



## The Iron Wire

*Garry Kilworth*

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In 1870 an enterprise began in Australia that was breathtaking in its ambition: to construct a single galvanised iron wire between Adelaide and Darwin, crossing two thousand miles of virtually unexplored wilderness. This was the Overland Telegraph Line, using local trees as poles, thousands of them, and hundreds of men who would not return to civilization for two years or more. Some would not return at all.

Alex McKenzie is a young telegrapher who believes his chosen profession to be at the cutting edge of contemporary science. A man who knows that once the last pole is erected and the line is open from Adelaide, to Darwin, to London and on to New York, the world will have shrunk and messages that used to take four months from sender to receiver will then take only minutes. His hopes for the future, for him and the love of his life, Sally, rest on the success of this magnificent Australian achievement. However, there are those whose enmity he has aroused and who would not hesitate to rob him of his life simply because he represents all they hate: someone who has grabbed at his opportunities and has risen from farm labouring roots to man of science.

The Iron Wire: a novel of human hope and progress in a land where men die, women are widowed, and bushrangers live by the lie and the gun.

“His characters are strong and the sense of place he creates is immediate.” (Sunday Times on In Solitary)

“The Songbirds Of Pain is excellently crafted. Kilworth is a master of his trade.” (Punch Magazine)

“Atmospherically overcharged like an impending thunderstorm.” (The Guardian on Witchwater Country)

“A convincing display of fine talent.” (The Times on A Theatre Of Timesmiths)

“A masterpiece of balanced and enigmatic storytelling ...Kilworth has mastered the form.” (Times Literary Supplement on In The Country Of Tattooed Men)

“An absolute delight, based on the myths and legends of the Polynesian peoples.” (Mark Morris on The Roof Of Voyaging)

“A subtle, poetic novel about the power of place – in this case the South Arabian Deserts – and the lure of myth. It haunted me long after it ended.” (City Limits Magazine on Spiral Winds)

## The Iron Wire Details

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## From Reader Review The Iron Wire for online ebook

### **Diana Tull says**

#### **Interesting**

It kept my interest all the way through. I liked Alex's theories of what the telegraph was going to do for world peace. It was interesting to read of this time in history. It seemed quite plausible. I would recommend this.

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### **Bryony says**

Drawing on his own experience as a telegrapher, Garry Kilworth paints an evocative picture of a world on the brink of technological revolution. The Iron Wire follows the story of the building of the telegraph line from Adelaide to Darwin in Australia. The protagonist Alex MacKenzie is a likeable character who has to contend with being a technical expert in a group of hard labourers - meaning that he is often on the edge of the group - not popular with the senior management but not popular with the lads either. Again, Kilworth draws on his own experiences in the forces - capturing the banter and competitiveness that comes from men being united in a common difficult task. Remarkably, many of the characters featured in the novel were real people, Kilworth takes some liberties of course in creating stories for each of them but it is an affectionate portrayal and tribute to the tenacity of these imaginative Victorians. There are obvious parallels with our own times, the character of Alex is thrilled to be part of history, wondering what the opening up of the world to communication will achieve.

The Iron Wire is a great read, well researched and creatively told.

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### **Dee-Ann says**

This story is a fictionalised account of the erecting of the overland telegraph line from Adelaide to Darwin. It comprises a mixture of factual elements and fictional. It leaves you in awe of such an amazing feat and the struggles that went with it and a admiring respect for the country-side.

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