

ABORIGINES WERE TOUGH ON WOMEN

Fifty years ago, the "Port Macquarie News" published some very interesting recollections relating to aborigines in these parts, and the writer (he signed himself "Hawkeye") was able to talk of personal experiences of 60 years prior to 1929.

His reference to Ashburners' Hill is intriguing and, unfortunately, the most knowledgeable historian the "News" knows is unable to place it.

Perhaps some reader of the "News" can locate Ashburners' Hill, for it is as certain to exist as does Limeburners' Creek.

The article was headed "Our Diamond Jubilee" which seemingly had something to do with the writer's sixtieth year here in 1929.

Well, said friend William, you've told us detailed stories of flood and field, fanatics and fairies, financiers and fools sixty years ago and more, but what about the original Australians, the real aborigines, whom we dispossessed, how were they 60 years ago? Were they a power in the land, or but a legend of the distant past?

Well, Port Macquarie abos. had 50 years contact with a "superior" race by that time, and all history has shown that half century is enough to enable a superior race to completely corrupt the inferior.

A few miles out of Port was Ashburners' Hill, where Government men were sent in batches 100 years ago to burn heaps of tree trunks and gather ashes for soap making. The darkies looked with wonder on so much trouble being taken to get materials to make soap, a thing they, nor their ancestors, ever used.

Don't let us feel too flash, though! Anyone who has read "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur" will get a picture of times in Britain when soap was just as superfluous.

Spearheads, axes

Near Ashburners' Hill was a great traditional camping ground of the blacks. Why? Because it was well drained in every direction. People with time for antiquarian research will find stone arrows or spearheads and axes in the soil there by the scores. But we have not time! A gentleman seeking for such stone relics on Manning River once was pointed by the writer to an age-old camping ground, long disused, and he found eight specimens quickly.

When a black visitor walked from Manning River to that camp 60 or 70 years ago he dare not approach it directly. He would halt within view, about half a mile away, and kindle a small fire. Seated close by, he would wait patiently as Kipling describes the waiting East. After a time a loud inquiry in abo language would sound from the camp. Rising to his feet, the traveller or travellers would reply. Then a rapid conversation would ensue as the smoke curled aloft. There was no haste about it, and at last a deputation from the camp came across to investigate. More talk and gestures, and at last the visitor, weapons, baggage and all, march quietly to the camp. Old men assured us that any breach of that law would mean death to the stranger. So no one ever risked it.

Speared by local blacks

We well remember a remarkably able native who lived for years on the Manning River, and went to Port Macquarie on a visit; and because of some breach of tribal law was speared to death by the local blacks. This man had been a tracker in Government employ, and perhaps relied on his official status, but it was no good.

Boolabon, a distant kinsman of Moonvan (the black hero of Port's early days) was drifting and fishing for flathead in a settler's boat. He did not notice the boat drifted on a rushing ebb tide to the bar. One paddle broke as he fought for life. Quickly he used the other one to guide the boat past a point, to which he sprang to safety. Said the onlookers, "Why did you let the boat get smashed?" To which he quickly replied, "plenty more b_____ boat, only one Boolaboon!"

Watching a cricket match of the whites one day he was transported with joy, and made plenty noise. This annoyed a scout near the boundary, who said, "shut up, Boolabon; you're a regular magpie!" To this he quickly replied, "I am not a magpie, 'cos I haven't got one white spot on me!"

A kinsman of his had been taught the three R's and other items of schooling by kind folks of the early days, without solid moral grounding, and, alas, that only made a clever rascal of him. One dusky evening he furtively entered a hotel, and paid the landlord 5s for a square bottle of rum and left at once. Five minutes after he re-entered quite hurriedly, and whispered that a policeman was coming. He placed the bottle on the counter, got his 5s, and fled. Before closing time Boniface was replacing the bottle in its proper order, and had occasion to remove the cork (rum was imported in bulk and bottled on the premises). Alas, he found the contents were only cold tea, and Tommy had quietly exchanged bottles at a culvert



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The advent of colonial wine helped to settle a vanishing race.

Truganini

Truganini was the last Tasmanian black, and we gave her name to a coasting craft. It is not known who will claim the honour in New South Wales, but it will not be long.

Many reasons are advanced for the rapid disappearance of Australia's native race, or races.

One reason is the servility of their women, and the cruelty of their men.

Eighty years ago "King Coldpata" reigned (more or less) on the Upper Hastings River, and wore his insignia proudly.

One day he and his queen were moving, and part of the journey was over a steep hill. Coldpata carried his weapons of war only, as he strode beside a 20-year-old white Australian youth. Behind came the lubra or queen, if you will, loaded with all the bags, nets and skins of the camp, with their contents. Steadily, and uncomplainingly, she toiled up the long hill behind her mighty life-partner and chief.

The young man looked back at the toiling, panting, perspiring woman, and remarked: "Missus very tired; pretty heavy load." The only rejoinder Coldpata made was: "Umph, b_____ black bullock," and steadily went on.

Let us learn our lessons each and all.

Opulent America and France make goddesses of their women — hence race suicide. Australian abos made slaves of their women, and hence came national decay and ruin.

Thoughtful races, in all ages, note and learn that woman was taken from man's side; and by his side, as an equal, is her normal place. This way comes peace, power and progress always.

Governor Fitzroy

When Governor Fitzroy visited Major Innes at Port Macquarie, and high jinks were the order of the day all round, some elaborate corroborees were held. For weeks men and women, to whom time was no object, prepared. There were artists in those days. White pipe-clay was brought from far, and bright red oxide of the settlement gave the three magic colours black, white and red, which the conquering Huns of modern times so often bore to victory. Trouble was nothing, art everything, and the whole physical outfit was crowned with a towering cobby-coy or headdress, made by binding the hair erect with a suitable central storage of precious possessions. There was one distinct similarity between heroes of the corroboree 80 years ago and fashionable ladies to-day, i.e., they had no pockets, and hence the cobby-coy carried all valuables. Aye, and when they saw that the vice-regal party and their friends all wore the black hat in civil life they made their head-gear as close a replica as they could.

"New fellow" songs were the glory of such star occasions — creations of the tribal poet. Who knows but what the Camden Haven location where Kendall produced the immortal "Cantata" and other poems, may also have sent in a poet to Port Macquarie to crown that week's festivities.

Upon the leaden flushing on St. Thomas' tower 60 years ago was a clear pocket-knife outline of Governor Fitzroy's boot, about a number 8 imprint of Britain's conquering race. And when black Terramidgee's number 7, with most tremendous toe-holds, was placed beside, we might rejoice to:—

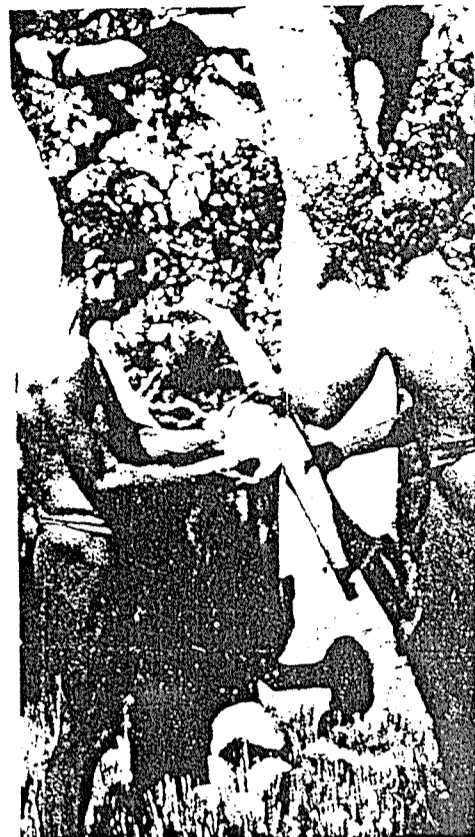
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"Hastings Billy"

The writer can well remember seeing the terrible tattoo marks on "Hastings Billy" 60 years ago, and wondering how any human being could undergo such mutilation and survive without apparent injury. On his back were healed tattoo gashes over a foot long, two inches wide, and with each edge raised at least half an inch. We would need chloroform to survive, but he laughed as an athlete, at mutilations he bore for fashion's sake and never saw.

Blackman's Point was a merry rendezvous 100 years ago, because



This picture, taken at Settlement Point in Port Macquarie by the late Mr. Tom Dick, shows aborigines removing a spear shield from a tree. The man on the left has a stone weapon. Trees with evidence of shields have been removed from them are still to be found.

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Aborigines

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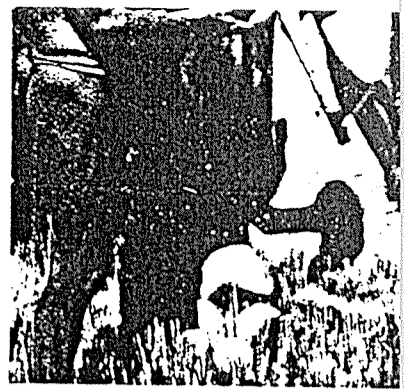
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Bob and Emily Fly, King and Queen of the Hastings River aborigines.

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Dying remnants

The magic wand of civilisation has banished "Binghi" forever from the main highways of life, and the dying remnant continue as pensioners, dole fed. It is scant justice, but no cure for race decline. And yet our legislators have the idea (or say they have) that dotes and endowment, which means something for nothing in various forms, will build up a virile white race. They dare not tell the truth, or they would be voted into private life.

From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone

Earth cries ten thousand lives have gone!

We are just a little bit better than abos. We really believe that 5 per cent. of those buried in old Port Macquarie Cemetery have marks to indicate their resting place, and the former owners of Australia have not. Even their loyal families are forgotten. Go and see the Manly of the North Coast for yourselves, and endorse the ideas that underlie our series of articles.