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THE ABORIGINES ON THE PAGE AND THE ISIS.

Near the junction of the rivers Page and Isis, tributaries of the Hunter, not far from the town of Aberdeen, Mr. Macdonald, a squatter of the place, showed me the spot where the blacks held their boras. It was in a pleasant glen at the foot of one of the highest hills in the neighbourhood. On the ground is the rude figure of a man, formed by laying down sticks of wood and covering them with earth, so as to raise it from 4 to 7 inches above the level of the ground. It is 22 feet long, 12 feet wide from hand to hand, and of the shape here given, fig 1.



Fig. 1.

While the young men are waiting the ordeal of the bora, they are made to lie flat on the ground upon their faces, in the position of this figure. Near by is a tree bent, as is not uncommon in this country, so as to be almost horizontal for some 10 feet, about 5 feet above the ground, down a branch and along the trunk of which the blacks have cut marks like the foot-prints of an emu. When a bora is held, a stuffed emu is carried along this tree, cleverly, so as to appear like a living one, and then walks round the company, along a raised path about 150 yards in circumference. In the centre is a large fire, round about which they dance.

The young men are initiated at the age of 16 or 17. There is no knocking out of a tooth in this part of the country, nor any such revolting process as that mentioned by Mr. Honery as practised among the Wailwun tribe. But there is an ordeal of pain. They say that on these occasions their god comes down by a tree, and makes a great noise, and tosses the candidates for initiation up into the air to test them, and if they are bad he tears them to pieces. Round about this place, for a considerable distance, are about one or a hundred and twenty trees marked

with tomahawks as in the subjoined sketch ; fig. 2 is 18 inches in diameter. There are many trees marked exactly in this way ; on some the marks reach as high as 15 feet above the ground ; fig. 3 is 2 feet 6 inches in diameter ; figs. 4 and 5 are different sides of the tree, about 4 feet.

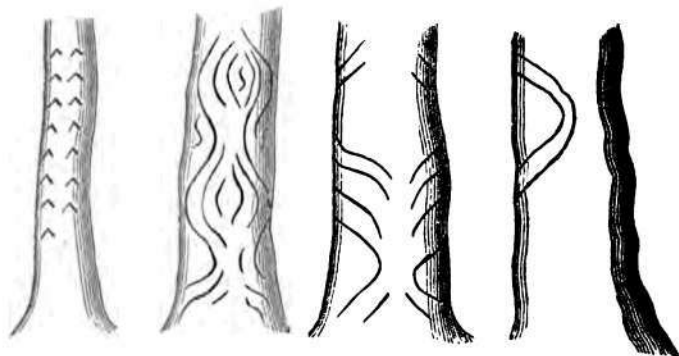


Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

MARRIAGE.

When a man wants to get a wife, he goes to a camp where there are men and women, and throws in a boomerang. If it is not thrown back at him, he walks in quietly and takes a wife ; if a boomerang is thrown at him, he has to fight Sorcerers. Their Krodjis profess to drive away rain by taking a large cinder out of the fire and beating it with a stick till it flies to pieces ; they then gather round it and shout "cooey." When any one is sick, the Krodjis come around him and sing ; they also burn the dung of kangaroos and lay it burning hot on wounds. They seek information in dreams, sleeping with their heads under logs.

VENGEANCE.

If a man steals anything the tribe kill him. If a man murders any one, they believe the murderer will pine away and soon die.

BURIAL.

In order to bury the dead, they dig a round hole like a well. They make a fire in this hole, and when it is burnt out, they carefully sweep up the ashes on a piece of bark and throw them out. When they put the dead in the hole, in a sitting posture, whatever belongs to him (spears, boomerangs,

opossum rugs, &c.) is buried with him. They lay large logs across the top of the grave, level with the ground, and roof them over with bark, on which they raise a mound of earth. They carve serpentine lines on two trees, to the north-west of the grave. They say black will rise up white fellows.

LANGUAGES.

They speak "Kamilaroi," varying slightly from that of the Namoi and Barwon. Here is a song sung at their Corrobarees.

Murrah a dai, būnmildē
 ɲa dinga dingai
 Duon dimi woldina
 Gulir bain de yē

"Bulimardyi" is something sacred; "Wunda" something awful.

TRADITIONS.

The deity who comes down at their "Bora" is very good and very powerful. He is very ancient, but never gets older. He saves them by his strength. He can pull trees up by the roots, and remove mountains. If anything attacks them he tears it to pieces.

The origin of the rivers was thus:—Some black fellows were very thirsty, looking for water; and coming to a tree with a gulagūr (opossum's hole), cut it with a tomahawk; on which rivers flowed from it.

The white cockatoo was formed thus:—A piece of white bark was taken from a tree and thrown up, while in the air it was turned into a cockatoo.

They tell of a chief who sent out some of his people to strip bark. They came back, and told him they could not get any. These men had broken the laws, and for their sin a terrible storm came down upon them. The chief took his tomahawk and stripped off a sheet of bark, and told them to get under it. They said it was not large enough. He stretched it each way, making it longer and broader. Then getting them under it, he threw it down, and killed them all. Another chief lived in a cave, and kept a dog.

ORIGINAL HOME OF THE MURRI.

The aborigines here say their fathers came long long ago from the north-west. This is the tradition told on the Barwon, 300

miles westward, and remarkably corresponds with the statement of Andrew Hume, that the blacks near the north-west coast of Australia say the first men who ever came to this continent, landed on that coast, and that the righteous and prevailing part of the population, afterwards drove away a multitude of offenders against their sacred law towards the south-east.

(End of Mr. McDonald's information.)

Language of the Aborigines of George's River, Cowpasture and Appin, that is from Botany Bay, 50 miles to the south-west (From Mr. John Rowley, of Scone, formerly resident on Cook's River, near George's River, son of Lieutenant Rowley.)

Black man, dullai [duggai is a man at Moreton Bay.]	Husband, mollimip. Wife, jinmap.
Black woman, wirāwi.	Brother, bobbina.
White man, jib agulay or jib-bagulōy.	Sister, bunnis * or wiap. Brother-in-law, jumbi.
Boy, wongra, or wangena, or wunpara.	Sister-in-law, jumbip. Comrade, mittigar.
Girl, wērōwī.	Head, kobra, or kobberā.
Forehead, kobinā.	Rain, wallan.
Eye, mai.	Thunder, murongal.
Nose, nogra.	Frost or snow, talārā.
Mouth, midyea midge, or burra.	Grass, durawi.
Teeth, tarra or terra.	House or hut, gunyu.
Ear, kurra.	Ship, murri noo-i.
Breast, nābuz.	Drink, wittama.
Stomach, bindi.	Victuals, kārndō.
Arm, minnip.	Spear (small), dūal.
Hand, buril.	Fish spear (with prongs), muttip.
Finger, berril.	Boomerang, būmarin.
Leg, mundowo, or muirdao-i.	Shield, hēlimān or hīlamun.
Semen, nallun.	Throwing stick (to throw spears), wōmrā.
Coition, nutta.	Net, rao-roa.
Cloaca, gūnārā.	Black duck, yūrānyi.
Deaf, kūrābūndi.	Hawū, būndā.
Having bad eyes, kūjamai.	

* The s here must, I think, be a mistake. Nowhere in Australia have I heard the sound s in any aboriginal word. The sound of dy (in hidyard) approaching to j, or g in Roger, is sometimes mistaken for s, so is rr. I regret to say Mr. Rowley left shortly before I received his collection of words, so that I could not consult him on the point.