Wave Hill Walk Off

Damien Dempsey

In the year of blonde Jesus 19 and 66
A great mumbling sound came from up in the sticks
All these gentle black warriors
They dreamed of a bill
And enough was enough
So they walked off Wave Hill

Away from the station these stop men walked tall
Along with the house servants 200 in all
They were Gurindji people
They were one with the land
That was stolen from them by a bloody white had

These brilliant black cowboys they were second to none
The most talented horse men
Neath the cruel southern sun
They were sick of the white man short changing them still
So for the pride of their people they walked off Wave Hill

A proud gentle Gurindji warrior spoke
Old Vincent Lingiari black beacon of hope
Such a thorn in the side of Lord Vesty on High
Why the call that man Lord, I will never know why

The Vestys had fenced off their lands long ago
Had destroyed hunting grounds and the watering holes
Made the Gurindji slave for some rations and shacks
Paid the white man much better than them half starving blacks

The sun line stretched out and they mapped the vast land
They had chartered their continent, rock, forest, sand
Their ingenious culture was the oldest on earth
From the Bite up to Arnem, Byron Bay out to Tiff?

The Gurindji walked off to old Wattie Creek
And they made a brave stand there
As tough as old teak
They would fight for their rights to the land that loved them
In this place of their dreaming,

They fought the rich men

One morning old Vincent woke up from a dream
And he walked to the banks of the Wattie Creek stream
He threw in a small pebble that he held in his hand
And a mighty black wave ran across the whole land

For 9 hungry years they kept up their bold stand
Until Gough Whitlam poured land into Vincent hand
For indigenous land rights it was finally time
For to make reparations for a Giant of a crime

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