

## DEATH OF JUPITER MOSMAN

### Link With Early Charters Towers

The death has occurred at "Eventide," Charters Towers, of Jupiter Mosman, who was a member of the little party which discovered gold at Charters Towers in 1872.

According to the records of the Protector of Aborigines Department, Jupiter was born "about 1861," which would make him 84 years of age. He was one of the only two men remaining alive who were on Charters Towers in its beginnings, the other being Sir Thomas Buckland, who was then an assayer at Millicent, and is now in his 96th year.

Of recent years, Jupiter Mosman resided at Eventide Home, this privilege being accorded him by the Government because of his historic association with the Towers. It is pleasing to think that the last years of this fine old man were spent in such comfortable surroundings, and that he had been so well cared for.

Born in the centre of North Western Queensland, Jupiter came as a small boy into Kynuna Station. That was over 80 years ago, but even then white men were pushing out into the West and the blacks were "coming in."

In the late sixties, Hugh Mosman, his brother Adam, and Mr. Fraser, either took up or owned, Tarbrax, and while on a visit to Kynuna, Mr. Mosman, taking a fancy to the dark eyed, smart little strapping, "acquired" him and took the boy back to Tarbrax.

Gold was being won at Ravenswood at that time, there was gold, too, at the Broughton, the Cape, and other places.

Fired with adventure, Tarbrax was sold to Mr. McIntyre, of Dalgonally, and, accompanied by the little black boy, the party made for the Cape Digging. The black boy was strapped behind Hugh Mosman. No one knew or bothered about the boy's tribal name, but as his eyes were large luminous, and as limpid as a planet, he was christened, or dubbed "Jupiter," and as he "belonged" to Hugh Mosman, that surname, of course, followed.

Eventually the party arrived at Ravenswood, and while there, Mr. Mosman grew to know George Clarke, the intrepid prospector, and with him and Fraser, decided on a prospecting tour. Jupiter, of course, accompanied them. So it came to pass, that the little black boy, a child of the stone axe period, the euphony of whose soft syllabled name had been lost in the centre of Australia, became one of a band which made the historic find of Charters Towers, one of the premier goldfields of Australia, a field from which was won over 6,000,000oz. of gold, and the first auriferous stone thereon was found by Jupiter.

That was in 1871. The small party, on leaving Ravenswood, headed towards the Seventy Mile Pinnacle at Mount Leyshon, working wide of what is now Charters Towers; but eventually it was decided to swing back, the high bluff, now known as Towers Hill, being selected as a landmark. It was easily seen, and the party made its leisurely way towards it, naturally deviating towards the valley, which separated the hills. Casually they rode through the "Gap", camping on a creek on what is now the town side of the hill. The little black boy, who was never allowed out of sight of his master, while cruising around, was attracted by a stone, in which his microscopic eyes had seen "colour." Picking up the stone, he

around, was attracted by a stone, in which his microscopic eyes had seen "colour." Picking up the stone, he brought it to the prospectors. No doubt about it, and what was more, there were tons of gold-bearing brownstone quartz covering the surface. A claim was immediately pegged out, and named "The North Australian," and so rich was the quartz on top, that over 16000 was won from stone picked up on the surface of that claim.

The prospectors were excited, but they stayed on, and worked the show until January of the next year. Riding into Ravenswood eventually, they reported the find, which was registered on January 2, 1872. The find caused a rush, and, for once, the rush was justified. Leases were pegged and worked, and the field grew in importance, until it was a lodestone to mining men from the four corners of the world.

Hugh Mosman and his mates made much money, but Clarke, once the quest was over, was not happy. He had the wanderlust, the insatiable desire of the old-time prospector, to keep searching. He was killed by the natives in New Guinea, where this desire had drawn him. Fraser retired, and lived in Sydney, but he did not live long. Hugh Mosman stayed on, but having lost an arm while using explosives, departed to Sydney. He took Jupiter with him. He was then a lad about nine or ten years old. The boy was sent to school at Newtown, and afterwards to Lyndhurst College, Sydney, where he was baptised as a Roman Catholic and christened John Joseph.

It is not known how he progressed as a scholar, but he learnt to play good cricket, and football, and to run well, but these accomplishments come naturally to our blacks. They have splendid eyes, are quick to move, very active and, for their weight, strong. Jupiter became a sound medium to fast bowler, a good field, and quite a sound bat. He had length, fine reach, and was a well-balanced athletic youngster. When he returned to Charters Towers he used to play cricket with "The Queens," under the captaincy of Jimmy Carroll, and he played football with "The Imps." Jupiter could run, too, but was not a Charlie Samuels. He could run 100 yards in 11sec, which was about his best. Naturally, as a pupil of Hugh Mosman's, he became a horseman. Most of his early youth was spent on horseback, and as Mr. Mosman was one of the old school, who liked to own steeplechase horses and ride them himself, Jupiter learnt much about racing and good class hacks. In the old days, Mr. Mosman seldom opened a gate into his paddock, but jumped his horses in and out, and even when he lost his arm, he would still ride a horse at a fence, and Jupiter followed the lead. He had to.

On completion of his schooling, Jupiter was brought back to Charters Towers. He was happy in that, for there there is no stronger urge in life, than that which calls a black back to his own country. When Mr. Mosman decided to leave Charters Towers, Jupiter took to the bush, going with cattle from Beaudesert near Kynuna, to Wodonga (Vic.) The cattle were owned by Messrs. Coillins and White, and a nephew of Mr. Mosman's was in charge. They took six months and five days on that trip, and never lost a hoof. Then Jupiter worked on Lolworth, on Dotswood, in Bourke and Munro's time, and used to ride the fine big chestnut horses sired by old Collector. He worked on Wombiana, and other places, prospecting whenever opportunity, and the money permitted. For some time he worked at Stockyard Creek with Solleux and Roberts. His heart was always in the search for gold, for, like Mr. Clarke, he had been infected with

always in the search for gold, for, like Mr. Clarke, he had been infected with the prospecting fever. He had "run over" all the Peninsula fields, and is credited with being the discoverer of several auriferous areas there.

Time, with its whitening hand, was overtaking Jupiter. He was growing old, too old to stand up to the rough work of stockman, or the exposure of a prospector's life. In his extremis he found friends in Charters Towers. A house was set aside for the old black at Eventide Home, among the old people who are cared for there. Jupiter was happy and content. "I have no complaints," he said soon after he went there. "It is beyond my dreams."



THE LATE JUPITER MOSMAN