

Ompelli

June 30 1918

Sir Baldwin Spencer K.C.M.G.
Melbourne

Dear Sir Baldwin

I was glad to get your letter of 6.12.17 + to hear that you were well. The letter took quite a while to reach Ompelli; I got it in May last. Cheque was duly spent and letters to you from old Maree, Marki, Mitchellact & Obiah are being forwarded to you. You may have a little trouble in translating, but the meaning is thanks for your kindness + they are very pleased to hear about you always. When a mail arrives, some of the old natives say; Boss you been get him letters from Profenor. I then show them your letter and also the pictures in the Times History of the war. I tell them that you send the papers & it is hard to make them understand about the war. Some of the young natives say, more better some fellow boy go help kill um B-Germans. Lilep says that he is going with my son Tom, to the front as soon as I get back from Sydney Tom is now 17 1/2 years, and very eager to go to the front. I tried to get Bailey to let me go with him, when he was recruiting a M.T.

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30.6.1918

Corps, but Railing said I was too old. Reading the latest war news; one wonders if the war is ever going to end. America will be a great help and by closing her trade with the enemy, will be a Godsend for the Allies.

Joe Cooper has been shooting buffalo on the Adelaide River during 1916 for Veeby Brothers, the big meat people, and during 1917; Joe was shooting on the Woolner Reserve for the Abos department. During the wet season Joe camps at Blue Mud Bay, a small Bay on the NE coast of Coburg Peninsula; about 20 miles from Cape Lon. Ruben; Joe's son is, or was last I heard; with his father. Joe was an inmate of the Darwin Hospital last year. Rheumatism was the trouble. Joe has had bad luck; losing two luggers some time back.

Rev J Watson, missionary of Goulburn Island had some trouble at his Mission Station. (Natives working ^{with} magic + killing goats etc; on Island) sent to me to come over and help him. I could not spare the time, so sent Lon along (Lon is assistant Protector to me) to see what was up. Several arrests were made + Jimmy Munder (the of the Campbell murder) was sent to gaol for a few months. One or two others got a few months in Jerry Bay. It will not be of much use, or any permanent good to

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send them to Gummy Bay; for they meet with bad whites in the gaol, and are worse when they come out than when they went in. Last time (May 1911) when in Darwin I went out and seen old Romula Mr Strath was with me when I saw the old man, I asked Romula why he put poison in the butter & he said that it was from lubra. I asked him what he meant by from lubra; and he said that I humbugged lubra, by not letting the men beat the women when the men thought fit. and that I told him Romula that I would do to him exactly the same as he done to the lubra. If he speared the lubra I would spear him. He also said that he was very sorry that he had done it; and must have been mad to do it I asked him in Mr Strath presence if I had ever hit him or knocked him about and he said no. I asked who told him to say in court that he did not do it. He said some man in gaol ^{told} to him to say it, but would not say who.

One old man Mitchener-unger died about 16 miles from here, you remember the old man - Mitchenerlacks father. The old chap had bad feet and had to be carried when wanting to move about one wish the old chap had and that was to go to ~~the~~ Field Island. Some of C Free's natives were here with a boat

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20²³ lent Mitcherlaek a horse and buggy to take the old man to the landing, and by boat the old people took a trip to Field Island. About three weeks later the old chap died in the boat coming back. He sat up and said, where is my son one of the others said, Mitcherlaek is with the boss at Campelli. The old man said oh he is all right & lay back and died. I had a fight with death a few weeks ago. (Peter) Mow-bearnun (he used to bring you totem) was carried to me dying. Peter had been poisoned by one Rambler. Peter had been away in Rambler's country; and Rambler gave Peter a fish *Thun-igo* (mullet) Peter eat the fish and that night he was bad (I was away at Darwin and was due to return at any time) and he was brought to Campelli. Mr. Stretton was here, and Peter was not brought to me until Mr. Stretton left for Darwin. I with two boys got Peter into a bath of hot water and strong ammoniac, half cooking Peter. I then had him dried and put a lot of blankets over him, giving him a good dose of Chlorodyne & told him to try and sleep, and he would sweat a great deal and all the poison would come out of him in sweat. Sure enough Peter did sweat, I saw to that and next day Peter was able to eat & now he is busy at a

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at a sacred corroboree - Peter had been suffering from fever, anyhow I gained a victory this time. Old Marealmark has been very bad at times, and was completely cured by being painted with iodine on the painful parts. I am getting quite a reputation as a medicine man; and have quite a large practice. Patients come in from the Liverpool River and I have had to get up from this note, quite a doz- times today; to deal out medicine, generally cough or fever cure. One very old man was brought from the camp a few days ago, by old Marealmark for treatment; and after a few days medicine the old chap was so pleased that he brought his son to me. By jove I have seen a lot of natives in my time, but this boy (about 16 years) beats them all. He is very light in color, being more like a red Indian than a native. His eyes are a dark brown and his head of hair is as red as possible. His country is at the mouth of the Liverpool River. I have just given him a pair of pants and shirt and started him to work with Tom at the Butter factory. I am going to study him a ~~bit~~ bit. I wonder if he is a throw back to the Maccazzais. You would be surprised to see the number of natives that come in for medicine. They won't come if anybody strange is here but as soon as any visitors are gone, any one sick or fancy,

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come or send in for medicine; generally cough cure
 A kind of influenza gets among them two and three
 times a year; and if one gets it, the thing goes
 right through the camp. An old man and
 woman came in from above the River crossing
 and they had pains in the chest and a very bad
 cough, I attended to them and gave them a bottle to take
 with them. The old man came back and said
^{old man} ^{clow} ^{acc.} ^{cant} ^{stool}
^{five.} ^{sleeps}
 Marina-bel-to prongda baraji, Niino Koona, Jacher-
 di-chi arronga. I made up a bottle of spearm salts
 and sent it by the messenger to the old man. A
 few days after word came in, that the salts had
 done its duty. I found out that the old man had
 taken the lot, (about 5 packets) at one dose, and he said
 that it was peev-da strong fellow.

I have been keeping
 an account of the number of doses of medicine that
 I give out at the station; and the names of the
 complaints that the natives suffer from; and the
 amount at the end of the year is astounding. I can
 hardly believe them myself. For six months for four
 263 doses. Influenza for same time 4949 doses - Sores eyes 118.
 Venereal - 110 - Skin dis^s 305. Open sores 133. Accidents 57 -
 Asthma 302 Yaws 10. Various attention 59 - Teeth drawn 4.
 etc. Sometimes when influenza is on, I am going
 nearly all day, giving out cough cure This last six
 weeks

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I have made three Kerosene tins full of my mixture for coughs Benzoin - Quinine - Native honey - and water - and it is very effective. My native that comes or is brought to the station for medicine, who I think is unable to eat native food; is kept here, fed and attended to until he is well enough to get or eat native food.

I have a few items here for you for your museum I don't know if you are aware that the natives on the N.E. coast, use the large claws of the crab for a tobacco pipe. I have four of them here for you, a few paintings on bark; and a tin of different things, packed in formaline. I have also a bag that is worn by a young woman who first becomes pregnant. This bag is filled with different little presents for the baby as a sort of bribe for the child to come to life safely. I have an outfit for a Kulorisi Ceremony, which I hope to hand to you personally at the end of this year. I am so busy that I can't find time to go into any of the old traditions lately, but hope to do so at end of butter season. I have been granted leave from November next and that will be my first holiday since you left Kimpelli. So I think that I am entitled to a spell - I wish that I could send you along some Pawpaw

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We have been having stacks of them lately
 what with pawpaws, Mango's bananas and
 Pine apples in galore, the natives fare royally
 I am just up to my neck in work. Butter
 making etc. I will just give you a Menu
 of work that I get through sometimes a voice
 at daylight say, Boss me no been sleep
 please you pull my tooth out. 2nd. Horse boy
 says one horse got cancer, I go and cut out
 the cancer. Tom came along and say's come
 and look at the engine, I have had a smash
 I find the eccentric broken a cast steel ring
 that works the pump. with the aid of Tom
 I set to work; drill holes in the steel band
 and bolt + rivet on a band. Cut out a
 square hole in a piece of iron and screw it on
 a joint, ~~the~~ put a thread on and ^{bolt in the place.} get the engine
 going again, all the above happened in one day
 so you see that I have very little time and
 Mrs Cahill is going all the time and we are glad
 when night comes + we get to bed at 9 P.M.
 I expect to get away by first steamer in November
 and I am booked for eight months holiday,
 and hope to see you in Melbourne about the
 end of Nov. Trusting that you are well, with kindest
 regards from Campelli.
 Yours faithfully Paddy Cahill.