



WILEY

19. Notes on the Weapons of the Dalleburra Tribe, Queensland, Lately Presented to the British Museum by Mr. Robert Christison.

Authors(s): Robert Christison and J. Edge-Partington

Source: *Man*, Vol. 3 (1903), pp. 37-38

Published by: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2839962>

Accessed: 27-03-2016 05:12 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Man*

<http://www.jstor.org>

low, owing to the remarkable position of the nasal spine. The skull is microcephalic as regards capacity.

It presents some remarkable resemblances to a cranium in the Cambridge Ethnological Museum, which I described in MAN (1902. 28): the shortness of the cranium and the general rotundity are alike in each, as is also the small figure of the cranial capacity. Where the Semang skull differs from the Andamanese skull just mentioned, it resembles a skull described by Turner as that of a Sakai, and figured in a communication to the Royal Society of Edinburgh (Vol. XL., Part I., No. 6). The Sakai skull agrees with the subject of the present account in the possession of prominent brow-ridges, and consequently flattened orbits, the nasal bones and aperture have similar characters in each.

MEASUREMENTS OF SKULL.		
CRANIAL PORTION :	FACIAL PORTION :	INDICES :
Maximum length - 167	Basi-nasal length - 96	Cephalic - - - 85
Maximum breadth - 132	Basi-alveolar length 96 +	Altitudinal - - - 82·6
Basi-bregmatic height - 128	Nasi-alveolar length 62 +	Alveolar - - - 100
Horizontal circumfer-	Bi-zygomatic breadth 131	Facial (Kollmann's) 47·2
ence - - - 482	Orbital height - - 34	Orbital - - - 82·9
	Orbital width - 41	Nasal - - - 44·8*
	Nasal height - - 48	
	Nasal width - - 21·5	
	Capacity:—two determina-	
	tions gave 1,245 c.c. and	
	1,250 c.c. respectively ;	
	1,245 c.c. is the more	
	correct figure.	

But Turner's "Sakai" is dolichocephalic, so that the correspondence of type is not far-reaching. No very close resemblance can be traced between the Semang here described and the skull from Pahang described by Turner or the "Pangghan" described by Virchow (see comparisons in "Some Anthropological Results of the Skeat Expedition to the Malay Peninsula," *Journ. Anthr. Inst.*, Vol. XXXII., 1902, p. 142).

To sum up, then, this specimen of a Semang skull is to be regarded as an example of the short type of Negrito skull, which is thus shown to be variable in the essential characteristic of the relation of length to breadth. It still remains to be proved whether the long or the short skull is the original Negrito one, and at the present day there are seemingly to be found Negrito skulls in the Malay Peninsula, which by their form link up the long and the short extreme types.

W. L. H. DUCKWORTH.

Australia.

Christison : Edge-Partington.

Notes on the Weapons of the Dalleburra Tribe, Queensland, 19
lately presented to the British Museum by Mr. Robert Christison.
Communicated by J. Edge-Partington.

Mr. Robert Christison, for many years a resident in Queensland, has lately presented to the British Museum a small but very interesting collection of weapons and other specimens collected by him from the natives of the Dalleburra tribe.

The chief camping ground of the tribe is round the water hole, Narkool, on Tower Hill Creek (lat. 20° S., long. 144° E.), the source of the Thomson river.

Mr. Christison is evidently a man of great observation and his notes are of considerable interest, and from them I have made the following extracts :—

The weapons of the Dalleburras are nearly all made of some kind of *gydia* wood, which is one of the hardest of Australian woods, and of a very close grain. It has also the peculiarity of having two distinct colours, yellow on the outside and a deep

* Falsified by great development of nasal spine,
[37]

nut-brown towards the centre. This they turn to artistic use, for in the manufacture of their mace-headed clubs (timmy-timmy) they choose a piece of wood of such a thickness that when carved will leave the head cut like a cameo in yellow, while the shaft is dark brown. These clubs are made in two sizes for single or double combat, and their heads are often whitened with a mixture of ground tale and water which they call kadilla. The shafts are stained red with a mixture of red sandstone, the gum of the red-wood tree, and red clay or black with charcoal, after which they are polished by rubbing them with emu oil.

The species of gydia used for clubs are those known by the names of wooderry and tingoaricha (the hardest wood in the Mitchell district).

In the manufacture of their spears, a native chooses a suitable tree, either a parenya, or more especially a karrbubulla (both specimens of gydia), whose branches spring high up on the trunk. He first makes a deep notch low down and another 15 to 20 feet higher up the trunk, according to the length of spear required. After a few blows on the surface a block is dislodged, from which the spears are split by means of wedges. The wood of the gydia is of a poisonous nature if a splinter is allowed to remain in the wound.

The wommera, which they call koolbinny, consists of a straight shaft of wooderry wood with a wooden peg attached to one end with kangaroo-tail sinews by means of holes pierced for the purpose and fixed by gum extracted from the beefwood tree (pandy) mixed with beeswax. The spear thrown by the wommera is formed of two pieces, the fore shaft is a reed to which is fixed a hollow stem of the grass tree obtained from the Mungooburras, a neighbouring tribe, in exchange for the hard wood of the gydia. This type of spear could be thrown, by means of the wommera, a distance of 300 yards, whereas the heavier wooden spear (moorcha) used in warfare was only thrown by hand, and then only accurately to a distance of 120 yards. Both types of spear were armed with barbs either cut from the solid or set with pieces of wood, fish bones, or the small bones of the kangaroo sharpened for the purpose and lashed on with kangaroo-tail sinews.

Their boomerangs are made of parenya wood and are of two distinct types. The one of lighter make, called a yarro-andy (to go and to return), and of more delicate curves, was used in warfare and for killing birds on the wing. This type, if it missed the object aimed at, returned to the thrower. This could be thrown a distance of over 400 yards. The other type was heavier, larger, and straighter, and was used for killing ground game, it was thrown straight at its prey, but not accurately beyond a distance of 100 yards. If it missed the object it did not return to the thrower.

In the manufacture of the boomerang, the most expert could never tell whether or not the one he was making would be successful or not, until it was carved in the rough and he frequently had to throw away one after another before he succeeded in developing the necessary curve; when this is obtained he continued working at it until nearly finished, when he tested it in the open. If the flight was unsatisfactory he heated the faulty part in the hot ashes to make it pliable; he then held it between his teeth while his hands gave it the necessary twist. This he continued until he was quite satisfied. The only tools used were a stone tomahawk and pieces of quartz.

The stones for these tomahawks were obtained from the Mungooburras of the Cape River ranges, as were also the pieces of quartz. From the latter stone they also made daggers (bibboo) by attaching a suitable piece, obtained by chipping, to a hilt of wood about 3 inches long with "pandy" gum; this they covered with a strip of kangaroo or opossum fur bound tightly round it, fastened with sinew or string made from the fibre of the yorring-er (native flax) or the bark of the kurrajong tree. These daggers were difficult to make and were kept entirely for warfare. In close conflict a black fought with a bibboo in each hand with a reserve one between his teeth.