Mounted Police and Blacks
Sketch by Lt. Colonel Godfrey Charles Mundy who, with Governor Fitzroy, travelled up the Hastings River in 1846 to Yarrowitch and thence over southern New England and who expressed astonishment and horror at the participation of graziers in massacre. (By kind permission of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.)

Baal Belbora

The End of the Dancing

Geoffrey Blomfield

Introduction by Russel Ward

The Agony of the British Invasion of the Ancient People of the Three Rivers: The Hastings, the Manning and the Macleay, in New South Wales.

Best wishes

Geoff Blomfield

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To my wife Carmen who has never ceased to 'cultivate the garden within the ring-fence of the skull', and whose wide reading has been a great help to me.

And with Carmen, our family of five, who have endured long waits in a canvas-covered land-rover, in cold and in heat, while I talked with good citizens of the Three Rivers.

SECTION THREE

BRITISH INVASION OF THE HASTINGS RIVER VALLEY

13. John Oxley's Journey

The British invasion of the Hasting's River Valley came down the river from Mt. Seaview, so named by Mr. Surveyor John Oxley, the leader of the expedition.

Oxley was returning from his journey to the Inland over the southern shoulder of the New England Tableland following long and strenuous exploring. His men were very tired and his pack horses dying. It was with ecstasy that they sighted the sea from this mountain at the head of the valley. The descent to the valley is very steep and travel is hindered by rain forest, a jungle of very tall trees, vines and almost impenetrable undergrowth. By contrast the valley bottom was easy travelling. The natives were shy but friendly. Oxley wrote of them:

> . . . we heard the natives call close to us; and on being answered they immediately presented themselves to the number of ten, taking care to show us, by lifting up their hands and clapping them together, that they were perfectly unarmed.[59]

The natives were numerous and further contacts were made with them by 'making them small presents of hooks, lines etc.'

In other words the first European contact with the Aboriginal people of the Hastings valley was quite peaceful. No doubt these people had been fully informed of the approach of the white explorers.

In his report to the authorities in Sydney Oxley wrote that the port at the mouth of the Hastings river was suitable for shipping and he spoke highly of the surrounding country for settlement. He also pointed out that it was useful for recalcitrant convicts since isolation made escape difficult.

Following Oxley's report another expedition was sent by sea for a further check. Governor Macquarie then reported to the Imperial

Government and was, as a consequence, ordered to set up a convict settlement at the mouth of the river. It was named Port Macquarie.

Captain Francis Allman, who had fought through the Peninsular War with the 48th. Regiment of Foot, and had visited the Hastings with Oxley, was appointed commandant of the Settlement. He appears to have handled the considerable difficulties of early settlement firmly and well. He even brought his wife and three children to live there and wrote to a friend, Captain Piper: 'It really is a delightful country and ought to be made a respectable settlement. I have no objection from what I have seen, to put off the red coat and remain.'[60] We are to hear more of the Allman family later and particularly of Francis Allman jnr.

But sad to report this most attractive river valley was shortly to become the scene of hostility with the Aboriginal people, these people who were so shy and friendly at first contact with Europeans. While visiting the port during his tour of northern settlements in 1821, Governor Lachlan Macquarie wrote in his journal:

> 'We saw some natives at a distance but were not near enough to speak to them. They had lately manifested a very hostile spirit towards our people here by frequently throwing spears at the men employed up the river in procuring rose-wood and cedar, on one of such occasions a very useful man was killed, by a spear passing through his body, of which wound be immediately died.
>
> This violent attack and treachery only took place about a fortnight ago, since which the natives have been very shy and never come near the settlement concluding they would be severely punished, if caught, for their treacherous cruel conduct.'[61]

In the face of substantial evidence, which is to follow, that they were a friendly and peaceful people, it is hard to account for these early attacks. Certainly settlement would, as yet, have had little, if any, adverse effect on their food supplies. Parties of cedar cutters had, however, gone up river and the history of the East Coast of the continent is that conflict followed the arrival of the cedar cutter. These timber cutters were mainly convicts who had been hardened by the brutality and injustice of the times. Only an odd exception would have the understanding and compassion to treat the Aboriginal people properly. It seems likely, in this case, that the cause of hostility was due to a breach of good conduct by cedar cutters.

The next month Captain Allman again reported that:

> 'The natives still continue their acts of hostility and I am obliged to double the guards in the bush—on the 12th our cedar party was again driven in with the loss of an axe—several spears were thrown through their huts. Although fired at frequently, and one of them supposed mortally wounded, they continue to annoy the party so much that the guard could not get the men to work.'[62]

No further reports of conflict have been discovered until the Cogo killing years later.

Major Archibald Clunes Innes

The most outstanding European who has ever lived at Port Macquarie, by any measure, was Major Archibald Clunes Innes. He was born at Caithness, Scotland in 1800 and, although only fifteen, failed by only one day to participate in the Battle of Waterloo. By the age of twenty-one he was a captain and was sent to Australia in 1823 in charge of the guard on a convict ship.

The historian, Frank O'Grady, writes of him that he was appointed commandant at Port Macquarie at the age of twenty-six and had dealings with the native tribes from just south of the Macleay River. He continues:

> 'His sympathetic understanding of the Blacks paid dividends in the exceptional co-operation they gave him. In December 1826 three prisoners, Stephen Green, William Genes and S. Davey absconded from the sugar plantation at Rolland's Plains. Innes communicated with the natives in the neighbourhood who went in pursuit of them. In February 1827 he was able to report that Davey and Genes had been apprehended on the 14th January, by the natives in the vicinity of Cape Tork [sic]. Several other prisoners had absconded since his last report, all of whom had been brought back to the settlement by the natives.'[63]

Innes himself wrote of the Aboriginal people of the Hastings and the Macleay Rivers:

> 'I consider the natives to be very friendly. Numerous tribes for sixty miles round constantly visit us and in my opinion, security and prevention of desertion of the prisoners is greatly to be attributed to the natives who generally apprehend them a short time after they are at large.'[64]

The natives were plundering vegetables from plots growing on the north shore of the river and one of the gardeners, a convict, was murdered. Innes reached agreement with the natives to administer justice in this matter in their own way and there is evidence that they faithfully attended to this.

Innes entered private enterprise at Port Macquarie, built a road to the tableland and chartered ships to load regularly at Port Macquarie. He established a string of stations, stores, flour mills, and inns all the way to Glen Innes.

He went bankrupt in the severe depression of the Forties and rode off from his Lake Innes mansion leading a pack horse, the same pair of horses on which he used to ride to Glen Innes. He travelled up his road to New England past the stations of some who, in his time of prosperity, had accepted his hospitality and were considered his friends. In his time of trouble no one offered him food or a bed. So he knew not only the bitterness of dispossession but the greater bitterness of desertion. He went to work on the goldfields of Nundle where he made again a reputation for kindness and generosity. He was a big man and he was a friend of the Aboriginal people.

14. 'Bangar' Macdonald

The assessment of the nature of the ancient people of the Hastings river made by Major Innes has strong support from a remarkable letter written by Mr. Macdonald to his father, Major Macdonald, and held by the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

Only that part of the letter about the native people is retained by the library so that the chance of identifying Mr. Macdonald, or his father, Major Macdonald, was small. However, research revealed that Mr. Macdonald was George James Macdonald who arrived in New South Wales in 1828 and in October of that year was sent to Port Macquarie as a clerk of the Commissariat. He was recalled to the Sydney office in November 1830 and in February 1833 appointed to the notorious Female Factory at Parramatta. In 1839 he was named Commissioner for Crown Lands, New England.[65]

George Macdonald was a well-read and sensitive person whose lot it was to live among the insensitive and brutal. He read and wrote poetry. Major Innes' niece, Annabella Innes, while a girl living at Lake Innes, Port Macquarie, wrote in her journal:

> 'Mr. McDonald, the C.C.L. New England, is a very clever man. Unfortunately he is very short with a small lump on his back just at the waist. It was owing to his peculiarity that he at one time possessed so much influence over the native people about here. They had sometime previously had a favourite and powerful chief who had the same deformity, and they, according to their established superstition, imagined that at his death he had 'jumped up' or arisen again a white man. Mr. McDonald encouraged them in this belief and added to his popularity with them by studying their language and customs'.[66]

Mr. Macdonald, son of Major Macdonald, who left Port Macquarie in November, 1830, wrote to his father in December of that year. His letter is a little spoilt by a note of condescension but it remains a remarkable commentary on the character and nature of the Aboriginal people of the Hastings river.

The Agricultural Establishment where Macdonald was employed at times was at Rolland's Plains which is about half way between Port Macquarie and Kempsey. He wrote to his father, Major James Macdonald, as follows:

> '. . . It was here that I obtained that extreme and extraordinary influence over the Aboriginal tribes of the District, which it seems has reached your ears altho' I have never at any time given publicity to it myself—however it may afford some interest to you and your friends, so I will now relate its origins and effects.
>
> A short time after my arrival at Port Macquarie I was on a visit to the Agricultural establishment situated about thirty miles from the settle-

ment and had one evening been conversing for a considerable time in broken English with one of the natives, when he suddenly stopped short in his discourse, looked eagerly at me with large dark eyes, and ended by stating that I was one of the King's River tribe who had been killed sometime before, and that I had 'jumped up' again as a white man. I took no notice of this ridiculous circumstance at the time; but I soon discovered that this idea had spread very generally among these simple and superstitious people by whom I was ever addressed by the name 'Bangar' which it would seem was my original patronymic.

From this period my name was established—my influence was extended by quickly acquiring their language, and they became greatly and generally attached to me, so much so, indeed, that many of them never afterwards left my house about which too the different tribes always formed their camps whenever they visited the settlement, and which was generally encircled by a ring of spears, while their dark owners reposed in groups on the grass flats before the door. This influence joined to my knowledge of the language (in which contrary to common practice they always conversed with me) gave me, of course, great advantage in making myself acquainted with their peculiar customs and superstitions and which I omitted no opportunity of witnessing, for I had by now become as much attached to them as they were to me, and have been frequently alone with them for a fortnight together in the Mountains and on the banks of the Great Rivers fifty or sixty miles from the settlement, collecting specimens in Natural History for my friend Dr. McLeod—and as everything in the shape of a curiosity that they came across was always brought as a present to me, I had at times a rather motley household, and I think it would have afforded you no little amusement if you could have seen me of an evening seated in my cottage surrounded by a tribe of my sable friends watching the manoeuvres of my family of pets. Flying squirrels of every size and variety might be seated on the ledges of the windows and springing from them on my shoulders and head and opposums stealing round the room and climbing up the legs of the tables and chairs. Bears muching green gum leaves in a corner, and Parrots and Cockatoos chattering upon their perches—but all this was not fated to last long, and although the Agricultural Commissary General had promised that I should remain at this station as long as I pleased, I was the other day recalled to Sydney in consequence of his requiring an increase of efficient hands in his office. The vessel that was to take me back, came in towards evening, and as soon as it was known to the blacks that were about me that I was to leave them the following morning, they immediately started off to their camp which was about three miles from the settlement, and returned with the whole tribe after dark with torches and encamped about the house. They then surrounded me expressing their sorrow that I should leave them, and using every epithet of endearment that their language afforded, most of them at the time stating their intention to proceed with me. This however I avoided by telling them that I was going for a time and that I would return to them shortly. The following morning they all accompanied me, men, women and children to the place of embarkation . . .'[67]

It was later suggested by the authorities in Sydney that Macdonald might be employed in recruiting a contingent of his Aboriginal friends to help in an attempt to muster the remaining Aboriginals of Tasmania, to involve these people in the extermination of the Tasmanian people. This apparently came to nothing.

Research by an historian, Dr. Lionel Gilbert, provides a moving epilogue to Macdonald's life at Port Macquarie. Unhappily Macdonald had little chance to marry although he enjoyed the company of women. There were not only few women in the colony but less in the distant districts and Macdonald was handicapped by his deformity. Dr. Gilbert writes:

> '. . . Reverting to Macdonald's letter to his father, it is clear that he was back in Sydney by December, 1830. This was rather sad for on the 14th February, 1831, a baby girl was born at Port Macquarie, described as the daughter of George Macdonald, asst. Clerk of Stores, and Maria, a Black Native. The baby was baptised Georgina on the 22nd February, and was buried the following day. (Port Macquarie Register, 1824—1831, T. D. Mutch Transcripts, ML. A4390).'[68]

So an Aboriginal girl accepted George Macdonald perhaps not despite his deformity, but because of it.

Macdonald enters the story again, not as 'Bangar' but as Commissioner of Crown Lands, New England, and as founder of the university and cathedral city of Armidale, New South Wales.

Killing At Cogo

George Macdonald tells his father that it was only a short time after his arrival at Port Macquarie, when on a visit to the Agricultural Establishment at Rolland's Plains, that he was adopted by the local tribe of the Aboriginal people and that:

> 'I had now become as much attached to them as they were to me, and had been frequently alone with them for a fortnight together in the Mountains and on the Banks of the Great Rivers fifty or sixty miles from the settlement . . .'[69]

It is plain from this that Macdonald not only trusted them completely but was very happy with them. Macdonald was at Port Macquarie in the years from 1828 to 1829 and at the time of his departure could hardly have been on better terms with the Aboriginal people. However, by 1843 there was a massacre at a place called Cogo which is near to Rolland's Plains. This was a massacre of Europeans by natives and the following description indicates a very hostile situation:

> 'When the settlement at Rolland's Plains was first established it was found necessary to erect a stockade to shelter the soldiers and prisoners with their working tools each night and sentinels were posted to keep watch. In 1843 a massacre took place of three men pit-sawing cedar boards at Cogo and camped in a small slab hut. A warning by an Abori-

ginal woman of the impending onslaught was not heeded and at daylight the next morning the hut was attacked. The only survivor, a Mr. Spokes, who feigned death, was able to escape to a settler's house and from Glencoe word was sent to the garrison. For his part in the attack, Terrimidgee was tried and convicted in Sydney and publicly hanged at Goal Hill, Port Macquarie.

Despite such early warlike encounters many a pioneering family had cause to be grateful for the help and friendship of faithful Aborigines.'[70]

This report indicates that some hostility was of long standing, in fact, from the days of first settlement at Rolland's Plains when it was found, or believed, necessary to erect a stockade. Rolland's Plains was good, open agricultural land and selected for food production quite early so that the need for a stockade could be connected with early hostilities against timber cutters on the Hastings River. It is puzzling because any hostility is so far from the findings of Major Innes and of Macdonald.

Rolland's Plains and Cogo are on the eastern fringe of the great mass of mountains, gorges, rivers and forest which comprise The Falls Country. By 1843 murder and massacre was frequent in The Falls so it seems likely that the massacre at Cogo was really a part of this conflict.

The last paragraph of this Cogo history also indicates that given the peaceful nature of Aboriginal extreme hostility only erupted when and where their sense of justice was seriously and specifically outraged. Or when, robbed of their lands, they were suffering hunger.

Settlement of the Hastings Valley

We have now arrived at a most unexpected and most welcome part of this unhappy history. Apart from the early hostilities, and the massacre at Cogo, no other massacres or murders have been discovered in the valley of the Hastings River. There are hints of trouble in several places but nothing recorded or sufficiently strong to be classed as oral tradition. It would only be speculation to include these. Now this is in absolute contrast to what happened to the north in the Macleay, to the south in the Manning and at the edges of the New England Tableland to the west.

An old resident at Ellinborough village in the Upper Hastings seems to have the most likely explanation for this. He points out that the Hastings is a short river, not more than a third of the length of the Manning or the Macleay. And perhaps more important, that this valley was the first occupied following early settlement at Port Macquarie in 1821. It was only a small part of the hunting grounds of the tribes so that its occupation did not lead to immediate starvation. He suggests that the people just retreated elsewhere and that there was still plenty of food. Many also settled and lived a parasitic

Girls on the beach with their mother between Port Macquarie and Laurieton. These people had by now abandoned their active tribal life and balanced diet to the detriment of the mother's figure. Corpulence was unknown until European foods became available. (Photo by Thomas Dick. Haddon Collection, Dept. of Archeology, Cambridge, Circa 1890)

existence near the town of Port Macquarie. It is known that a lot of these people died of measles.

Aboriginal Warfare

The defeat of the Aboriginal people was as much due to their conception of war as to their lack of guns and rifles. Their advanced and civilised manner of controlling the passions, greed and brutality of humanity was a main cause of their utter defeat at the hands of a ruthless invader.

This point is well made by one of the most remarkable characters to emerge in Northern Australia, the late Bill Harney: a self-educated bushman who wrote eleven books and who delighted to be alive and among people of all colours and who, above all, had a sensitive appreciation of the Australian Aboriginal people.

After experiencing the massive slaughter of European warfare in France, Bill returned to Australia to ride eight hundred miles home to Borrooloola hoping and expecting to escape from Western civilisation only to find, when he arrived, that the local Aboriginals were engaged in a tribal war. He exclaimed: 'don't see any dead or wounded lying about!'

Someone told him: 'Oh, no, they've got a different way.'

And indeed the Australian Aboriginal did have a different way. There are three descriptions of Aboriginal battles on the watershed of the Three Rivers. The first of these by Clement Hodgkinson appeared in Chapter 5. We now have to thank Mr. James Workman for his account in the Wauchope Gazette.

The Tribal Battle at Allendale

'The late Mr. James Workman had spent much, if not the whole, of his young life at Allendale and at this time the Blacks were numerous. He could speak and understand their language and was conversant with their manners and customs. A mere lad in his 'teens then, but he could clearly remember the excitement among the abos., and other events caused by the war scare. But they did not allow it to overflow into their conduct with the white people. A close fellow where his own interests were concerned, this fight business made him creep right up into his shell.

The camp was only about ten or twelve chains from our house, narrated Mr. Workman, and goings on there could be seen quite plainly by us. Sometimes we could see two or three men close together, gesticulating and talking excitedly, but if you went near they would change the subject. Some of the men were boastful of their achievements with spear and other instruments of war, but nothing was ever said about the preparations . . . and some bushes in the way prevented me from seeing as clearly as I would have wished. There were two lines of warriors facing each other at a distance of some two or three chains, several yards apart, hurling spears at each other and side stepping or parrying the spears with their shields or heilomans, as they were called. It was clever work and demanded perfect sight and co-ordination of hand and eye. But this they had practiced since childhood. It was part of a boy's training to enable him to qualify as a defender of his tribe when occasion demanded.

As each man used up his supply of spears, another took his place. The whole business was characterised by a spirit of fairness. One never tried to take an unfair advantage over another when out of position. There was a feeling of expectancy in the air. Expecting every minute to see someone speared fatally, but no, they skipped around, as hard to hit as flying swallows. I expected to hear wild shouts and a rush to get at each other, as in minor skirmishes among themselves, but there was none of this. Everything was planned and in order.

How long the battle had been in progress before it was my privilege to view it, was not known to me, but I watched it for more than an hour, when there was a great shout and the warriors dropped their fighting gear and rushed to fall on each others necks. Blood had been drawn and, according to tribal law, honour was satisfied. For several minutes there was an uproar of voices and men yabbering and gesticulating as though they were crazy. Then each withdrew to his own sector. By evening the battle ground was deserted.

Thus the Macleay Blacks began their trek back to their own territory . . .'[71]

This confirms Hodgkinson's assessment of Aboriginal warfare as fair and open and hardly more than an athletic contest.

15. Epilogue on the Hastings

The Breelong Blacks

The final scenes of a man hunt following the slaughter in 1901, of seven white people by men described as the Breelong Blacks were enacted in The Falls Country at the head of the Hastings and Manning. Actually the murderers were as much European as Aboriginal but the white population thought of them, and treated them, as Blacks, and it was, in a way, the agony of mind created by the terrible injustice of dispossession and destruction of the Aboriginal race that was the basic cause of the murders. The guerrilla resistance was long over in The Falls Country and the few remaining Aboriginals completely demoralised.

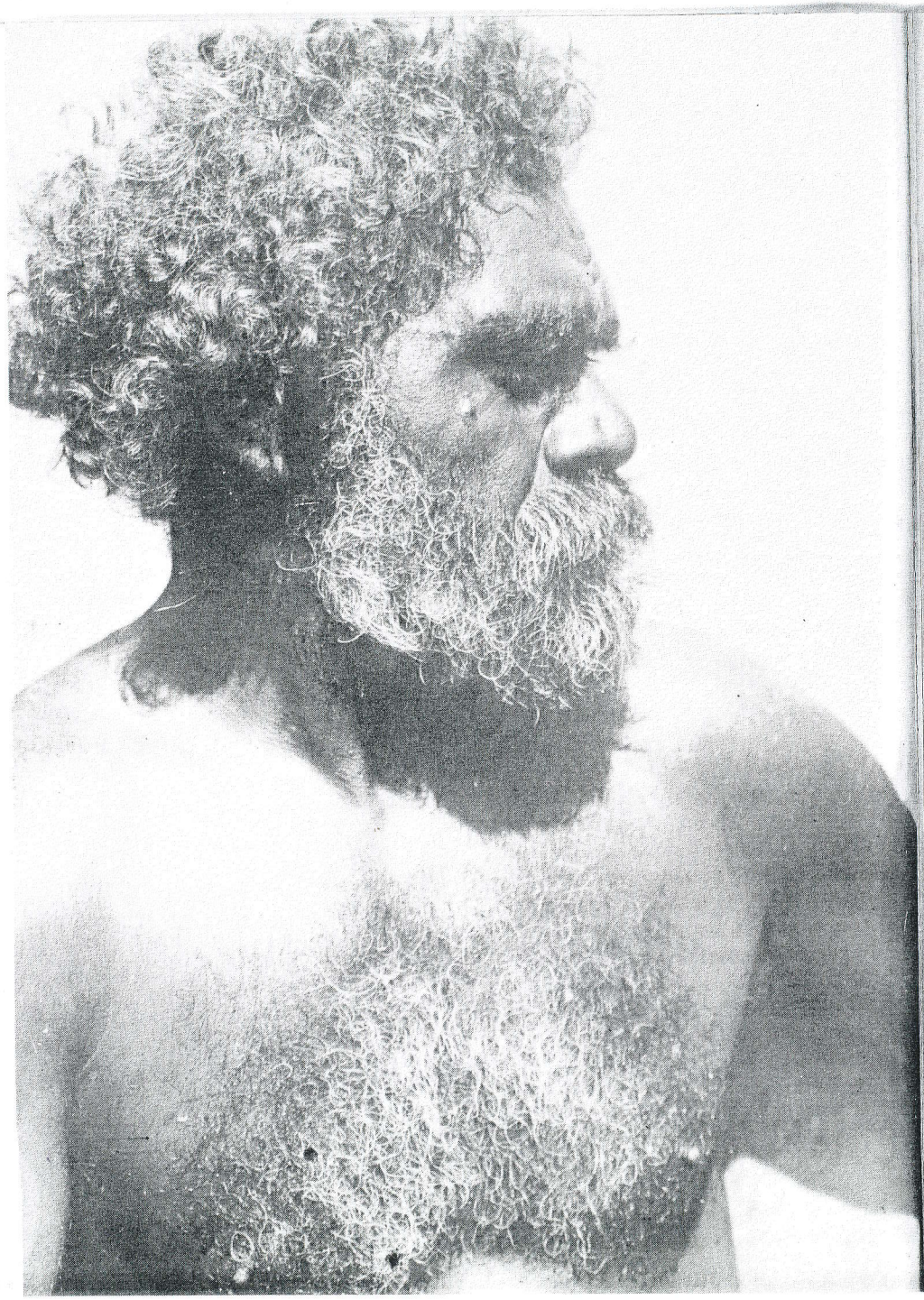
The story of the Breelong Blacks, Jimmy and Joe Governor, is known nation wide. At the turn of the century it flooded national newspapers for over three months. It has since been the subject of two books, numerous newspaper articles and a much publicised film.

The first book, written by Frank Clune, is a straight narrative and is a useful record with some perceptive comment. The second book was written by the well-known novelist Thomas Keneally and takes the form of fiction but does not depart from the facts and like much good fiction probably comes nearer to the truth than the plain record. The film, directed by Fred Schepsi, is based on the novel.

The final scenes of what is described as the greatest man hunt in Australian history were enacted in the Hastings and Manning valleys. Jimmy Governor's white wife, Ethel Mary Jane Page, was born on the Macleay river and, if Jimmy was descended from two white, aristocratic families as suggested by Clune, members of these families were, over a long period, resident in The Falls Country.

The beginning of this century, the time of the federation of the Australian Colonies, saw an estimated two thousand horsemen and two hundred police riding the ranges and rivers of central New South Wales to shoot or capture Jimmy and Joe Governor.

The fugitives were, and still are, generally known as Breelong Blacks, and one of them, Jimmy Governor, committed a string of



Aboriginal men fishing with pronged spears on the Hastings river. The vegetation indicates that they were close to the sea. The canoe is quickly made from a strip of bark and the man usually has his wife with him. They also usually had a small fire on a clay base.
Haddon Collection, Dept. of Archeology, Cambridge University (Photo by Thomas Dick) mid 19th century.

murders most foul and brutal. The press persistently called them Blacks and the public to this day think of them as Aboriginals. Joe was probably three-quarters Aboriginal but he was the minor figure who did not take part in the original massacre of three white women and two children.

Jimmy was half white and had red hair. Frank Clune tells us that the name Governor was probably a corruption of a very similar English name, that of an old aristocratic family. And that his mother's name indicated descent from the Irish aristocracy.

Clune comments that if Jimmy Governor had the blood of these two haughty and fiery noble families in his veins then it is no wonder that he would avenge insult regardless of the consequences.

Clune tells us that at school Jimmy was a proficient scholar and became a bush worker, about the only occupation then open to a half-caste. By contract and for wages he did fencing, horsebreaking and land clearing. As a half-caste Aboriginal the law did not allow him citizenship or the right to own land.

This man is using a stone axe to cut toe holes to climb. Another method is described by the late Duncan Bain who is said to have been 'a kindly gentleman, who liked the dark people and was very good to them.' In his reminiscences published in 1900 he writes:
In my childhood, as a boy on the Hastings River, I was well acquainted with Bunyah Jimmy who was known as far back as I can remember as being a black man with an imposing figure and a kingly bearing. He was a gentle, likeable fellow . . .
He (Bunyah Jimmy) was a powerfully built blackfellow. I remember the time Arthur Christy got him to climb a big gum tree for some eagle's eggs. Bunyah got a length of vine and walked up the tree in a flash. (Vine looped round the trunk.) The nest was on a long branch and he just walked along it while it bent under him and collected the eggs and put them in his mouth to bring them down. Arthur got such a fright he said it would be the last time he would ever ask him to get eggs for him again.
(Photo by Thomas Dick)
Haddon Collection, Dept. of Archeology, Cambridge, mid 19th century

The Abundant Life Did Not Last Much Longer, Northern New South Wales (Courtesy Hastings Historical Society) (Photo by Thomas Dick)

He was well known and liked in the town of Gulgong. He played cricket there. He was a handsome, well set-up young man, strong and agile, sober and hard working, honest and trustworthy. For eighteen months he was a police tracker and they were always chosen for good reputation and general intelligence.

This hard-working and respectable young man tried hard to adapt to and adopt the European way of life. A main ambition was to marry a white girl and he achieved this. But because of his Aboriginal blood he was rejected, despised and exploited. Overwhelmed by insult and injustice he murdered women and children.

He then fled with his family and a friend, Jacky Underwood, who had taken part in the massacre. However it was quickly evident that the pace would be too fast for Underwood and the family and they were abandoned to allow Jimmy to escape with his brother Joe to accompany him. Joe at this stage had done nothing wrong but he later murdered.

For over three months they ranged the bush between Gilgandra and the Hastings river with the hand of every man against them. Further ghastly murders were committed.

After the most intense man hunt the Governors were hunted down in The Falls Country. Jimmy was wounded at Big Flat on the Forbes

Local conditions varied from locality to locality, and Aborigines adapted readily to varying conditions. Mid 19th Century (Hastings Historical Society.) (Photo by Thomas Dick)

River, a flesh wound in the buttocks and a serious wound through the mouth taking five teeth.

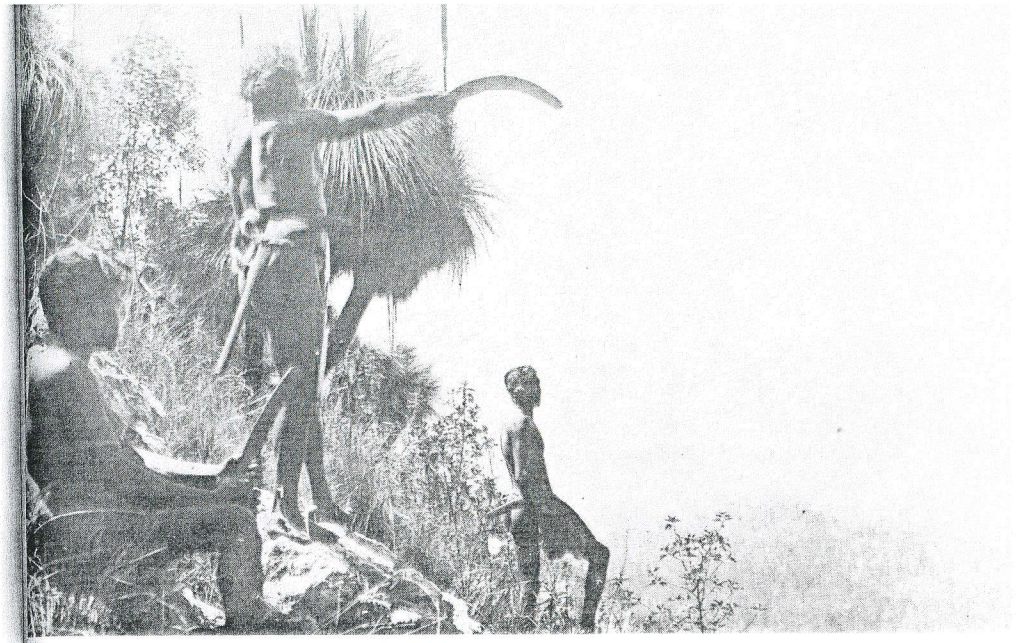
The brothers escaped by providing covering fire for one another. Clune says they headed for Mt. Banda Banda but it seems more likely that at this stage they were in the Yarrowitch area where an Aboriginal believed to be Joe was given food by the Costigan family. They camped that night on the Yarrowitch river about a mile above the falls and travelled east down the road next morning.

Their presence at Yarrowitch was strongly suspected by their pursuers. As a child Barlow Chandler remembers numerous men on horses and police arriving from the Mummel Hills. Barlow's cousin, Ned Chandler, the local mailman and aged sixteen, was late with his mail delivery the night they camped on the Yarrowitch river. When Ned took the mail to a house on Honeysuckle Creek he found the owner, Mr. Partridge, covering him with a rifle from the attic window. Mrs. Partridge was still downstairs being too large to squeeze through the man-hole to the ceiling.

Ned knocked on the door of a farm further up the creek. There was a long silence so he knocked again. The door was flung open and a gun jammed in his ribs by a police sergeant. He was taken inside where he found himself covered by a gun from a hole in the chimney.

From his home on the hill above Honeysuckle Creek, Ned saw the Governors walking down the centre of the road next day at about 10 a.m. He said they were carrying rifles and were plainly very tired.

In background North Brother Mountain—named by Cook. Courtesy Hastings Historical Society.
(Photo by Thomas Dick)



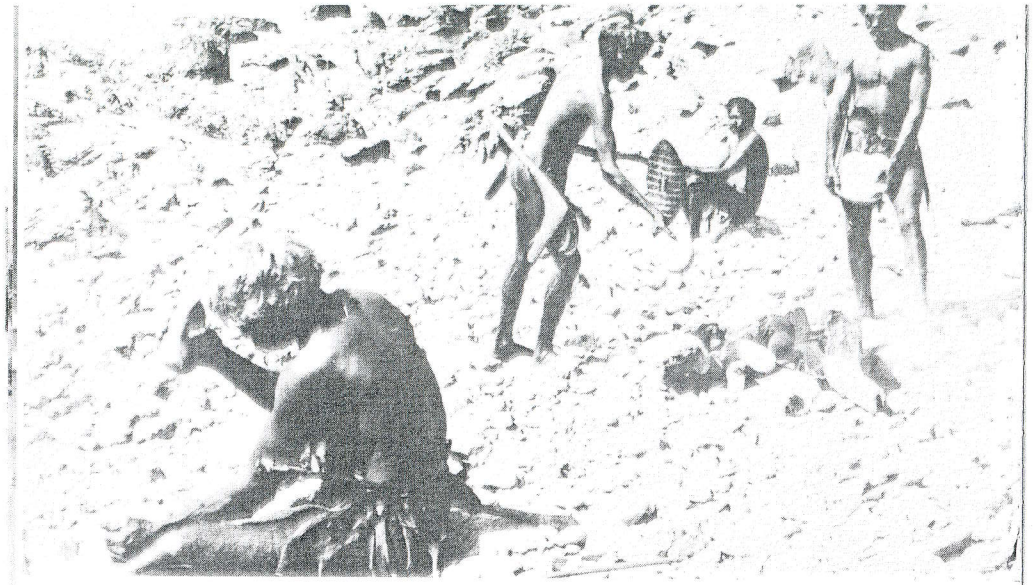
Aboriginal men on the eastern edge of The Falls Country. (Haddon Collection, Dept. of Archeology, Cambridge University.)
(Photo by Thomas Dick)

No one left the cover of their homes to identify them or to halt them. However the time-line and the track they were taking, as set out by Clune, allowed them to be at Yarrowitch. And the veracity of Ned Chandler is beyond doubt.

They were next seen near Yarras on the Hastings River and Jimmy was swimming across when a bullet knocked his hat off. He dived and swam down-stream under water. No doubt believing him to be dead the police concentrated on Joe. Reinforcements galloped up but Joe escaped.

The brothers were separated and never met again. Joe was eventually shot near Singleton and his body buried outside the cemetery fence.

Jimmy made his way over the range into the Manning Valley. He was very weak from his mouth wound and could only eat oranges and honey. Some ten days later a bush worker named Joe Wallis found food had been taken from his camp on Bobbin creek. He collected three friends and they returned and found Jimmy asleep close by the camp. When awakened he grabbed his rifle and jumped into a gully. Four shots were fired and Jimmy later said that he was hit by the



By courtesy of Hastings Historical Society. (Photo by Thomas Dick)

second and the fourth. None of the four men could remember in what order they had fired except Thomas Green who claimed he had shot Jimmy with the second shot but Joe Wallis said that it would never be known who shot him. He was taken to Sydney and hanged.

Clune's book went to press in 1959, so it was no doubt researched and written up in the Fifties. At this time there was not the concern there is now in the plight of the Aboriginal race so that Clune's concluding comments are of interest. He writes:

> 'Throughout the fourteen weeks of the Governor's reign of terror, the newspapers never referred to them as half-castes or half-whites, but always as the 'Breelong Blacks', or the 'Black Murderers' or the 'fugitive blacks' . . . The words repeated daily in the headlines, fanned the flames of racial prejudice . . .
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> In the records of violent crime in Australia, Aborigines had only a small part, compared with the Whites. In sixty-five years, from 1815 to 1880, there were one hundred and eighty-seven criminals hanged in New South Wales. Of these only thirteen were Aborigines. In the twenty years preceding the Governor outbreak not one Aboriginal had been hanged in the state . . .
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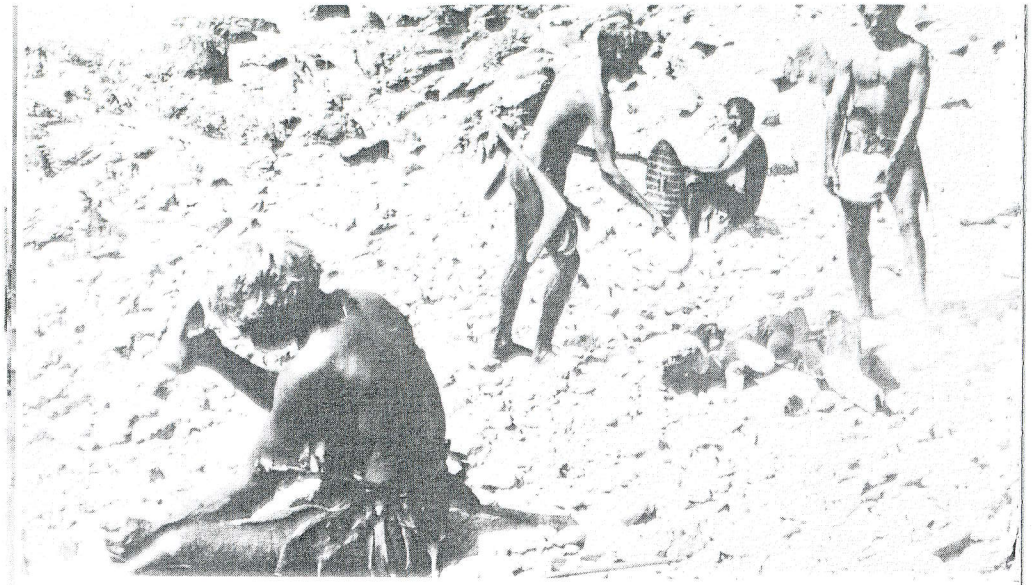
> The often reiterated headline use of the words 'Black Murderers' was an insult . . . to the three thousand full-bloods of the New South Wales tribes who had survived the genocide policy of a century of British colonisation.

> Their numbers had been reduced, in one hundred and twelve years of contact with the white man, to one-tenth of their original total. They had been thinned in numbers to the verge of extermination—not by 'black murderers' but by white murderers, who, in the hypocritical pretence of 'protecting them', had driven them off their hunting grounds, herded them into reservations, and doomed them to a lingering death from malnutrition and the heartbreak of racial despair.
>
> This was the terrible crime, though committed within the sanctimonious framework of British law and order, which made Jimmy's demented and gory deeds seem trivial revenge for the orderly extermination of nine-tenths of a race. Yet even the pathetic remnants, loyal and eager helpers as they had always been of white men, were now to be further spurned sturned and crushed and blamed as the progenitors of a mind-warped murderer who was only partly of their race.'[72]

If, as happens in to-day's world, the Aboriginal people had been provided with rifles by another nation it is unlikely that the British invasion would have succeeded. Their bushcraft would have enabled them to pick off the clumsy enemy at will. When, in the upper Hastings at Yarrowitch, these Europeans were confronted with rifles instead of spears they hid behind their doors and made no effort to apprehend the Governors. The Governors, exhausted and wounded, walked down the centre of the road in broad daylight. The superiority of the British was in weapons only. Deprived of this advantage they showed up very poorly indeed.

Hastings Historical Society. (Photo by Thomas Dick)



By courtesy of Hastings Historical Society. (Photo by Thomas Dick)

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Aborigines of the Hastings River, New South Wales, circa mid 19th century. Note the lack of corpulence. (Photo by Thomas Dick)

(Courtesy Hastings Historical Society)

References

59. John Oxley, *Journal*, 8th Oct., 1818. M.L. Sydney.
60. Francis Allman, Private letter to Capt. Piper quoted in *History of Port Macquarie*, 2nd ed. Archives Port M.
61. Governor Lachlan Macquarie, *Official Report to Col. Sec. 15/12/21*, M.L. p. 11.
62. Capt. F. Allman, quoted from *History of Port Macquarie*, revised ed. Jan., 1973, p. 13.
63. Frank O'Grady, *Major A. C. Innes*, unpublished ms.
64. Innes, quoted from O'Grady, ibid.
65. George James Macdonald, first Commissioner for Crown Lands, New England, and founder of the university and cathedral city of Armidale, N.S.W., came from Armadale on the Isle of Skye. He was a great grand-son of Alastair Mac Dhomhnuill on the paternal side and of Randal Macdonald of Kinlockmoidart on the maternal side. His grand-father, Donald, succeeded at Balranald and also succeeded his father as factor to Sir James Macdonald on his Uist estates. Donald married Catherine daughter of Capt. James Macdonald from Aird of Sleat. Sleat is southern Skye and includes the village of Armadale.

    James, a major in the army was the second son of Donald and Catherine. He married Elizabeth, daughter of George Owen of Tiverton. They had ten children and a listing of the names of their children commences as follows:

    (a) George, who held a civil appointment in Australia.

    (b) Owen, who served for sometime in the E.I.C. Navy and afterwards lived in Australia.

    Major James Macdonald also had a natural son, John, who had seven children. Donald Macdonald of Balranald died at an advanced age in 1819, nine years before his grand-son, George James, sailed for Australia. (Rev. A Macdonald, *Clan Macdonald*, Vol. 3, p. 409. Edinburgh Public Library.)
66. *Annabella Boswell's Journal*, Sydney, A & R., 1965, p. 142.
67. G. J. Macdonald, extract from letter to his father, Major James Macdonald, Port Macquarie File, M.L.
68. Dr. L. Gilbert, paper read to *Armidale and District Hist. Soc.*, 1978. (T. D. Mutch Transcripts, M.L. A4390.)
69. G. J. Macdonald, extract of letter to his father, Port Macquarie File M.L.
70. *The History of Port Macquarie*, revised ed., January, 1973, p. 15.
71. James Workman, *Wauchope Gazette*, 1958, 17/7/1926.
72. Frank Clune, *Jimmy Governor*, 1958, pp. 176, 177. Horwitz Press Sydney.