

See p. 6
On death of mother saw
rest allowed to go into deep water or join
fifty party until - painted with burnt grass
washed down - see 'pencil' in diary 20.11.

(4)

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Darwin

Oct 19 1913

To Professor Baldwin Spencer Esq
University
Melbourne.

Dear Professor,

Your two letters, I received two days ago. I was very pleased to hear from you. The three pounds that was enclosed I also got and will take back their value to your old friends. By your you are quite right saying that the difference in our lives are great, and it would be hard to find a greater contrast. I, you may say am vegetating at Oenpelli; While yourself going like a machine, day + night I can stand a fair amount of roughing it in the bush, but I fancy one week at your work would make a blithering lunatic of me. The whole of your questions I will answer as soon as I get back home. The word Muraian is pronounced; is very hard to get. Some of the natives say mor - some say mer-i-an others again pronounce it the way that you spell it. So I think that you had better spell it as you have always done.

Thirteen

I am sorry to say that spelling is my weak point. My father saying when I had just turned 13 years of age, I have been in the bush ever since and the very little that I at present know, I have had to learn myself, and you know very well that the bush is a first class schoolmaster as far as nature is concerned, but grammar cannot be picked up with the natives. So you just go on and spell any of the words as you are doing. Any of the words that I send you I try to spell phonetically and you must put them in their proper spelling. For instance I used to spell Oenpelli, - Owenpelly. & etc.

I am now at Darwin for my wet season supplies and further instructions from the Chief. I had sent in requisitions, and in some instances some of the goods have been cut out and one requisition had been shelved entirely so I want to know the reason, and to point out the fact that when once the chance is lost, it is very costly to get the thing to Oenpelli. One one occasion I sent Romula to Burundie for a mail and a few small parcels, one of the land or survey departmental men took Romula to pilot him to Oenpelli and never troubled his head about my mail.

Romule was very wild when he got back without my mail, and said next time I don't care - nobody can't make me come suppose I no more got him letter belong to you - poor old chap was very sore about it for a long time.

I have had a deal of merrin and humberg-ing with the Survey people. I had to lend them all my private saddles, and could not go any distance myself. I hope that I can have a good chance next year, and can get on dried horses for all the natives and when I have got things to my own liking, I will try and get you some photos of the place.

I have a nice room (mosquito proof) on one end of verandah, where we used to dine - I extended the verandah in width to 14 feet wide, so if you come along again, we will have a good skinning room. I have another crop of young papaws ready to be planted out as soon as I get back. The others are almost done, only two trees remaining. As soon as I get back home, I intend going shooting Buffalo, until I get sufficient beef to carry me over the wet season. I intend building four houses for the natives and enclose the lot with cyclone wire (that is if I can get the wire) and plant the enclosure with pine

apples, and other fruits. If they give me a free hand, I am not afraid of the future of the natives in my district.

The Abo, school opens tomorrow at native village. The Bishop of Carpentaria will be present, so I will give you a description of the opening later on. Dr Holmes came in with me in the Lone Hand and we brought poor old Muckalakai and a boy named Toby in to the hospital. Dr Holmes examined two women and took photos of them, I fear that one is a Luper, you ought to ask the Dr for a photo of the women. I packed you a box and handed it to Brown Brothers to ship to you. It contains a few curios, and two black Kangaroo's skeleton and skins, one is a fine specimen, but the small one has been eaten a bit by weavels, but you may be able to get it fixed up. I had two other females, but they got hopelessly ruined. I will try and get you a female later on. As soon as I get the blanks, I will try and get you two or three records. Mr Pickford is leaving Darwin on the 7th of next month and may be in Melbourne in January, I have asked him to call on you, he can give you a good deal of news of this part that will be of great

interest to you. I am sending my son Tom for a trip to Sydney and to give him a year or two at school. I would like very much to leave him here, but I can get no place for fit for him to stay at, now that his uncle and aunt, will be away for six months.

We all had letters from Miss Mason and she was very pleased with her trip to Oenpelli, Mrs. G. would have liked her to stay for a much longer time there. Mrs. Cahill and Ruby were very much taken with Miss Mason, and they all had a wild gallop to catch the launch, in fact I think it only took them about 30 minutes to do the 7 miles.

Oenpelli plains were looking their best when Dr Holmes and Mr Beckett^{and his} and they were very much impressed with the value of the country. Beckett said I was a great fool to part with the place, as in a very few years, it would be worth a fortune. Old Maudmark told me to tell you when I wrote you that she was still at Oenpelli, or in her own words, you tell um Boss me here Boss, me wait you come back. I told old jimmy (Kul-un-youchetria) that I was going away, and he replied, you go, me all about go back my country, sit down, sleep, no more want um, muther one white fellow. You remember, the little short chap that used to dance

murain, a great mate of old Harrys. There is a ceremony (that I forgot when you were at Oenpelli) connected with the dying of a mans mother. The son must on no account go into deep water, or join in a fishing party, until he has been painted with burned grass, and washed down. Anyhow I have made a note of two or three things that I will get you as soon as I possible can. Do you want any more sacred stones or sticks. I will try and get you some more painting, but I do not know when I will be able to send them to you. The time between the last two boats, was over six months and the next may be even longer. When I get the answers to your questions I will despatch them via Burrundie as soon as possible. Mrs Cahill and Ruby were well when I left Oenpelli last Sunday evening I was a bit off color, but got seasick and developed a real bad cold being hardly able to speak until today, I hope to be all right again in a few days. Trusting that this will find you well.

I remain

yours faithfully

Paddy Cahill.

P.S. Mail closed before school opened