

SKY PILOT NEWS Sept., 1971

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SKY PILOT FELLOWSHIP

23rd ANNIVERSARY & SALE OF WORK

to be held (D.V.) in the grounds of

Marella Mission Farm

ACRES ROAD, KELLYVILLE, N.S.W.

SATURDAY, 30th OCT., 1971

MORNING and AFTERNOON

FREE PARKING

1.30 p.m. PUBLIC MEETING. ALL THE USUAL STALLS.

REFRESHMENTS AND HOT PIES AVAILABLE

Proceeds in aid of our work for needy Aboriginal children.

Do your Christmas shopping while you enjoy a day's outing in the country; at the same time you will be helping this work for the dark children of our land.

Make up a car party, including your friends. For children there will be swings, donkey and pony rides and motor boat rides on the Mission Lake and other attractions.

If you are unable to come by car, there are buses from Parramatta to Kellyville Post Office. The Mission Farm is about one mile from the Post Office, but transport between the Mission Farm and Post Office bus stop will be arranged for the following buses:—

Depart Parramatta Station: 9.06 a.m., 10.06 a.m., 11.06 a.m., 11.40 a.m., 12.20 p.m.

Depart Kellyville P.O.: 11.50 a.m., 12.45 p.m., 1.23 p.m., 1.53 p.m., 4.16 p.m.

If coming by car, turn off Windsor Road at President Road, follow to end, then turn left into Green Road and first turn to left is Acres Road. The Mission Farm is the third home on the left in Acres Road.

Gifts for the stalls will be greatly appreciated. They should be mailed to Marella Mission Farm, Parramatta Railway Station, or brought direct to the Mission Farm before or on the day of the Rally or posted to Box 29, P.O., Castle Hill, 2154, as early as possible.

For further particulars, please 'phone Marella Mission Farm, 629-1555.

PLEASE PRAY FOR A FINE DAY

THE MAN WHO WAS AFRAID: From the Sky Pilot's Log, 2CH Broadcast

Tim was a half-caste. There was nothing very unusual about that; there were plenty of half-castes here in Arnhem Land and on the cattle stations around. Most of the half-caste men found work amongst cattle; some were head stockmen and at least one was the manager of a large station. But Tim was different. Somehow he never seemed able to make the grade, and the stockmen on one side and the native warriors on the other, spoke of him with contempt.

The wet season had broken unusually early this year, and the rivers had come down in flood. Some of the cattle and horses had been trapped by the rising water, and the stockmen banded together with all the stockboys in an attempt to save what they could from the flood. It was dangerous work swimming horses through flooded creeks and trying to force terrified cattle to swim to higher ground. Joe brought Tim along with him, and most of the stockmen objected. George put the objection into words. "Look here, Joe, it's no use takin' Tim along with us. This is man's work and — well, Tim's got a yellow streak in him a mile wide. Better leave him behind with the women and children."

"Oh, give him a chance," Joe pleaded. "He means well, and he's anxious to help. I know he's no good in an emergency, of course."

"In this work," said George, "there is an emergency a dozen times a day. I tell you Tim's no good at all. Our lives depend on each other, and I wouldn't care to trust mine to Tim. He'd funk it if there was any danger — just clear off and leave a man in the lurch. What do you think, Jim?"

"That's true enough. Give me a decent full-blooded native any time, rather than a yellow cur like Tim. He's the biggest coward I've ever met. Even the blacks can't stand him."

"Hold on," Dick broke in, "you fellows don't know him as well as Joe and I do. I know that what you said is true enough, but I agree with Joe. Tim means well, and he's always anxious to help. Why not give him a chance?"

George shook his head. "No, I'm in charge of this plant, and I wouldn't risk the lives of any of my men by givin' Tim a job. He may mean all right, but he'll let us down, and someone may lose his life over it. Send him home."

"But," Joe insisted, "you know the saying about giving a dog a bad name. Well, I think it's like that with Tim. Everyone expects him to act like a coward and — well, he lives up to it — or

down to it."

"Look here, Joe," said George, "I've known Tim since he was a piccaninny. There ain't many half-castes like him. He's full of superstition, and he believes all the myths of the Aborigines, and fears their medicine-man and tries to keep their laws and customs. But he's also afraid of the white man's laws and religion. He'll attend Church, and then rush off to some corroboree to appease the spirits of the workers of magic. He's a con-contraption in terms."

"You mean a contradiction in terms," Joe suggested.

"That's what I said. And he's no manner of use to us this trip."

"He's not a bad cook," Dick remarked. "Why not put him on as a cook? He won't have to run no risks then, and it won't look so bad as sending him away."

Jim grinned. "It will be us that will run the risk — if he's cook."

"Dick's right," said Joe eagerly. "Tim is a good cook, and I'd sooner see him taken on as a cook than be sent back. It would be a bad thing for him to be knocked back again. I think he's really trying, and he can't help his unfortunate make-up."

"All right," George agreed. "Sign him on as cook. I suppose that if there's a storm and he hears a decent clap of thunder he'll go bush and we get no dinner, but that's about the worst that can happen. What a life!"

And that's how Tim became a member of the mustering party. Joe was pleased, as he had been trying to help Tim for some time, and now he would be able to keep him under his eye. He was not altogether surprised, one evening, when Tim came to see him.

"You good friend belonga me," said Tim. "All about say Tim no good for nothing. You always say, 'Poor Tim, give him a chance,' ain't it?"

"Of course I'm your friend, and I'm anxious to help you if I can. I talked the others into giving you this job. What do you want now?"

"Me want to become a Christian. Proper Christian, no gammon."

"You want to become a Christian, do you?" Joe asked somewhat doubtfully. "Well, I'm glad to hear it, but are you sure you're not just doing it to please me?"

"No more. Me savvy Christian way more better way."

"Well," said Joe, "do you understand what it

will mean if you become a Christian. You'll have to give up your old beliefs and customs. You'll have to keep away from the medicine man and take no notice of anything he says."

"Me savvy all right."

"You will have to believe there is only one God and that He loved you and gave His Son to die for you."

"Me believe all that."

"You have to believe that God will forgive all your sins if you truly turn to Him, and He will give you the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome temptation."

"Me savvy all right."

"You must follow God's way," continued Joe, "and keep His laws and not be afraid of anything."

"Suppose me fright little bit? Maybe can't help that."

"Even if you are afraid, you must never let it stop you from doing your duty, whatever it may cost."

"Me try, if God help 'im me."

"Well," said Joe, "kneel down with me and thank God for his love in forgiving you through Christ, and promise to serve Him."

And Tim went down on his knees with Joe beside the camp ovens and quart pots, and repeated a simple prayer.

When, later in the evening, Joe told the others about it they were sceptical about the reality of it. George said: "I don't reckon it means much to a fellow like Tim. Mind you, I ain't sayin' he don't mean well. But you know what a superstitious fellow he is, and you can't change a coward just by prayin' over him."

"I can't," said Joe, "but God can. Nothing is impossible to God."

"That sounds all right," Dick put in, "but how do you know that God comes into it at all? You can't be sure that God is going to help Tim, or change his whole life."

"Yes, I can," Joe insisted, "Christ said: 'Who-soever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' No one has ever truly sought God without finding Him."

"But Joe, you can't see into a native's mind," said George. "Tim might be only tryin' to please you or to create an impression. Maybe he thinks he's safe enough from the medicine man while he's with us, but it might be a different story when this trip is over and he goes back to the camp."

"Well, Joe, you've done your best," Dick put in. "If Tim slips back to what he always has been, don't take it too much to heart. I'm not

expecting much change in Tim; it'd take a miracle to change him. He's a born coward. Why, he's even afraid of the dark!"

"I admit it would take a miracle to change him, but I'm hoping that the miracle has been worked — not by me, but by God."

A few days later the men had a wild mob of frightened cattle in hand. They were very touchy, and a storm was brewing. George had all the men riding round, trying to steady them. He gave final instructions: "Now, you fellows, get onto the job. When the storm breaks there's likely to be a stampede. Keep ridin' round, and don't forget to sing all the time."

"Did you say to **sing**?" Dick asked. "What's the idea of that? If Joe and me start singing, it's likely to start a stampede. And you and Jim ain't no canaries, neither."

"If you can't sing, keep whistling or talking aloud. That way, the cattle know where you are, and they're not so likely to get a fright if you ride on 'em suddenly. If they do rush, try to head 'em off from the river, else we'll lose the lot. They go mad in a stampede."

Tim spoke up: "Maybe me help 'im you, George."

George laughed. "NO THANKS! You keep clear. You'll be safer in the camp. If they rush your way, you'd better climb a tree; they'd chop you into mince meat if you got in their road. Now, come one, you fellows, here comes the storm."

It was a dry storm, and there was no rain as yet, but the lightning was vivid, and each flash was followed by a clap of thunder. The cattle began milling, and it took the men all their time to keep them steady. Suddenly a fierce globe of ball lightning ran along the ground and burst near the cattle. It was too much for the already terrified animals. Like one beast, they stampeded in a frenzy, and George galloped round to head them off. They went quite close to the camp, and George chuckled as he saw Tim climbing the highest tree he could find.

Next minute there was a yell from Jim. George's horse had put its foot into a hole and crashed to the ground, pinning George beneath it. They were right in the path of the stampeding mob, and there was no time for Jim or the others to reach him. Jim covered his eyes. That is why he failed to see the figure of a man drop from a tree and throw himself over the injured stockman. It was all over in three minutes. The cattle had gone and the men gathered round a blood-stained mess on the ground.

"My heavens!" said Joe. "This is awful. Poor

old George! What a mess!"

George's voice came from underneath. "Never mind sayin' 'Poor old George!' I'm all right except for a broken leg. This mess on top of me is all that is left of Tim. Poor devil, he's chopped to pieces. He shielded me with his own body, and — God forgive me — I called him a coward."

When the stockmen buried Tim, George, his leg in splints, insisted on being present. And there was never a white man who was paid greater respect than the half-caste, Tim, the man who was afraid — and yet acted bravely. On the block of sandstone that was erected at the head of the grave, Joe scratched in his crude lettering a verse from the 14th Chapter of the Revelation: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

SALE OF WORK: The Spring Sale of Work is set down for 30th October, 1971, and we will be grateful if our supporters will pray for a fine day, as so much depends on the weather in an outdoor function. Gifts for the various stalls should be brought out to the Mission Farm or railed to Parramatta Railway Station as early as possible. Over a number of years there has been a tendency for the Sale to commence earlier in the morning and to finish earlier in the afternoon. For this reason the time for the Public Meeting has been altered to commence at 1.30 p.m. instead of 2.30 p.m. This was tried out at the Autumn Sale and proved satisfactory.

The Marella children will be singing at the Public Meeting but we have lost most of our older girls with strong voices and the smaller children are not able to take their place adequately. Nevertheless most of our friends are interested to see the dark children as they line up on the platform, or mix with the crowds. We would also value your prayers for these children; they have many problems to face and they have started life with a handicap, in many cases.

THE NEW CHILDREN: From time to time new children are admitted to Marella. We are sometimes asked if we bring them down from the country, but we ourselves never do this. Some of those here at present are State Wards that were brought to the city by the former Aborigines Welfare Board; but most of the children that come to us are from the crowded areas of the city. Not all have had unfortunate backgrounds or an unhappy life at home; it sometimes happens that a mother is unable to cope for a few weeks owing to illness or financial difficulties and

we are asked to take the children for this period. But some of the children admitted have shown the effects of neglect and malnutrition.

Some children who have suffered from malnutrition in infancy never seem to get over it fully. They eat as much as they can but never seem to be satisfied. Often there is food left on their tables and they hide crusts away in case they get hungry later on. We are always discovering these hoards of food planted by children whose "eyes are bigger than their stomachs".

The children at Marella cannot be taken as a cross section of the Aboriginal population in Australia. It must be remembered that though there are some backward children at Marella there are dozens of normal Aboriginal children in the community. Often children have been sent to us because they could not fit in as adopted children or because they are mentally backward or handicapped. But we believe that they are all children for whom Christ died and we want to make sure they are given every possible chance in life. Several of those who are here now will never be able to graduate from a sheltered workshop or some similar occupation. Because of this they need all the love, the understanding and the help that we can give them.

CIVILISATION: For one like the "Sky Pilot," who has lived and worked amongst the Aborigines in Anrhem Land while they still lived their tribal life, it is often a matter of regret to realise that civilisation came too quickly. The Aborigines of yesterday were a proud, free people who were happy and able to secure all their needs from the country they loved and in which they roamed freely, having respect only to tribal boundaries. They were fond of fun and laughter; they were shy and yet to strangers they showed themselves to be nature's gentlefolk. Civilisation has ruined them rather than uplifted them. They were quick to copy all the vices of the white man and to throw off responsibility.

They no longer obeyed the old men of their Council or observed the restrictions imposed on them by their old guides in the tribe. And in many cases the old men refused to pass on to an unappreciative younger generation the laws and myths that were so sacred to them. Diseases caught from the white men decimated them and all the "advantages" of civilisation did not make up for the lost birthright of their tribal heritage.

PRAYER MEETINGS: The Monthly Prayer Meetings at Marella continue on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 8 p.m. These have been a time of great blessing and many wonderful answers to prayer have been received.