

SKY PILOT NEWS

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"FEED MY LAMBS"

By courtesy of *The Sun*.

NOTHING TO GIVE: FROM THE SKY PILOT'S LOG 2CH BROADCAST

James was an Englishman, and came from an old family that had travelled with William the Conqueror — or, at least, that's what he told us. Strangely enough, there are so many men about whose ancestors came over with William that one wonders if he had a boat the

size of the Queen Mary. Anyhow, Palmer and I were respectfully silent, though George wasn't impressed.

"Did you say William the Conqueror?" he asked. "Yes, I thought that's what you said. Well, I've never heard of him. It must have

been afore my time. He never landed in Darwin, as far as I know."

"Bah!" James snorted. "Ignorant stockman! You know, I detest this country, positively detest it. I haven't met a gentleman since I arrived, not one. And the natives! pooh! nothing but naked savages, lower than animals."

"Some animals ain't that low," George put in, "not when you compare them with some of the men that seem to get about these days. And as far as the blacks are concerned, I don't mind sayin' that I've learned a lot from them, and I've a lot of respect for a good blackfellow."

"So you've learned what you know from the blacks, have you?" James said, sarcastically. "Well, I'm not at all surprised; not in the least."

"Hold on a minute, James," Palmer interjected, "you're talking through your hat. When I first came to this country I thought as you do now, and — well, I hate to admit it, but I despised the natives and thought it would be a good thing if they died out. I've learned a lot since then; and quite a lot of what I've learned is from the blacks."

"Nonsense! There's nothing worth learning from the blacks."

"You're wrong there," said George. "A man can learn quite a lot from the blacks, and, what's more, there's many a white man in this country who owes his life to the natives. They're kind and generous, and they'd share anything they have with you, from a goanna to a favourite wife."

"How loathsome!" James exclaimed. "If anything, I prefer the goanna."

"That would be about your level," George asserted. "Let me tell you . . ."

Palmer interrupted him. "Don't say it, George. I know what you are thinking, but don't say it; not on the Mission, anyhow."

And there the matter rested for a time.

James fancied himself as a sailor, and he told us stories of his favourite pastime — yachting. He hinted at a private yacht he owned in England, and we almost believed him. Anyhow, he borrowed the Mission dinghy and took Palmer for a sailing trip. We were near the coast at the time, working on the salt pans, and all would have been well had James kept to the river. However, he decided to take the dinghy out to sea, and the result was they were caught in a sudden squall and driven far away from land. It is a wonder the dinghy lived in such a sea, but James did know quite a lot about boats, and he managed to keep it afloat, and finally beached it on Maria Island. He was rather proud of his feat, and let Palmer know all about it.

"Nasty squall, that," he said. "If I hadn't been an experienced yachtsman we would have been drowned. You are fortunate."

"Did you say fortunate?" Palmer wailed. "I like that! First, you nearly kill me with sea sickness, and then you land me on a desert island, where we'll starve to death or die of thirst, or both."

"We'll have to signal the first passing boat," James said, "and they'll take us off. There's no need to panic."

"The first passing boat? Did you say the first boat? Good heavens! don't you know we're in the Gulf of Carpentaria, right out of the track of boats? If Smithy doesn't come out looking for us, we might be here for years and years — if we don't starve first."

"We might rig up a sail. It is a pity the sail got torn to pieces in that squall. Or we could row to land."

"What would we make a sail of? Besides, we haven't any oars now, and if we tried to make them, how would we manage without even a pocket knife between us!"

"Good gracious! I had no idea the place was so isolated. We'd better find water. My lips are cracking in this heat."

"I'll say we had. Three days without water is the absolute limit in this country, and a lot of men go mad in less than three days. Come on, let's hike."

The men walked across the island. They found the remains of a billabong in the centre, but there was not a drop of water, and the bottom was caked and criss-crossed with gaping cracks. By nightfall they were in a bad way. They had walked till their clothes were torn to shreds in the thick scrub, their tongues were black and swollen, and it was with difficulty they kept their cracked and blistered lips together.

They slept little that night, and at daylight were again on their feet, staggering along in the vain search for water. They noticed, about 11 o'clock, a smoke in the trees, and made towards it. Palmer alone reached the smoke, James dropped out by the way. It was a camp fire made by two blacks, who had come to the island for fishing and to catch turtles. The blacks gave Palmer water, propped him in the shade, and went back for James. They lifted him gently and carried him to the camp, where they bathed his face and wrists with water and gave him a little at a time to drink.

When the men fell into a sleep of utter exhaustion, the blacks watched over them, and when they awoke fed them on oysters, fish and cooked lily roots. One of the blacks spoke English, and Palmer tried to thank him.

"I say, you fellows," he said, "what I mean to say . . . well, you saved our lives, and I'm terribly grateful. Of course, that's the wrong word. I mean — well, I'm extremely grateful, if you know what I mean."

"Poor fellow white man," said the black, "him all a-same piccaninny longa bush. You two-fella close up finish that time."

"Yes, it was close up, all right," Palmer agreed. "Well, we appreciate what you have done. I'll be glad to pay you, of course — that is, I haven't anything on me at the moment — no cash, I mean — but if ever you're near my farm or the Mission, you can call in, and I'll see you're properly rewarded."

"Me two-fella no more wantim money — nothing. Plenty water and tucker longa bush. Blackfella always share everything. You feel good now? By and by me take you longa mainland in canoe."

"Oh, we're fine now, thanks," said Palmer. "And to get to the mainland — well, that's just what we want. You're a Briton . . . what I mean is, you're a sport . . . a — a — what's a word you'll understand? You properly good-fellow blackfellow, no more little bit."

James said nothing.

Later on Palmer discussed the matter with James, after saying what he thought about yachtsmen in general, and James in particular.

"That's the last time," he said with feeling, "that you'll ever kid me out to sea in a dinghy. We nearly perished. The only thing that saved us was finding those blacks. What was it you called them? Naked savages, lower than animals! You said we could learn nothing from them and they had nothing to give. Well, they gave us what they had, and it meant life to us. I wouldn't call that nothing."

"It meant nothing to them," James said crossly. "They had plenty and wouldn't miss a little water and food. Yes, they were useful, I suppose, in their right place. But so is a good dog, and — well, give me a dog any day."

And the final entry in to-day's Log is taken from the 25th chapter of Matthew: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me. . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

MISS HENNIE VAN ROEKEL: For the past five months Hennie has taken charge of all the outside work on the farm. During that time she has built up a splendid vegetable garden, and we are using the vegetables now. The poultry and pigeons and other pets have never before been so well looked after, and it was largely owing to her efforts that we won 111 prizes at the last N.S.W. Pigeon Show, in-

cluding the trophy (for the third time) for the most successful exhibitor.

Hennie has announced her engagement to Mr. J. Schreuder, of The University of N.S.W., and the wedding has been set down for 14th October. We wish to congratulate these young people, and we wish them God's richest blessing in their life to follow. As all Hennie's relations are in Holland, the wedding is being arranged from the Mission Farm, and the reception will be held here, after the service in St. Paul's Church of England, Castle Hill.

Hennie will be a great loss to the Mission Farm, and we know it will be very difficult indeed to replace her. During the time she has been here we have all learned to love her and to admire the conscientious way she has carried out her duties.

EASTWOOD METHODIST WORKING

BEE: Members of the Eastwood Methodist Youth Fellowship have undertaken to supply the material and carry out the work of renovating the first room in the new hut. A start was made this month, and when the work has been completed it will be a great asset.

STREET STALL: A Street Stall was held this month at the Parramatta Town Hall. Together with private sales, we cleared about £40, which seems to be the usual amount raised by these Stalls. It is a great help to the Mission, and we are grateful to the members of the Women's Auxiliary who conduct these Stalls.

SPRING: With the fruit trees coming into bloom, we are reminded that Spring is approaching. It has been a long Winter, and this year we had 16 consecutive frosts. During the cold months of the year it is always more difficult to keep the dark children warm and dry. We will welcome the Summer months, when things are much easier with a large family of small children to care for. We had hoped to move the children into their new quarters before the end of the Winter; now it seems that this move will be delayed for some weeks while voluntary workers finish the alterations to the hut.

MISS RITA FISHER: A dark girl of 16 has come to help us for a few weeks before she goes into training for her future work. She has already taken her place in the Home, and is proving a great help. We hope Rita will be happy with us and that all of us will benefit from her stay. Rita seems to be a popular name. We have a small girl named Rita on the Mission Farm, and some time ago Rita Wenberg was helping Isabelle in the Home; now we have Rita Fisher temporarily on the staff.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND BOYS' SOCIETY: Both Eddie and Ron are members of the C.E.B.S., and they enjoy the

meetings very much indeed, receiving much help from the Christian training. We are glad that it has been possible to arrange for both of these boys to attend the Camp which will be held (D.V.) from September 29th to October 2nd. They attended the Camp last year, and had a wonderful time, though they were too excited to sleep much the first night.

CHRISTINE: The years pass so quickly that it is difficult to realise that Christine is now seven years old — almost eight. She was our first dark baby, though we had older girls before she came. Since she was a baby, Christine has been with us, and she is growing into a sweet and pretty child. One of the difficulties about this work is that we cannot always be sure how long any of the children will be with us. Some, of course, are permanent. Others come for a few weeks or a few months, and then rejoin their parents. But if we have them here even for a short time, it must be remembered that these are the impressionable years of their lives, and it is something for them to be in a Christian home and to receive the love and care that Christians can give them. We trust that many of them will be brought to a knowledge of Christ as their Saviour during their stay with us.

MRS. WARWICK: Unfortunately, Mrs. Warwick had to enter hospital during the month for a slight operation. She is home again now and progressing satisfactorily.

ASSIMILATION: There has been a good deal of publicity about living conditions at some Aboriginal settlements, and both newspapers and television have featured this matter. There is no doubt that conditions could be improved considerably, but there are many problems to be overcome which do not always appear in articles written about the Aborigines. One of the greatest difficulties is to get the Aborigines to make some effort to help themselves. As mentioned in the Sky Pilot News previously, there are many Aborigines who have made good and are living quietly amongst white people in the community. But they are not "news".

There are some Aborigines who want houses and think the Government should supply them; but they want the houses rent free, even when they are earning good money. To have everything given to them without any responsibility on their behalf would not really be helping these people. In the outback, one of the most exasperating experiences that one could meet with is trying to get a camel out of a bog. The animal refuses to co-operate at all; it is almost as if he wished to sink still further into the bog. When a little effort on its part would

solve the problem, the camel simply refuses to make that effort. About the only thing one can do is to haul it bodily from the bog, in spite of itself. And when rescued, instead of being grateful, it seems to be resentful.

If the money was available (which it is not) in sufficient quantities to provide every Aboriginal family in N.S.W. with a new house, that would be only the beginning of the problem. The next step would be to maintain those houses in reasonable condition. Not all Aborigines have advanced sufficiently to take an interest and pride in their houses. Perhaps not many of them would tear up the floor boards to keep the fire going, though this has happened, but there are some who would do little, if anything, to keep the house in repair. If it is a house owned by the Aborigines' Welfare Board there are some Aborigines who would consider it a "Government house", and it would be most difficult to collect the rent that would be needed to keep the place in repair. There seems to be a deep-rooted conviction in some Aborigines that the Government should do everything for them and they should do nothing in return.

If these Aborigines are really to be assimilated they must learn that every citizen has to accept some responsibility in life, and until they are willing to do so, or can be taught to do so, they are not ready for assimilation. Unfortunately, it is these backward Aborigines who hold back many of their kinsmen who are anxious to get on and willing to help themselves. Government assistance is necessary, of course, but it should be designed to train the Aborigines to help themselves, rather than on a free "hand-out" basis that would tend to produce a race of professional "cadgers".

CHRISTMAS PARTIES: Last year we were overwhelmed with parties for the dark children. We do appreciate the kindness of friends in thinking of the children, but too many parties are not good for the children, and this year we will have to restrict these considerably. It will not be possible for the children to attend any more outside parties besides those already arranged. As far as parties at the Mission Farm are concerned, we would like to suggest that there are other more practical ways in which the children can be helped. We do not need any more toys this year, as we have ample put aside now for the children; but gifts of fruit, groceries, biscuits or any other food-stuffs, are always most welcome — especially fruit. If you are thinking of doing something for the children this Christmas, may we suggest that you phone the Mission Farm (YA 2427) in advance and talk the matter over with us.