

25  
22  
Sir Baldwin Spencer C.M.G.  
Melbourne

Campelli

July 27 1920

Dear Sir Baldwin

just a few lines, to let you know that we are still at Campelli. I have had a deal of worry, with one thing and another, in fact, I thought that I would have left here, ere this. The Royal Com- that was held at Darwin was a farce, Evidence given by certain witnesses was perjury from start to finish. The villains that were the cause of the R.C. were doing everything they could, to keep the truth back. Judge Ewing seemed to side with the lawbreakers. One part of the case was when I was giving evidence. I had branded some young horses & had put the brand on three horses without putting the brand in the fire again. I had the horses in a narrow lane, only wide enough for one horse at a time, but long enough for five or six head. When a brand is red hot six head of horses can be branded, without reheating the iron brand. You can understand, that as it only takes less than a second to burn a brand on one horse, a red hot iron does not lose hardly any heat, in that time and to brand three horses, in less than five seconds; the brand is still very hot, I pointed this out to the judge

2

but he only shook his head & says Mr Davis, swears that only one horse can be branded, without again heating the brand. The C.V. Officer also said that it was not possible to brand more than one horse. I was Thunderstruck. I asked the judge for permission to get practical stockman to give evidence on branding and he said yes. Later on, two station owners, came to Darwin. I got them to make a statement before a Magistrate. Both men had been practical cattle men all their lives. The both swore than any practical man, could easily brand four or five head of stock and one man swore he branded seven head of cattle (which are harder to brand than horses) without reheating the brand. All this evidence, I had wired to the Royal Commissioner, judge going.

I found out afterwards, that one of the men giving evidence, on branding, knew nothing of branding, and had to get J.J. Roney, to brand some calves, for him. Poor Dr Gilreath, I was sorry for him, He lies that these skunks spun about him, was fearful. They tried to make him out an awful scoundrel + The judge, seemed pleased. Very few questions were asked me about Dr Gilreath, + what I said was never published. They said that he was mean, tried to make out, that he sponged on people, during his travelling. I was asked if Dr. G. paid for his food, while at Campelli.

I said, No, he did not pay money for his food at Campelli; but sent goods, to over five hundred per cent, more than what he had at Campelli; and that Mrs. Gilruth, send to Campelli, cases of fruit, etc to Campelli, & that when Mrs. Gilruth was out in the bush with Mrs. Cahill & our party; we had jams, fruit salads etc, to last us for months, all paid for by Dr. Gilruth. I said that Dr. Gilruth was a fair & just man. This kind of evidence did not please Nelson and Co, so they dropped Dr. Gilruth's name right out. They tried all kinds of tricks to try and get me sent away from Campelli. All this trouble & lies against me was; just because I stood by Dr. Gilruth, during the riot in December 1918. The only thing that keeps me here, is the poor natives. Some time back I told them that I was going away & may not come back & the poor people cried for a long time when they went to the camp nearly all night they were crying. In the morning, I ~~asked~~ asked them, what was the matter & they said; when they ~~told~~ told the camp natives that you were going, they all cried; and wanted to know, who would give them food (when sick) and medicine. During the end of last December, we got the influenza here. I got it very severe. Then Mrs. Cahill got it, my temperature was 103 when Mrs. Cahill took her. I got out of bed to attend to her; you can picture us. I trying to mix up medicine for the natives & attend to my

wife, I was hardly able to stand. Somehow we pulled through  
+ Mrs C - was just out of bed the day the boat arrived  
Five of the soldiers police. Nelson, Captain Bishop, Chief  
Vet - and a man named Davis - five people  
to get food for + Mrs C + myself hardly able to sit  
up. The natives had mostly gone away. Eleven had  
died near the station + we unable to go to their aid  
and just as I was getting well enough to be of some help  
to the poor people, I was summoned to go to Darwin  
While I was away, the people S.S.W of Oupfelli, got  
the influenza + died in scores, only a few of a once  
numerous tribe, are now living. They come right from the  
Liverpool River; for cough cure. I make a mixture which  
is very effective composed of Trinitin Buzoin, Quinine, Honey,  
+ Sweet spirit's nitre. I make about 6 gallons at a time, &  
it only lasted about 10 days, so you can see that a  
lot of it is used. They come in all directions for this  
medicine + I don't know whether it is the medicine or faith,  
but very few died, that had the medicine - You can see  
how hard it would be, for me to go away, and leave  
these poor natives, to the tender mercy of whoever takes  
my place. That is the only reason that I stay at Oupfelli  
Re specimens, I have been unable to do much of this  
work yet, but hope to have a little time to myself shortly  
+ get you a good variety of birds, and animals.  
I am sending you by first boat, one black Kangaroo skin

22

a few climbing fish, some beetles, a few alligator  
fijons + (black fijons) Rufous quilled Rock pigeon  
+ will get you others as soon as I can get the  
time. Just at the present time, I am getting my  
packs ready, to go from Campelli, to Mataranka  
and bring back, five hundred head of cattle,  
from Mataranka to Campelli. They don't give me any  
chance to carry out my work, as a Protector of  
Aborigines at all. Droving cattle + fencing seems  
the order of the day. I hope Sir Baldwin that  
all is well with you + Lady Spencer and your  
daughters + grandson. All the older nations wish to  
be remembered to you. Poor old Maree mark is breaking  
up very fast; also sends you remembrance.

Trusting this will find you well  
with best wishes to you + yours  
from us all at Campelli  
- yours faithfully  
P. Cahill.

P.S. Small case addressed

National Museum

Melbourne

will go by first boat.

R.C.