

(continued.)

### Wife for Rum.

On one occasion a man sold his wife for four gallons of rum, and many men and women sold their souls for a few pints of rum. The rum traffic became such a serious menace that Governor King realised that something would have to be done to prevent rum taking complete charge of the colony's economy. Strange as it may seem, Governor King encouraged the manufacture and sale of beer in the hope that beer would reduce the consumption of rum, and thus lessen its commercial value.

Breweries were established on the Parramatta River and at other places near Sydney. Perhaps the best known of the early breweries was that of James Squire at Kissing Point on the Parramatta River. Evidently his beer was not of very high quality. In an old Parramatta cemetery there is a tombstone which bears this inscription :

"Ye who wish to lie here,  
Drink Squires' beer."

The early settlers did not readily take to Australian beer and still preferred rum if they could get it.

It was Governor Bligh who did a lot towards checking the traffic in rum, indeed it was his activities in this respect that really led to the often quoted rebellion.

Governor Macquarie tried in some way to check the traffic in rum, but even he used rum to pay for a number of public works. It is on record that he bought a house for 200 gallons of rum.

### Into the Harbour.

It was a man named Tawell, a member of the Society of Friends, who made a spectacular move to deal with the rum business. With as much publicity as he could command he ordered 600 gallons of rum ceremoniously emptied into Port Jackson. The event, talked about for many years after, took place on March 9, 1836. Many tried to get a taste of the rum before it went into the harbour. Others claimed that the fish were so drunk that they could be caught without bait.

In more recent years hundreds of gallons of rum poured into the river at Bundaberg (Q.), but not deliberately. Fire broke out in the distillery and huge quantities of rum poured into the river. It floated over the surface of the water and burned with a brilliant blue flame. For some time afterward stupefied fish were caught about the distillery, and many dead fish were washed up on the river banks.

Rum played a big part in the early development of Australia. In the purely historical sense of adequately remembering the railway centenary it would have been interesting to see rum sold at a penny a bucket when the N.S.W. railways celebrated their big event last year. There probably would be many buyers, even at a £1 a bucket, if some sort of souvenir utensil, similar to the novelty of 100 years ago, was made for the occasion.

# Burra Bee Dee has Proud Record

## No Colour Line Drawn Here!

During the past year, thirteen people left the Station, to live permanently in the general community. Every possible encouragement was given by the Station staff in this regard, as those who moved have all the characteristics of good citizens and are unlikely to need further assistance from the Board in the future.

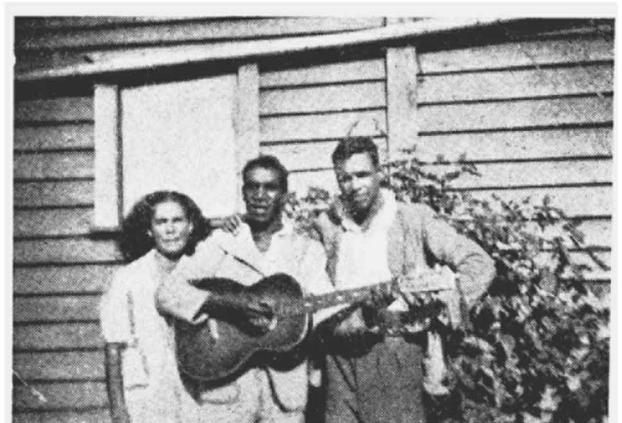
Improvements have been effected to the aborigines' dwellings by way of improved water reticulation and fencing.

A Progress Association was formed on the Station during the year and it held a number of socials and dances.

One Station lad is boarded by a white family in Coonabarabran during the week, so that he avoids the six mile bicycle ride in the bitter cold of early morning during the winter. This indicates the feeling of friendliness apparent among the better elements in this town and must set a splendid example, that might well be followed by other towns not so understanding.

There has been an improvement in the scholastic attainments of the Station children, since they have been attending the Coonabarabran Schools. In one case, a Station lad secured the prize as the most improved boy in his class. They are admitted to the recently opened swimming baths, where no colour bar is raised. This in particular is a very pleasing feature, particularly in view of the unfair and unchristian attitude adopted by some Councils.

Again this year, the residents have the proud record that no Police or Court action has been necessary, because of any misdemeanour by a resident while on the Station.



Don Ritchie, Bessie Ferguson and Alfred Mercy, of Coraki, make a very musical trio.