

TRAPPED BY THE FLOODS

A Little Boy's Story



Many stories have been written about our recent floods . . . stories of courage and sacrifice . . . stories of fear, and heroism, and destruction . . . stories of the hopes and ambitions of those people who have suffered, and yet still fight on.



Dawn recently had a letter from fourteen-year old Jimmy Quinlan, of Kinchela, and this youngster, in his own simple way, tells a graphic story of how the floods came to Kinchela.

Jimmy said, "It rained very heavily here about the middle of August and flood warnings went out to the people living in the Hunter and Macleay areas.

"We boys here were just settled down, preparing to have a good night's rest when Mr. White came running down to tell us to pack all our belongings and get ready to leave.

"Some of us were very sleepy and didn't want to be awakened, but we packed our bundles, stripped our beds and packed our mattresses up high where they could not be reached by the expected floodwaters.

"The small boys moved out at 11 o'clock that night," said Jimmy, "but the older boys waited until morning. Believe me, it was a hard job. Mr. White rang for a bus to come and get us, and soon it was packed to the roof with bundles and all shapes and sizes and a lot of very drowsy boys who had not been to sleep all night."

Jimmy went on to tell how Les Darcy and Fred Ward had helped move the cattle out into another paddock near the entrance of the Macleay River, and how the boys left the school.

"We were taken to South West Rocks," said Jimmy, "and as it was my first trip there I made the most of it. The South West Rocks people put on a concert for us, and soon we were all joining in, eager to forget the ever-threatening flood.

"We returned to the Home about three days later and were delighted to find the floodwaters had not invaded the buildings, because we had so many other cleaning-up jobs to do.

"We were so tired after our first day back that Mr. White let us all sleep in the next morning."

And that was Jimmy's letter. A simple letter from a little schoolboy who had found himself and his forty mates suddenly in the path of a raging flood.

Can you imagine just how those youngsters, suddenly awakened from their sleep, must have felt that night?

Some months ago we published an appeal for pen friends, not only in our own State, but also abroad in other parts of the world.

Already many aboriginal people are writing to and receiving letters from these people, making new friends and improving their knowledge and at the same time telling others about themselves.

Here are some more of our readers who are seeking pen friends: Miss Janet Fernando (16), King Street, Coonamble, wants pen friends of both sexes, and would like photographs of her new pen friends, Miss Maisie Fernando (14), King Street, Coonamble, Janet's sister, also wants pen friends about her own age, Miss Isa Randall (14), Ashby Aboriginal Station, Maclean, wants to hear from boys and girls of her own age.



In this picture are some of the pupils of the Aboriginal School (Nulla Creek) on the Bellbrook Station. The two cups and the shield were won by the school at the Inter-district Sports at Willawarrin, where ten schools competed.

They are—

Back row.—Joe Quinlan, Wm. Scott, Jim Quinlan, Ron Cohen, Barry Cohen, Rod Cohen, Mr. G. Frusher (Assistant Teacher), Mr. L. Ellem (Headmaster).

Second row.—Greta Cohen, Claudette Quinlan, Dawn Little, Grace Murray, Joan Dunn, Betty Holten, Margaret Kelly, Julia Holten.

Third row.—Maureen Holten, Judith Holten, Millie Cook, Jessie Quinlan, Heather Thompson, Clarice Cohen, Esther Scott, Aileen Scott.

Front row.—Warren Ellem, Gregory Thompson, Vic Cohen, Alex Thompson, Geoff Holten, Ralph Quinlan, Neville Cohen, Chas Murray, Dallas Thompson, Greg Ellem.