

19/11/95 (6) 10f2

14/9/95 England  
Notes E. B. Cotton

27/4/96  
Ans 10/6/96

Notes sent April or May '96

32 Prescott Street  
Halifax  
3/VIII/95

My dear Sir

I am extremely obliged to you for yours of 15 June last. I was just beginning to get a little anxious but not much as having been much delayed in the completion of my book on the natives of Sarawak (Borneo) I have had no time to think about anything but getting this book off my hands. Your kind letter & the papers have nevertheless relieved me.

James B. Walker Esq. Hobart

Regarding the Bibliography I will bear your remarks in mind & carry them out if possible.

The notes on the writers are useful & it is as well to have such knowledge in weighing evidence.

This is a fair collection of portraits in the British Museum, but it belongs to Mr Dranks. He is however most generous in lending me his books &c. so I will make a point of looking <sup>up</sup> the collection.

The new information as to the method of procuring fire is of course very valuable - you did well to secure it. Mr Cotton's ~~of~~ notes will also be welcome.

The only museum in Europe which possesses any hair of Tasmanians is the Musée of the Ecole d'Anthropologie, Jardin des Plantes, Paris.

The few I had examined & reported in my book are from there. They were handed to the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford & — lost! Can you therefore send me a small portion of the lock you possess — I will then hand it over to the British Museum when examined.

The stone implements you sent me have been ~~sent~~ deposited at the British Museum until I have had them drawn for the new book,

they are then to become the property of the Museum. They are I think too valuable to be risked in a private house.

Regarding Fanny Cochrane I do not think she is a pure aborigine, but as the hair has not yet been examined & as my examination has only been cursory I would rather this opinion were not made public until I have fully satisfied myself on the point.

In Prof. Ratzel's *Völkerkunde* (Hist. of Mankind) second edition there is a very short chapter on the aborigines of Tasmania. Among

some of his statements which I do not think correct are:

1. The existence of a Melanesian form of head stool — I wrote him for his authority & he gave me Labillardiere II, 43. I think it is a mistake. Have you ever heard of it?
2. Stone axes. I think this matter has now been decided that the Tasmanians did not fix the stone on to a haft or handle.
3. Mummifying dead persons. He tells me he is unable to quote his authority & says he probably mixed up tree burial with it.

4. He says they eat fish. In my book p. 114 it states distinctly that the natives did not eat fish — am I correct?
5. He says besides the canoes rafts &c mentioned by me that they possessed coracles covered with skins! I can find no authority for this. Have you ever heard of it.
6. He says they swim & dive well. All my authorities say quite the contrary. Labillardiere 47

If you can throw any light on the above points it will materially assist me.

In asking old colonists about the



7

doings of the aborigines may I suggest  
that it would help to get at facts  
if the questions are only put in a gen-  
eral way; my experience is that old  
people especially the poorly educated  
are so apt to give assent to all  
that is asked them - it saves think-  
ing - which is a difficulty to them.

I hope I may hear again from  
you before long.

Yours very truly  
Hy Liny Roth

James B. Walker Esq, Hobart

R. 23/4/97

32 Prescott Street  
Halifax  
England  
12/III/97

Dear Mr Walter

I am very glad to hear from you under date of 30th January last.

With this mail I am sending you Sir Wm Flowers book in the Preface of which you will find such instructions as any one with a surgical education will be able to understand & to follow.

The news about your having

2

succeeded in obtaining the assistance of Mr R. M. Johnston is good news, & will no doubt lead to results.

If all goes well I would much like to get my book ready for the press by the end of the present year; all, however, depends very much upon how much time you can spare on my behalf. I am afraid with you it is very much as with myself — a very little leisure after a long day's work.

Mr Beattie has just sent me a letter from a Wesleyan minister describing Mrs. Smith's char-

-acteristics but nothing is said  
about her physique & that is  
very important. I am writing  
him by this mail.

I think I ~~to~~ exhausted my  
questions in my last communica-  
tion & so will not trouble you  
with any this occasion.

Yours very truly  
Jy Ling Roth

James B. Walker Esq<sup>re</sup>

P.S. In a previous letter you  
mentioned you possessed a few  
hairs of a Tas. aborigine; can  
you send me 2 or 3 of these?