Hobart, 1/7/1873

Respected Friend,

Dr. Agarreis,

Having received a copy of the queries proposed by Brough Smyth of Victoria respecting the flint instruments used by the Aborigines of Tasmania I have endeavoured to gain information on the subject, as from personal observation I could say only that I had never known that in their attacks on the Europeans they had left behind on their flight being refused any other weapons except their spears and waddies, two instruments had ever been found at their encampments— but to be certain I have consulted an old inhabitant of the Oyster Bay District— John Radford, his wife a daughter of the late Thomas Burton of Mayfield.
who came early into this district up a sandstone there and on men who had many opportunities of observing the manners and customs of the Bayside tribe. This tribe traversed the East Coast from East Bay Rock northward as far as Palanwath or George's River where they would come upon the boundaries of the Break o' Day tribe, it is not probable they went farther North if even so far.

S. Radford came here in 1818, the Natives were so friendly although looked upon with suspicion by the settlers. About this time a man was left by a part of the settlers in charge of their provisions stationed at a place named Sandstone Bay from their having got there.

They returned from sealing at the White Rock they found the man had been murdered and his goods taken away. A large number of articles destroyed. It was some time after that Mosquito joined the tribe and became their chief. Mosquito and Bulldog were two friendly natives transported to Norfolk Island for the murder of a white woman. Bulldog died at Norfolk Island. Mosquito was sent to Hobart Town, he remained in the "Tonk" there some time and was afterwards permitted to go off the settlers at Sorewater, here he became acquainted with some of the Aboriginal women who wandered about the Sorewater settlement and by them he was led to join the Bayside Bay tribe. Mosquito travelled with this tribe as their chief and...
on one occasion the whole Tribe arrived at Sydney Bay that there being then a Station belonging to one of the Galeshouse's and in charge of John Radford, they encamped on the north side of a Creek of Shoal to the Hut on a Wednesday night and remained Thursday & Friday, making their Spears & Waddies-Mosquito had picked up a Tin Pot and asked Radford if it was his saying he found it at a place near Major Fidda's Bluff. Radford recognized the Pot gave Mosquito from that were with him some Damper Mosquito told Radford that he had promised Colonel Suttol that he would tame the Natives and prevent them from annoying the Settlers, and that the Governor had issued an Order that the Settlers should not molest the Natives. The whole Tribe about seventy in number men women & children whilst remaining here were engaged in making the Spears & Waddies and being apparently apparently friendly Radford had the opportunity of observing their manners and customs at this time in particular To form their Spears & Waddies of Black Flint was broken by any other tool at hand and the piece with the sharpest edge selected where with they shaped the Spear I noticed it, alternately scraping & hardening it in the fire until a very hard sharp point was produced, and if the piece of flint lost its edge it was if large enough again broken at another piece selected. The Spears were of different lengths proportionate to the prowess of the individuals who wielded them. The longest Spear found was one belonging to Ballavoy and the chief who succeeded Mosquito measured eighteen feet others 14 to 16 feet. The Waddies under went a similar process to the Spears and
and in cutting down the same tall straight stems of their spears or cutting off the pieces of the oak for their waddies they could have no other instrument than the pieces of wood if the spear was bent in was redosed on the fire and straightened out or the knees Saturday morning arrived with the attack upon their friend Radford his two companions commenced as it described in Rolvick's Book on the Aborigines and for Wh Mosquito suffered death. There were no other weapons but spears & waddies in the hands of the Aborigines at this time with the exception of a club used by Mosquito, formed out of a young Macabah their he by the root of the tree with a portion of its horizontal root left attached to the bulk, some thing like an axx, it was a formidable weapon that would have knocked down an ox.

From Grundy's Bay Station the Tribe next appeared at the Beaufort
Mayfield Mayfield

Mayfield, the alarm being given by Mrs. Radford their sister before the persons on the premises could be called into the house for safety, the Aborigines had sneaked into it, stolen everything they could take away even to the only gun on the premises. Fortunately an old pistol being had been placed under a bed to keep it from damp as it was occasionally used to obtaining fire, with this pistol they were kept off by my wife being in the night procured from Waterloo Point, in this case after they were driven from their camping ground that left every thing behind there no weapon but their spears & waddies were found they did not even make use of the knife, and as for guns it was their custom to hide them in some concealed place.
One taken from Mayfield was four many years afterwards being laid ba by the bush fires; the barrels only remaining and the knives were left in the Hut. It seems that the women had a practice of shaving each other heads with very small & sharp pieces of flint when these pieces were blunt they would rub the ones together as if to sharpen them—a ring of hair was left around the crown of the head as an ornament.

The Skin disease which was so prevalent particularly amongst the children was treated by the mothers placing the child across her knees, and with a blunt flat file, something similar to the end of a table knife, filing out the purulent matter & rubbing the parts with the marrow from the knee bone of the Kangaroo.

The mothers carried their Babies under their arms wraapt up in an Opossum or Kangaroo skin, the flesh side outwards it being scraped clean & smooth as they possessed no implements. The skins must have been taken off with the pieces of flint. The usual practice of cooking their food was by the Aborigines was to throw the Animal on the fire which burnt off the hair on one side, the carcass was then turned. The charred upper side scraped with a piece of flint when these finished an animal as an Opossum it was hits by the head thrust & the flesh torn off with their teeth until nothing more was left but the bones which were thrown to the Dogs. I do not know how the women made the holes in the little shells that were strung on Sinew to form Necklaces as they removed the outer surface of the shell by the aid of the fire to make it white & easily peeled with a stick hardened pointed in a similar manner to their Spears. When the Women were friendly with the Settlers they would make little rush baskets to give them to the children. The Baptor Bay tribe.
The tribe appear to have had great dislike to be3 transferred without carrying any articles except their spears and shields with the exception of their care in carrying fire from place to place. Some of the people were always entrusted to carry the preserved lighted pieces of bark used for this purpose. Unaccustomed to clothing they would even throw away blankets that had been given them, it is therefore unlikely that they would carry flints with them, particularly as they well knew where to obtain fresh ones. The queries must therefore be answered as applying to the Oyster Bay Tribe of Aborigines by saying that they never used any made implements, trusting only to the pieces of flint they would pick up in their wanderings through the district.

It shall be happy to supply any other information required.

Yours faithfully,

George Story