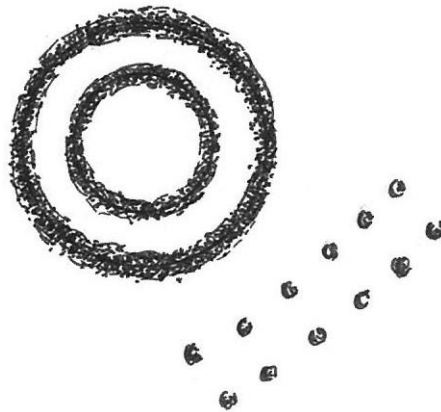


TASMANIA'S ABORIGINAL PALAEO ART



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"CONTENTS"

This work is a collection of papers each pertinent to the art produced over thousands of years by the Palaeo-Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

Their art had roots extending back to their original homeland "Africa", to what extent can only be wondered, but with obvious relationships that all foraging people have in common. I will not extend this work to cover such an ancient beginning, instead I will concentrate on the various expressions of art practiced in Tasmania that we know about. Obviously much has been lost.

Crafts such as necklace and basket making are not included being a part of another collection of papers, "Material Culture".

Before listing the papers contained in this composite work I would make a final remark. The art of the Tasmanian Palaeo - people is a unique part of the Australian Aboriginal complex collection of peoples. It seems to me that this is lost on some who include art styles, mainly from the Northern Territory, not akin to Tasmania but suggesting it is. The work may be Aboriginal but it is NOT Tasmanian!

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"Abbreviations Used"

The following list applies to all my works and are abbreviations used.

A.S.L.	Above sea level (the present).
B.C.E.	Before the Christian era (formerly just B.C.).
B.P.	Before the present (1950).
B.S.L.	Below sea level (the present).
C.	Circa = about E.g. C. 8,120 BP = About 8,120 before the present.
Cal.	Calibrated.
CR	Protected by "Copyright" and not to be reproduced etc for my publications.
C.14	Radio Carbon Dating E.g. C.14 9,120 \pm 200 B.P.
G.A.R.	George Augustus Robinson.
Is.	Island.
KM	Kilometres.
Kyg	Thousands of years ago. E.g. 10 kyg = ten thousand years ago.
L.G.M.	Last Glacial Maximum (C. 20 - 18,000 B.P.).
M	Metres e.g. 100 M.
P.G.M.	Post Glacial Maximum (C. 6 - 3,500 B.P.).
P.P.S.	Palawa Pleistocene Speakers.
S.L.	Sea level.
T.S.W.F.T.	Tidal Stone Wall Fish Traps.
YA	Years ago.
(12)	Reference - consult "References" in each work E.g. (12) = Friendly Mission.
(12:20/7/31)	As above but the date in that work.
(12:21)	As above but denotes the page number in a work.

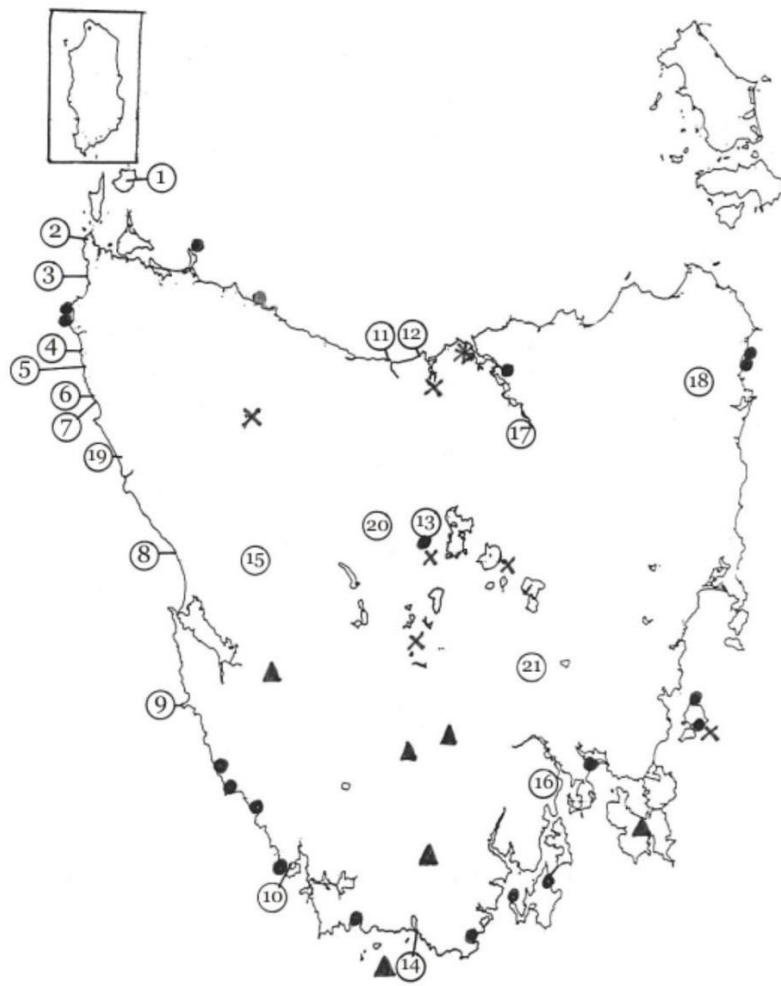


Fig 1

“ART SITES”
(On approximate areas).

- ①—②① Petroglyphs or supposed
- ▲ Cave Art.
- Rock Arrangements
- × Bark Art
- * Kelso “Bird Nests”

"ART"

Because of the sensitivity within sections of today's Tasmanian Aboriginal communities a repetitive theme of explanation does occur in many subjects pertinent to their ancestors, the Palaeo-Tasmanians as I refer to them. This theme is centred around the word "simple" when describing their material culture. The use of the word "simple" for the sake of political correctness and to avoid any unintentional insult or prejudice should be avoided.

Obviously I am sympathetic to such avoidance but I feel that perhaps a modified use of the word which has a totally different meaning yet explains the Palaeo-culture is the word "simplified".

I would explain the defining of it as;

"Simplified" Deliberate or evolutionary trends to utilise only
what is necessary to function and continue the culture
without elaborating the material culture,

or more briefly'

Suitable, no need to change.

However it must be pointed out that within their material culture and economics they made significant adjustments in response to environmental changes (90:9) but it is "art" - including some mention of "crafts" - that we are concerned with here.

The subject of "art" is extremely complex and is not one I intend to extensively discuss, nor do I have the knowledge, the purpose of these notes is to introduce the Palaeo-Tasmanians artistic creativity so important to their culture.

Regretfully Tasmania has only a few rock art sites, in 1977 we were told that less than twenty were known (221:226), now - 2012 - we have c. 20 petroglyph and c. 5 hand stencil/ochre painting sites but we do have the present oldest (Pleistocene) hand stencils in Australia. The lack of known sites may be contributed to by;

- 1) A lack of "renewing" the art due to a change in culture or since the extinguishing of their culture in recent times.
- 2) Older art could have been destroyed.
- 3) Older sites pre 6,500 when the sea level reached its present level, may have been lost due to inundation.

- 4) Tasmania is relatively small and much is either mountainous, deep river valleys or thick vegetation hindering modern researchers access to possible sites.
- 5) A culture change from rock art to bark painting - which is far less durable - may in some parts occurred, although no evidence of this exists.
- 6) The loss of exploitation of some of the south west river systems from at least about 15,000 to complete abandonment of general occupation c. 10,250 (218:225), and with no replacement of deep caverns that could be used for ceremonial purposes, a change in such activities may have deprived us of Archaeological evidence. No occupation material has been found in the painted caves (218:225), except for a small deposit of ochre and charcoal in a narrow chamber of an entrance to a cave (221:226).
- 7) While "rock paintings" are confined to caves, i.e. deep caverns or rock overhangs that have protected the art, it is "petroglyphs" that have survived in open and exposed areas. This, if interpreted as a distinction of the two arts, is misleading as possibly paintings, even as additional outlines of the engravings, would have lost all their evidence a long time ago. If exposed to the atmosphere.
- 8) Rock Art had a confined geographical tradition.

While most of the art it seems is in the west, especially petroglyphs, it is difficult to allocate regional art forms but a very rough, and I warn possible suggestive, zoning may be;

West: Circular petroglyphs	Concentration from Port Davey to Point Sorell.
	All coastal?
Heavy concentration of Petroglyphs.	Swandown Point to ("Preminghana") Mount Cameron West.
Complex cave gallery.	South of Macquarie Harbour.
Cave art - hand stencils.	Inland south west river systems.
East: Rock shelter - hand stencils.	Far Southern Midlands and Tasman Peninsula.
Complex rock arrangements.	Far Upper East Coast.
Cupules - Petroglyphs.	Far Upper East, inland from Coast.

The main art form was of motifs (repeated decorative designs or patterns) of an abstract (non-representative) nature such as, and prominently, circle compositions as well as lines of dots. Generally it was geometrical and symbolic. Circles, curved lines and series of cut-dots being repeated in body art - cicatrices.

However, we have ethno-evidence of figurative art on slabs of bark (see "Drawings - Bark Art") as well as rock art comprising bird-tracks, human feet even suggestion of human bodies (see "Petroglyphs").

Deep within caverns amongst the inland river system of the south west stencils are known. Other long lost examples existed in the southern area of the state (see "Rock Shelter - Cave Art").

This pigmented art of the south west has been dated to c. 20,000 B.P. (11:11) but other art is un-datable - at present - or suggestive of recent times. There is no doubt that the motifs, mainly circles and lineal dot or markings were being made in the last days of the culture (12:16/12/1831).

While we can allot the term "art" to a number of practices within their culture such as "petroglyphs", "cave art", "rock arrangements", "bark art (drawings)" and "cicatrication (body scarring)" we have problem in so suggesting they had "architecture" although on the West Coast and certain inhospitable areas they did erect substantial huts, even groups of them, villages. Additionally we have limited knowledge of what seem to have been ritual constructions.

"Sculpture" or should I say "wood carving" seems to have existed in a very crude and confused way "_____ cut the trees with stone to make a large porcupine" (12:12/6/1834). What does this mean?

Some arts are better referred to as "crafts" e.g. personal adornments like necklaces, baskets and the treatment of relics of loved ones for charms.

Some artefacts in some respects suggest artistic appreciations and is such an extensive subject is only here mentioned.

Rock, or stone, arrangements have in some areas such as the Upper East Coast been preserved but regrettably even those are under severe pressure from enterprises who are mining the stranded beach material. This subject of arrangements comprises what can be termed

- 1) Stone features of an unknown use and
- 2) Tidal Stone Wall Fish Traps (TSWFT).

Research by S.B. Cane (338) on 1). stone features has clarified in many instances which are either Aboriginal, non Aboriginal or either being possibilities. Trying to establish age for stone arrangements is extremely difficult. Cane did not include Tidal Stone Wall Fish-Traps in his research.

As regards 2). TSWFT, I have done extensive research and it is my belief that they are more than likely not Aboriginal. Their principle distribution is from near Rocky Cape to Point Sorell with a large concentration in Port Dalrymple. A few odd and isolated traps exist in other coastal Tasmanian areas.

My principle work is held at the Queen Victoria Museum and Launceston Library as well as the Tasmanian Museum and Library in Hobart. (B45).

Rock, or stone arrangements, (but excluding fish traps because they are economic considerations not artistic and as explained there is more than a good possibility they are European not Aboriginal), exist on the Central Plateau and their possible age has been suggested, but the real connection is on the Upper East Coast at the Bay of Fires. These unique constructions must be within the present sea level being amongst stranded rock and sand deposits just above high tide. A maximum age is suggestive of 6,000 B.P. (107). A linear (pathway?) arrangement at the Bay of Fires has yielded a date of c. 750 B.P. (88:174). The time periods re: the Upper Western Coastal petroglyphs could apply to these stone arrangements.

The following simplified list shows the different art forms and although it includes "crafts" (personal adornments, stone artefacts and just "crafts") I have excluded them from this collection of papers termed "Tasmania's Palaeo-Arts". Architecture is a general term that actually is covered under a separate paper on "Dwellings".

Separate papers are included for petroglyphs, cave art and rock arrangements, as well as bark art and body art. Sculpture is very dubious but must be mentioned. Of special interest is what are termed "bird's nests", two types, the first is a term used in some stone arrangements but another type is actually what seems to be small stones in an actual nest composition and are covered under "bird's nests?".

"Palaeo-Tasmanian Art"

Type	Material	Form	Execution	Purpose	Source	Environment	Comment
Petroglyphs	Stone facings	Abstract. Figurative rare. Cupules.	Engraving.	Ritual.	Archaeological.	Montane to sea level. Exposed areas.	Painting possible but not survived - no evidence.
Rock shelters & Cave art.	Internal walls.	Abstract. Figurative more common. Hand stencils.	Painting (Ochre). Engraving rare.	Ritual.	Archaeological.	Deep bark caverns to a rare cave entrance.	Mainly from the Pleistocene period in the south west inland river system.
Rock arrangements.	Loose stone.	Symbolic, paths "nests", cairns, walls?	Collections of nearby stone.	Ritual, some perhaps non-ritual.	Archaeological.	Montane to Coastal.	Excludes tidal stone wall fish traps being economic (if Aboriginal).
Bark art.	Slabs of bark (inner side).	Abstract and figurative.	Charcoal, it seems, sketches ochre?	Ritual ("Tomb"), but evidence suggests art for art sake.	Ethnological.	Inland North West and Southern Midlands at least and East Coast.	Probably commonly practiced.
Body art.	Human body.	Abstract	Cicatrization and painting, charcoal, ochre.	Ritual and personal adornment.	Ethnological.	---	Some suggestion of "Band" connection or initiating at puberty?
Sculpture? (One example)	Woodwork on trees, stumps?	Symbolic or figurative?	Using stone tools?	Ritual?	Robinson (12:884)	Thick woody country (12:884)	Very odd account: cut the trees - made a large porcupine (ichidna).

"Palaeo-Tasmanian Art"

Type	Material	Form	Execution	Purpose	Source	Environment	Comment
Architecture.	Wood, bark, grass.	Domestic & Ritual/ "tombs".	Collected material.	Living quarters & ritual structures.	Ethnological.	Principally West Coast and South. Ritual structure at Kelso.	Inclusion as "Art" debatable.
Personal Adornment.	Shells, hides/skins, "strings", human relics.	Adornment : necklaces.	Manufactured .	Adornment .	Ethnological.	----	The great care taken by some men in hair adornment should be included.
Stone artefacts.	Stone.	Domestic & economic.	Flaking.	As tools.	Archaeological.	----	This is confirmed to the beautiful formal tools mainly in Central East.
Crafts.	Vegetation.	Domestic.	Manufactured artefacts.	Domestic & economic.	Ethnological.	----	Includes baskets, water containers and shafts and charms/relics.
Bird's Nests?	Stones and grass.	Symbolic realism.	Collected material formed into a representation.	Ritual.	Ethnological.	Known only from Kelso.	

"Its Purpose?"

With limited evidence available much of what we suggest is conjecture, however we can still arrive at reasons even if not what art represents what.

To begin with we can say that the reasons can be;

- 1) Art for art's sake - An artistic desire and appreciation of achieving some form of beauty.
- 2) Celebration of an event - example being an individuals or group achievement in the hunt or battle.
- 3) Boundary markers - shows limit in the area of territorial custodian-ship.
- 4) Ancestral contact - could be a part of 5) even 6).
- 5) Mystic/Spiritual - Part of activities, ceremonies, to give thanks, enhance, to protect or continue necessary social activities such as economic or good health. Religion, magic, superstition.
- 6) Burial Grounds - Cairns and flora constructions known.

Evidence of 1) exists in bark paintings of such images as European objects e.g. a horse (225:47). With 6) we have early Maritime accounts (86). Strong suppositions exist for 5), probably 4). Although no evidence exists for 2) or 3) some thought has been given to 3) and may have merit.

"Its Age"

I have already touched on the subject of how old the art work is in Tasmania and now will elaborate on same.

We have an Archaeological date for the estimated beginning (that is based on calibration radio carbon 14 dating) of the first humans to enter Tasmania, this is c. 40,000 B.P. and an historical period at c. 1830 A.D. which more or less is the ending of Palaeo-Tasmanian Aboriginal Culture - not the end of Tasmanian Aboriginal Culture.

However, types of art, not styles have to be considered in estimating antiquity.

I will begin with what I will call "Cave Art" which includes "Rock shelters". "Caves" are caverns without penetrating light and protected from the atmosphere where as "rock shelters", including "rock overhangs" (veranda like natural formations), are long, exposed to light and open to the atmosphere.

Caves with art-principally hand stencils - are confined at present to the inland south west and have yielded dates of red ochre containing human blood to c. 10,730 and c. 9,240 B.P. (221:226). However pigment was being utilised in the south west since its earliest days as revealed in excavations (221:228) but we cannot say this use included cave art for sure.

Generally occupation ceased in the river systems of the south west at c. 10,250 (218:225) with almost all caves being abandoned c. 12,000 B.P. (221:228). Separation of the Corridor linking Tasmania to Australia occurred c. 12,500 with any cultural connection ending completely at c. 10,500 or earlier.

So it is suggested that cave art seems to be dated;

Inland South West - since possibly 40,000 but known to be
at least c. 14,000 to 10,000 B.P.

Rock shelters with art, again hand stencils are confined to the south east but without a determined age. Since the art is or was in reasonable condition its age suggests relatively recent creation.

Petroglyphs main concentration is in the western half and except for one possible example they are confined to the coast, some being actually washed by high tides. This suggests recent work, that is since the sea level reached its present level, but if higher seas occurred - some two metres - in the Post Glacial Maximum, then these sites could be even younger.

The possibilities are;

- 1) Pre present sea level - people lived on dry land further out than today and went inland to the sites.
- 2) Present sea level - c. 6,500 - 4,500 (opinions vary greatly!). Some engraving done of an unknown amount.

- 3) Post Glacial Maximum - c. 4,500 - 1,600 (again, opinions vary). Most of previous work, if it was done, is destroyed.
- 4) Return to present sea level - c. 1,600 <. Present known engraving done.

The most outstanding petroglyphs are at Preminghana (Mount Cameron West) and although we do not have an actual date for the engraving an associated midden dates between 1,350 to 850 B.P. This suggests a minimum but not maximum age for the petroglyphs of 1,350 (221:233, 235). An approximate age may be c. 2,000 - 1,500 and may be therefore consistent with 4) above of an execution date of c. 1,600 or so.

Of course this does not exclude possible pre present sea level sites now lost under the ocean which conceivably date back to earlier periods, even pre 40,000, as to reach the inland south west you had to travel south down the west coast. Yet again perhaps petroglyphs were only a more recent development?

Inland petroglyphs, are undated. the north east may be any date from earliest to more recent times, but the Central Highland Lake country is more suggestive of recent times, that is in the Holocene. Regretfully we have only the small rock shelters half way up the Great Western Tiers eastern side that has yielded a date of only c. 2,830 B.P. The two archaeological areas of the Forth and Mersey Rivers with their rich excavated caves are not really a part of the Central Highlands being immediately north west of it.

The Northern Midlands has dated sites to c. 5,000 B.P. and in the recent period was the access area to the Highlands. The Southern Midlands has a site, Ors7, south of the Highlands with a Pleistocene date but the suggestion it seems is that the area would be similar to the Northern Midlands in other respects. Suggestions are that the Highlands were occupied at least periodically from possibly 8,000 B.P. and more intensely post 5,000. Prior to this the area had little attraction, possibly the population was limited in comparison to the more recent times.

So any petroglyphs or rock arrangements that exist may be dated to 5,000 > but 8,000 cannot be disregarded.

Isolated areas may have attracted short penetrating visits for mystic ceremonial purposes, this is suggested for the area in later times, why not in some earlier time?

The Examiner Newspaper (25th November, 1999) reported (this is a very dangerous exercise in a reference quote) a suggested date of c. 25,000 B.P. for the concentric art discovered on the Highland Plateau and another quote (Dr. Robin Sim) suggested c. 10,000 it seems because of its great patina.

I often refer to John Taylor's Linguistic Research (236) to try and comprehensively cover any subject. In this respect I will do the same as regards the Highland Plateau.

John's "Palawa Pleistocene Speakers" entered Tasmania prior to 40,000 B.P. and although capable of artistic and mystic creation (e.g. the cave art in the South West there is no evidence of them exploiting the Central Highlands. Indeed up to c. 13,000 B.P. the area was very inhospitable with droughts, extreme cold, a steppe landscape with alpine open herb fields - "Periglacial" - an environment not conducive

to wallaby, the principle food source at this time in the surrounding areas. It also lacked the protecting caves and river systems of the nearby South West. Winters saw it covered with ice and snow fields being exposed to the prevailing westerly winds and storms.

Taylor suggests it is his "Victorians" who were the first new peoples to exploit the area probably via the Southern Midlands in the summer months about 13,000 to 9,000 B.P.

A separate group of new people, Taylor's "Nara" entered the North West via the King area and made their way South East into the Derwent Estuary by c. 8,000 B.P. their inland route being across the Central Highlands.

Taylor suggested that these "Nara" were more sophisticated and is credited with the possibility of creating the petroglyphs in the west, which includes in this instance the Highland Plateau Art. Other than Taylor's beliefs we have no evidence, but it is a new perspective that must be considered in any future work.

We do know that the area of the Central Highlands, west of the Great Lake, in historic times (c. 1820 - 1830's A.D.) was an extremely important ceremonial ground for the people known as the "Big River" and their eastern "brothers" the "Oyster Bay". Each summer saw the gathering of bands from these two groups and it seems sometimes those from elsewhere e.g. "Northern Midlands" even "Ben Lomond". It is possible, utilising Taylor's beliefs, that after a confederacy of "Palawa" and "Victorians" invaded and expelled the "Nara" from the Plateau that it was they who created the art, possibly about 5,000 B.P.

“OCHRE”



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“Ochre”

Because of respect and to minimise the acts of vandals the exact location of sites is not revealed, only approximate area naming is made.

What is Ochre?

Ochres are earthy, pulverulent (reduced or crumbled to powder or dust) forms of Haematite and Limonite (48), or friable (easily crumbled), earthy iron ore (328:10).

It is widely distributed in Tasmania, both as small pellets in gravels (Tamar Valley) or in reefs (Alum Cliffs). It takes the form of a natural pigment, browns, reds and yellow. Red in its most vivid state is most prized (308:33), yellow it seems was rarer.

At the most famous site, “Toolumbunner” in the Alum Cliffs near Mole Creek, it takes the form of a series of hard and soft beds, very brown (Ferruginous, that is containing iron) and clay-like, parts of the site are red brown ferruginous sandstones and grey mudstones. (308:33).

Ochre is Haematite (Fe_2O_3) plus small part Goethite (Fe OH) and Limonite. Quartz content in the ochre is 50 to 60% (308:33).

Ochre (Bal-de-winny)

The main reference consulted is (328) and we are told that three types of ochre was available and utilised by Palaeo-people in Tasmania. The following is only a selected amount of information and (328:142-151) should be consulted for additional data.

The three types are;

“Ordovician Ferruginous Sandstone”

About 30% haematite (red ochre),
the site is “Toolumbunner” and was regarded as the best.
(328:142-144).

“Specular Haematite”

It has a crystalline, glittery appearance, dark grey but
when powdered a dark reddish brown. It is very heavy.
The principle site being “Mt. Housetop” (328:145-146) but
the area was most likely Penguin Creek, C. 25 km north-east
of the mountain. (328:146). Distribution is northern and eastern
Tasmania.

“Laterite / Gossan” (Ferricrete)”

Dull or earthy with some shiny red or brown.
All over Tasmania but not in the mountainous areas
of west and south west Tasmania (328:147).

Some 13 ochre mines are recorded but some doubtful and locations confusing. Some have no Aboriginal evidence of usage (328:142).

“Toolumbunner” is the largest, over some five hectares and comprises of several long, open irregularly cut trenches (328:142).

We are told that the use ochre is, “_____one of humanities most universal and persistent symbols” (328:10). Its use – outside Australia – stretching back at least 300,000 years (328:38). In Europe to 70,000 during Neanderthal times (328:32).

Of more importance to Tasmania, because of its original link, is its tracing to at least 120,000 – 80,000 B.P. during the African Middle Stone Age (328:27), the time when the first modern humans left their homeland expanding east towards Australia and ultimately into Tasmania C. <40 years ago.

Its use in Tasmania after being located, extricated, transported, processed by grinding into fine dust, mixed with grease from animal fats like that from mutton birds, penguins and marsupials sometimes with fine charcoal dust, into a paste that could be smeared or painted onto the body, possibly artefacts or used in art for both mystic and artistic reasons is explained under the following headings.

Its use.

As explained by Sagona (328:10-11) Aboriginal use of ochre was ritual, social, physical/sexual, practical and for pleasure.

Apparently both sexes utilised ochre extensively and from Petit's drawings even their infants had it smeared on their foreheads, cheeks and chin (86), even their eyelids (6:128). Petit also shows a woman with similar decorations on her cheekbones, chin and forehead (6:128). Women were also "fond of painting their devery" (pubic region) – at least it seems those of the Big River people – with ochre (12:491).

The whole of the body was generally smeared with a mixture of ochre, charcoal and grease, but this was mainly for protection against the elements. Experience had shown that in Tasmania's generally wet conditions, especially the western half, it was much more practical in their culture to go naked with a protecting coating of insulation than to stagger around the bush laden down by a wet animal skin. This purely practical purpose, insulating body extremities against the cold, even frost-bite is suggested, that it was the fat or grease not the mixed ochre that probably was the protection (328; 13).

Regretfully a side effect of the use of this cosmetic was the skin complaint that produced small pulses that required at night them employing themselves in puncturing them using a small pointed stick. This was a painful experience causing them to cry out (12). It is also possible that the disease was caused by association with dogs brought to Tasmania by the Europeans.

Mortimer recalled that a young man drew a circle around each eye and wavy lines down each arm, thigh and leg (6:127). Bligh encountered a "mob" blackened natives but one was covered in red ochre to distinguish himself (6:127), while Bonwick refers to "Dandies" who drew fancy streaks on themselves (225:25).

The customs varied from "band" to "band", perhaps being a system of identification, for instance;

The Big River and Oyster Bay people favoured blacklead? (12:600), (12:688). The West Coasters (including West Point Band) never used red ochre about the face (12:549). The "Tommaginny" (of the headwaters of the Arthur River) and "Larmairrener" (of either around Little Swanpoint or along the Ouse River – I am not sure who) both reddened their hair (and body) in long ringlets (12:855), where as the Bruny people both male and female daubed their faces with red ochre and charcoal (12:103, N. 39).

It seems that it was significant that an important male may have red ochre while others blackened themselves with charcoal as on Bruny Island.

Other explorers, like Bass, mention a native with a blackened face while the top of his head was plastered with red earth (presumably meaning his hair (127). Yet another account was by Backhouse who mentions that they were completely covered in ochre and grease but some of them had blackened a space of about a hands breadth on each side of their faces. Their eyes being nearly in the centre of each black mark (127).

Other body painting refers to a black glittering material – a mineral – being used to draw lines on their “prominent parts” and above and below the eyes (127). The mention of “prominent parts” is not elaborately on but may mean genitals. Interestingly, Robinson noting that they constantly painted themselves asked them “why?”, the reply was “why do you wear fine clothes?” (12:594).

Where ochre on the body was for personal pride and to distinguish important individuals within the band, or the sexes, as well as protection against the elements, it had also a ceremonial purpose such as when mourning, painting their bodies with charcoal and marking their faces with red ochre (12:57).

Yet an example of its importance this time under happier circumstances is recorded by Peron, at a “Dance” a woman who had just finished dancing approached him with an “awe of kindness” taking from her rush basket some charcoal and painted the whites taking great care not to allow it to go into their eyes. When they had finished they admired their work and congratulated themselves (6:128) – obviously others had helped the first woman. The substance was not ochre but it does show the appreciation of artistic work and an association of emotional feelings.

The importance of the material is obvious and is reflected in the affectionate way in which they treated it – they were always eager to get it and compared the quality of it from source to source, the best coming from near Mount Husetop and Gog Mountain near Mole Creek in the central north inland, this mine and quarry is now known as “Toolumbunner” (233;344).

This site was the main source of ochre for the north west people (11:9), when they came across ochre they patted it with their hands and kissed it (12:600). It was such an important substance that they even enjoyed looking at the red top of the trees comparing them with their own heads (12: 559). Even using the red leaves of peppermint and other trees (12:287).

This love of “red” is well known from mainland Australia and I had the good fortune to come across this while we were on our honeymoon to central Australia. My beautiful wife, Vicki, had gorgeous red hair and when we alighted from our Pioneer tour (close to the first time tourists were going this way to the “centre”) bus at Mulga Park just south of Alice Springs to buy items from the Aborigines, the young girls broke out in great fits of laughter point at Vicki’s hair – it was all in good spirit and Vicki really loved it.

If ochre was not available post British Invasion they substituted with soft red bricks (as I found near Royal George?) or even rust from metal bolts off old ships (164:6).

A suggestion is that ochre mixed with water could be smeared into the interior of baskets as a lining to carry water or fire (308:33). The possibility in the use of fire may be when they carried it in their watercraft to get to offshore islands. I could not think of a more dangerous exercise than carrying hot material in a bark canoe!

So “ochre” was used for many different purposes, its possible connection with blood is one, a sexual connection? (328:2), with symbolic emphasis on the functional

significance of those body parts (328:12). In Australia we are told that ochre had connections with symbolising fertility, new life, besides rejuvenation, strength, medical uses, coating artefacts and paintings, a connection with their “Dreamtime” and as a magic to influence natural occurrences like rain. A sign of power within the group (328:13-15).

Ochre was not confined to body adornment as show in the cave art of Tasmania’s south west. Hand stencils and nondescript use of red ochre in the dark inner chambers could possibly extend back 40,000 years (an occupied level in the area exists).

The oldest dated art is C. 20,000 B.P. (11:11).

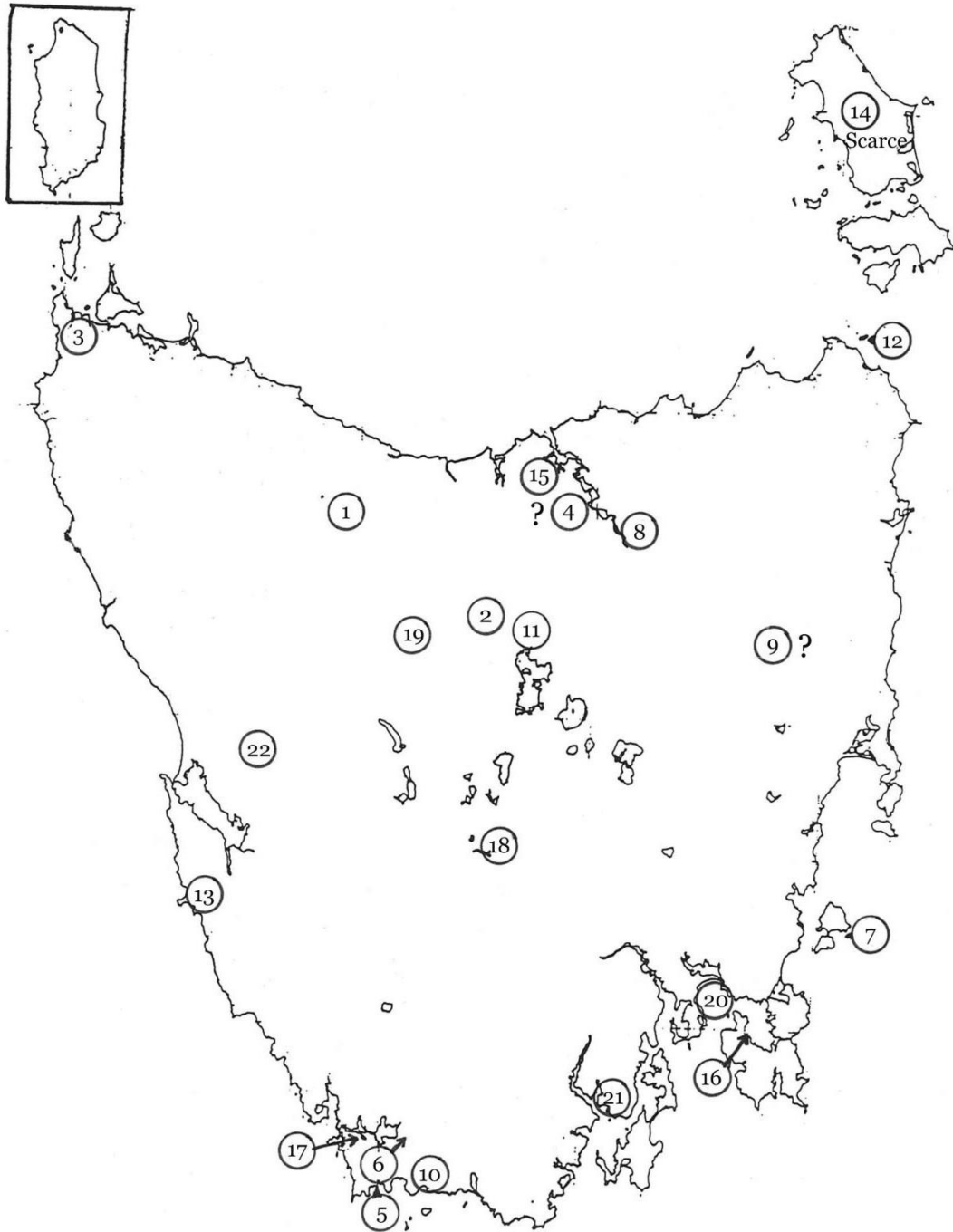
Artistic use was not confined as seen but used for any desired purpose such as marking shelters, bark huts and burial structures, with what have been said to be religious motifs and symbols (328:9). Use purely for artistic purposes is just as obvious.

The use of artefacts for decoration or magic is a little confusing in Tasmania. Javelins/spears were finished off by rubbing grease (6:70) or as Robinson explained (12:220) blacken it until it shone like varnish, during the manufacturing the good spirits were invoked by singing (12:498). Perhaps if ochre had been included it may have been detrimental to the use – not so smooth?

Other artefacts may have been coated but we have no evidence except that at Mannalargenna Cave in the West Furneaux area, stone artefacts showing signs of ochre on them suggest possible colouring (218:268).

OCHRE SITES

No.	Site	Type	Remark	References
①	S.E. of Mt. Housetop & W. of Leven (difficult to be exact), most likely Penguin Creek (Blythe River near Mt. Housetop & Blythe River Is C. 8.5 k.m. S.E. of Hampshire).	S	Very important. Iron glance (like black lead?) Iron oxides common in this area.	12:688 N29, 12:549, 582 N75, 328:146-7
②	“Toolumbunner”, Alum Cliffs, Gog Range, near Mole Creek	F	The “celebrated spot”, apparently the most important. Not just a quarry but a mine too.	12:540, 549, 582 NG5, 895, 904, 308:33. 328.
③	Welcome River, Cape Grim area.	L	Obtained from underwater.	12:866, 915 N61. 328:150.
4	Tamar River Valley	?	Small marble size pelettes found amongst river shore line e.g. Rosevears.	Personal Observations.
⑤	Cox (Coxes) Bight	L	Red ochre. See also No. 10. Plomley perplexed by G.A.R. re: this site, could not find it (12:227 N49).	12:170.915 N61.
6	South East of Bathurst Harbour, Near Melaleuca Lagoon.	S	Yellow (rare) and red marl (ochre). Note: yellow ochre used at a site near Sandy Cape.	12:118 116:19 12:167.
⑦	Bloodstone Point?, Maria Island	L	Extensive deposits of iron oxide.	328:143, 148.
⑧	Russel Plains, Rocherlea.	L	European enterprises known but failed. On route from North East and E. Tamar to Midlands.	Personal observations. 328:148.
9	Royal George area.		Colonial bricks smashed, stone artefacts associated, suggestions? Aboriginal use as a substitute for ochre.	Personal observations.
10	Louisa Bay	L ?	Suggested by (116:19) that this may actually be G.A.R. “Coxes Bight” (No. 5) (12:170).	102:7 116:16.
11	“Red Hill” about 13 km from Quamby.	?	Bonwick (225) could not have meant Toolumbunner area as it is C. 30 km from Quamby (Brook-Bluff).	225:25.
12	Swan Island	L	(Never visited in Late Holocene). Plenty of red ochre.	12:280.
⑬	Point Hibbs, Lower West Coast.	L ?	Dived for it at low water – yellow ochre.	12:738.
14	Flinders Island.	?	Extremely scarce. Those at the Aboriginal Settlement relied on “Sealers” for fresh supplies.	227.
⑮	Tamar Hematite Iron Co. Mine, N.W of Beaconsfield	S	A very significant site containing brown, red and yellow material. Too important not to have been utilised by Palaeo-people.	365:152.
⑯	Saltwater River, near Turners Point, Tasman Peninsula.	L	Used by European for brick making. Presumed used by Palaeo-people.	308:122.
⑰	Schooner Cove C. (4 miles) 7 km below Horseshoe inlet, Port Davey.	L ?	Is this No. 6? Near G.A.R. camp 15/2/1830.	12:227, N49. 116:19 (not north But east).
⑱	On east side of River Dee and Opposite Humphries (5/12/1831). C. 22 km S. of Lake Echo.	S	Plenty of red ochre.	12:524, 540. 12:537 (map 20). 328:148.
⑲	C. 5km S. of Daisey Dell near (W?) Gads Hill.	L ?	“_____ got from the river (Forth?) on the Banks a good deal of their favourite re.mite.yer” (ochre? but no word recorded for re.mite.yer in (6), (229) or (236).	12:897 12:907 (map 30).
⑳	Sandford	L	Known outcrops.	328:148
㉑	Randal’s Bay Rocks.	L	Known outcrops.	328:148
㉒	Philosopher’s Ridge, C. 3.5km N.E.of Queenstown.	L	Gossan ochre quarry with 30 stone artefacts in the vicinity.	328:150.




(6) (17) ? Same

(5) (10) ? Same

? Meaning not a known mine.

“Approximate Areas of Principle Ochre Deposits.”

Key:	
No. (Number on map).  = Known Aboriginal Quarry / Mine	Or accepted as such.
Types of Ochre: F = Ferruginous Sandstone S = Specular haemetite L = Laterite / Gossan	 A source of red ochre apparently exists back of Devonport at Kelsey Tiers. Used by Aboriginals. (Fay Garden, Devonport Historic Society).

Reference (328)

Without a doubt Antonio Sagona's publication (328) is by far the most important, with emphasis on the excavations at Toolumbunner, but it is necessary to clarify some information in (328) in order to come to a satisfactory understanding.

I will start with Fig. 51 (328:143). This is I believe incorrectly, (Typeo), referred to as Fig 42 (328:142), at that time we are informed;

“Thirteen Aboriginal ochre-mining sites have been recorded in Tasmania”.

And consulting Fig 51 I have found what obviously must be the “thirteen”.

All are mentioned as “Ochre Quarries” and are five different types;



Specular Haematite,
One only.

My number being 1.



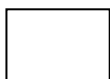
Laterite,
Seven

My number being 3, 7, 8, 12,
18, 20, 21



Ferruginous Sandstone,
One

My number being 2.



Geology uncertain (?Laterite)
Three

My number being 5, 13, 17.



Gossan (weathered Ironstone)
One

My number being 22.

(“Gossan” means decomposed rock).

On my map and list I have referred to 22 sites but a word of warning is necessary in comparing (328) map (Fig 51) with mine. Let me explain that I have allotted numbers as follows;

Sagona’s 13 “Ochre Quarries” are my numbers (already just mentioned),

1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21 & 22.

My number 4 my observations of scatter – not a quarry but still could have been collected for use.

My 6 could be my 17 duplicated, as my 10 could be also 5.

My number 9 is only what seemed to be deliberately smashed convict bricks used as ochre. Associated with stone artefacts.

My number 11 an ambiguous reference (225:25) from Bonwick C. 1870
a for-runner to today’s Anthropological Researchers – but important
to consider especially since the place was called “Red Hill”.

With 14 this is only referring to Colonial Settlement use of the island.

My 15 is sourced from (365), Nigel Burch, who as an Historian took me
to this one time important commercial site that because of it’s size
had to be known to the Aborigines.

Again 16, although a sample reference (328) was so large it was an important source
of brick manufacturing and must have been known to the
Aborigines.

Last is number 19. G.A.R. mentions this and is not Toolumbunner being some
distance south west of it.

My suggested “Ochre Quarries” are 15, I exclude (328’s) 12 (Swan Island, as not
visited in Holocene times) but include 15, 16 and 19.

Although we have established the existence and mostly the utilisation of “ochres”
from a number of locations, quarries (open cut) and at least one mine (underground
operation), we cannot say that all ochre sources used by Palaeo-Tasmanians are
known. Somewhere in disguised areas covered by bush or other material is no doubt
a few other places. Proving usage of deposits is even a bigger problem being out of
use for centuries even possibly millennium with subsequent alteration, erosion and
earth movement and vegetation disturbance, perhaps water courses have taken their
toll.

If any are found you can guarantee conservation and/or Aboriginal organisations will
come into play, so any discovery could be disguised even destroyed by financially
interested parties, making it illegal is regrettably a farce, better to try for a co-
operative partnership!

As seen we have in the past at least three commercial or government enterprises either for making bricks (Tasman Peninsula), obtaining iron (Beaconsfield area) and Russel Plains (paint pigment). I have not carried out research on other industries that may reveal other possible Aboriginal sites.

1 Penguin Creek Area (formerly Mount Housetop).

It is suggested, with substantial evidence that the so-called Mount Housetop source of Specular haematite was the second most important in Tasmania.

Trying to locate its actual site is very difficult being first mentioned by Robinson on 27/4/1832 (12:599), he wrote he travelled in an east and south east direction, past the north side of the Housetop Hill close at the base, continued to travel nearly 20 miles (C. 34 km) to “The Celebrated Spot”. The site is in the proximity of Hampshire/Surrey Hills of inland north west.

Robinson (12:600) explained, “the place where the mineral is obtained is considerable beyond the hill called The Housetop”, as seen above, so it is misleading to refer to the quarry as “Mount Housetop”. Further research by Antonio Sagona (328), (the most important authority on Aboriginal Ochre use in Tasmania), strongly suggests that the site is in the Penguin Creek area being 25 km north east of Mt. Housetop. This area has an extensive deposit of Specular haematite (328:146). It is also explained that Robinson would have travelled north not east and south east as he wrote (328:147).

Regretfully Penguin Creek has been commercially mined destroying any Palaeo-evidence.

Reference is made by Robinson to an “Iron Glance”, like black lead called La.te.win.er (12:688 N29), also referred to as lead (from Surrey Hills) (12:197) and micaceous ore of iron (12:602).

Apparently lead ore (plantina) was found by the earliest “settlers” from Rocky Cape to it seems about Burnie and inland via the Hampshire Road which during its construction the substance was found (12:197). Its use for drawing is evident it seems and it was found to be used as a necklace when pieces were strung on “kangaroo” sinews (12:197) this means it was probably drilled, or was it tied?

Hampshire, Surrey Hills, Mt. Housetop (or Housetop Hill) and Penguin Creek areas were and still are rich in iron oxides (12:688 N. 29).

An extremely important and unique Anthropological Book, “Aborigines of Tasmania”, by H. Ling Roth was published in 1890, refers to “Iron Glance” obtained by another early “Anthropologist”, Joseph Milligan, from near the Housetop Tier, Hampshire Hills and said to be the only locality known in Tasmania. Roth explains it was greatly valued by the Aborigines for its scarcity and its body decorative use. (6:128). No mention is made of Robinson.

An explanation is warranted re: the various descriptive terminologies;

Aggregate	collected into a mass.
Argillaceous	clay like.
Blacklead	A black mineral, not lead, graphite.
Ferruginous	Containing iron and argillaceous.
Haematite	An iron ore. Ochre.
Iron Glance	Specular iron.
Lateric	Clay formed by weathering of rocks, chiefly of iron.
Micaceous	Usually transparent, of various colours.
Ochre	Iron rich earth. Haematite.
Ore	Naturally-occurring mineral aggregate.
Plumbago	Lead ore (plantina).
Specular	A brilliant steely crystallised haematite.

Note: Iron Glance is not ochre although it seems just as highly prized by some people and probably processed and used the same.

2. “Toolumbunner”

This is by far the most important ochre area utilised by the Palaeo-Tasmanians.

It is set on a spur in the Gog Range (sometimes called Roland-Claude-VanDyke Range (236:50) – the Alum Cliffs (308:33).

Gog Mountain was called “Red Ochre Hill”, Too.lum.bun.ner.lun.ner.lin.no but abbreviated to Too.lum.bun.ner meaning “red ochre” (12:904).

European stock-keepers called it “City of Ochre” (328:3). It was discovered C. March 1828, or at least prior to this when the first mention in journals were made (328:3). Robinson first visited it with his Aborigines on 16th July, 1834 (12:904) who were in great excitement, especially the North East “Chief” Mannalargenna – who love to decorate himself especially his hair with it – Robinson referred to it as the “Celebrated Spot”. (12:895). His party covering 34 km in a day to get to it, Robinson had great trouble trying to persuade his Aborigines to by-pass it (328:4).

This site was so rich that underground mining, a dangerous pursuit even to the Aborigines as testified when one woman got stuck and had to be pulled free by her legs (12:904). The “mining” started, at least in one spot, with an extension of a two metre deep hole – big enough for one person – it ran for several metres underground (12:904-5).

Obtaining It.

The first endeavour was to source it and this was originally purely by chance, a slow unconscious drift into new and unknown territory.

The Palaeo-Tasmanians arrived on the Tasmanian landmass prior to 40,000 B.P. and it is surprising that the Great Mine, Toolumbunner, has only a date about 480 B.P. (328:69) but evidence exists from a change in vegetation, a drier climate and fire-sticking at about 3,000 B.P. (328:47). It is possible that the oldest date has not been obtained for Toolumbunner considering the suggested presence of humans in the area C. 2,500 years before the obtained date.

Five different recovery processes were employed;

- 1). Just picking up pelette – marble sized pieces. Eroded pieces.
- 2). Collecting pieces that form a sort of debris on the outcrop.
Possibly caused by bush-fires.
- 3). Digging past the debris in an open-cut quarrying process.
To get to the better quality material.
- 4). An extension of 3) but in an under-ground mining process.
So as to obtain “big lumps” of the best material, and finally
- 5). The need to dive or wade to obtain submerged deposits in streams or coastal areas. This may suggest that the deposits were known prior, if on the coast, and were inundated by rising seas after the Glacial period and up to C. 6,500 when the present sea level arrived.

The use of material culture artefacts to obtain the material is basic. A tool to extract it, then a carrying artefact and maintenance tools for the extractor.

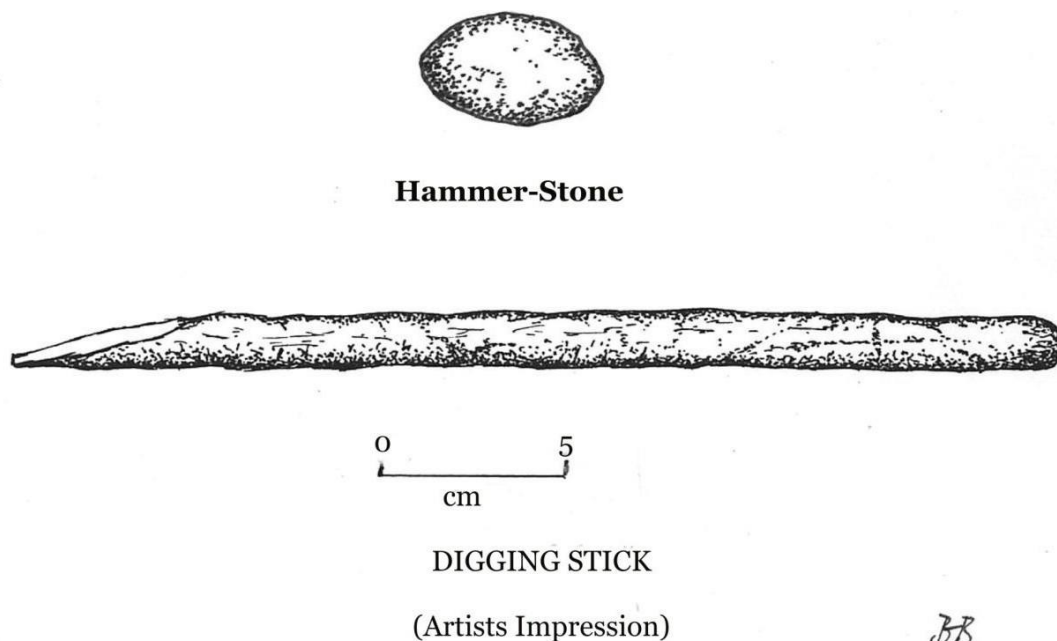
The extractor we are told was a short stick 30 to 45 cm long, acted as a chisel using a hammer-stone as a mallet. The chisel edge suggests a uniface that had been burnt to harden it (12:904-5, in part).

Maintenance tools for repairing the “digging stick” would have been the same as used for originally manufacturing the stick, stone tools.

After laboriously extracting the ore lumps weighing 2.25 to 2.70 kilograms were collected and put on the prepared large quantities (this was at Toolumbunner) of bundles of “kangaroo” skins for transportation to another site (12:599-600) where

the men were. The women were responsible for the extraction – transportation as will be explained.

Although bushfires damaged the surface material causing it to be not so good never the less the extracted harder ore was subjected to fire for ease of working. The Aborigines preferred the softer more powdery ochre for easy use (12:600).



Additionally, what has been termed “naturally formed large scrapers” (328:129-131) have been recognised at “Toolumbunner”. They are described as naturally wedge shaped with a scraping or chopping edge along their lengths, 39 to 130 mm. This sites artefacts are columnar dolerite, made into a tool by breaking the slab that it was found as into segments.

Extensive “chopping” was noticed along the working edge, here I am presuming actually “use wear” not modification for an improved edge. A sheen from heavy wear is also recorded on some.

Their use was said to be;

“_____to scrape ochre from the sides of the mine,
an idea – supported – at other (ochre) sites”. (328:131).

The hammer-stone used with the digging/chisel stick doubled as a pounder when processing the ochre/grease into the usable paste. But more often I would suggest a suitable “pounder” would be kept or obtained at the processing site, why bother carrying it from the source, better to leave it there for future digging.

However we do know that women, at least sometimes, carried smaller pounders in their everyday baskets (164:6).

It is with some bands that an especially made pounding/grinding stone was manufactured prior to arrival at the source, this was the “Ballywinne”.

Women’s Duty.

Cultural tradition varied in Australia from one people to another. In Tasmania the evidence we have is that it was the women’s duty – in most activities it seems the women did the work – to collect, including mining and diving for ochre, transporting and helping in the processing. The men seldom participated except in processing the ochre/fat-grease into the desired paste (12:904-5).

The associated artefacts, stone tools, digging sticks and “kangaroo” skins seem to be all women’s products, although killing the “kangaroos” may have been only done by men. The men however were involved as well as women in the making of the all important “Ballywinne” pounding/grinding tools in the preparation of the paste. They were manufactured prior to arrival at the camp where the paste was manufactured.

The Ballywinne were not it seems made by all bands but this specially made tool had its similar tool in a raw material shape. A palette was used as a sort of big dish – rarely found as it seems a flat fortuitous stone without modification was suitable – the mixed ochre was ground into dust, mixed with fat, heated at the same time or prior and the greasy paste was ready to use.

The women were also responsible for carrying a supply of ochre and a large stone often to prepare the paste on (164:6). However it is more likely that a suitable large stone was at the next camp from previous use or could be found there or nearby as a fortuitous piece.

Trade?

On the 12/12/1831 Robinson was travelling south west from near Quamby Bluff (C. 8.5 km north west) to Pine Lake on the Western Tiers just north of the Great Lake (12:555). That is he was going away from the “Toolumbunner” site.

On that day Robinson recorded that the Aborigines with him intended to go for ochre. This must mean they intended to go to “Toolumbunner”, so their reference at that time that “_____all the natives went for it – “, naming those from Ouse, Western Tiers and Campbell Town specifically (12:549) testify to its importance.

Robinson at the same time recorded that this material found at Hampshire Hills came from “Toolumbunner” even suggesting the named three above peoples visited Surrey and Hampshire Hills.

He did not discover the Penguin Creek (Mt. Housetop) ochre until later – 27/4/1832 – and it seems possible he was presuming too much re: “Toolumbunner” but possibly

not because visits to Cape Grim via the inland north west by “eastern peoples” did occur each year. I only point this out because of the confusion in researching.

We are told that;

“The “Mount Husetop” site is known to have been visited by tribes from the Big River (Ouse) Midlands (Campbell Town) and north west regions” (328:147).

and that pieces of specular haematite - the substance of Mount Husetop i.e. Penguin Creek, and probably from that quarry have been found in the above three place i.e. up to 140 km away. Further similar material from Mussel Roe Bay in the far north east if from Mount Husetop means it was dispersed over 200 km (328:147). The north east peoples never went that far, although who knows if an individual made trips, but they did have contact with the Western Tier people so trade or other means is obvious.

Such research into the types of “ochre” – source and final in situ position – could give important information into social activities.

Addition information coming from Robinson is that the Port Sorell people and Big River (Ouse) come from the east and the Cape Grim from the west to obtain ochre from Mount Husetop (12:600).

Interestingly Robinson also tells us that the Big River (Ouse) people never went to “Toolumbunner” (mentioned as going to Port Sorell) unless wanted ochre (12:540, 582 N65).

Robinson’s letter of 25/1/1833 (12:688 N29) telling us that the Big River (Ouse) and Oyster Bay (central east coast) visited the Penguin Creek area (Mt. Husetop area) constantly is some what different, or is it that while “Toolumbunner” was only occasionally visited and just for ochre, Penguin Creek area was more regularly visited perhaps because it was on the route to Cape Grim for mutton birding?

The Band that had custodianship of such raw material obviously had significant clout and no doubt trade for access to others area or barter for items like shell, raw stone even tools and anything else of value did take place. In a sense “red ochre” especially and of good quality was like gold.

Postscript.

Since completing this note I have found a Westlake Paper (c. 1810 c.e.) entry that records a source of both red and yellow ochres in the Forcett district called Bally Park, this site is now known as Red Ochre Beach, between Spectacle Head and Tiger Head, overlooking Frederick Henry Bay (231:55).

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Photo 369

**Crushed Yellow Ochre Ore
(Experimental Archaeology by Nigel Burch)**



Photo 370

**Lump of Ore from Companies Site
(Courtesy Nigel Burch)**



Photo 371

**Reef of Ore from Company Site
(Courtesy Nigel Burch)**



Photo 372

**Excavations by Company
(Courtesy Nigel Burch)**

PALAEO-TASMANIAN DRAWINGS



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"Drawings - Bark Art"

The main materials used for drawing was ochre - mainly red although some yellow pigment does exist - and charcoal sticks (12:197) or probably lumps obtained from campfires.

Blood has been suggested (205:34) mixed with ochre to do artistic work in at least one south west cave of the Pleistocene. Detailed information on caves and rock outcrops with petroglyphs follow, but ethnological observations show that what has been left to us is only a small amount of artistic inspiration.

The explorers and invading British tell us that from their observations drawings existed in many parts of Tasmania but have since melted away being in exposed places and on materials that would only last a short time.

Cattle, "kangaroos", dogs etc. were traced in charcoal, some of these drawings being apparently unintelligible (6:137) or were they "abstract"?

At the Vale of Belvoir drawings on bark showed the Van Dieman's Land Company's carts, two with six oxen, complete with wheels and the drivers with whips (6:137).

At the Company's property at Mt. Cleveland a piece of bark was found with a rough drawing of the carts wheel, bullocks, drivers and whips again, and although crudely drawn they were of a most interesting nature (6:137). - Regretfully, no other details were kept of these drawings and it would seem that some doubt may exist as to their authenticity (6:137).

Drawings of men and women and totems (?) were seen by Robinson on the West Coast in 1831, and Dr. Ross, in the Valley of the Ouse, found geometrical figures, squares and circles (6:137).

Again Robinson remarks on devices resembling trees, men and women inside a huts wall at Arthur Lakes on the Central Plateau (12:917, Note 98, 6th December, 1831).

"Bonwick" (225:47) mention three locales of sketches;

Macquarie Harbour (Tribe)	Sketches in huts of birds, beasts, and men (some fairly executed).
Valley of Ouse	Geometrical figures, - squares and circles on bark.
Vale of Belvoir	On a piece of bark - copies of a dray, bullocks and men with whips.

While at Wybalenna in several huts (European constructions) rude (simple) drawings had been made on the (inside) walls of ships, others of letters and a variety of devices and hieroglyphics as made in the natives country (227:329) (12:917 Note 98).

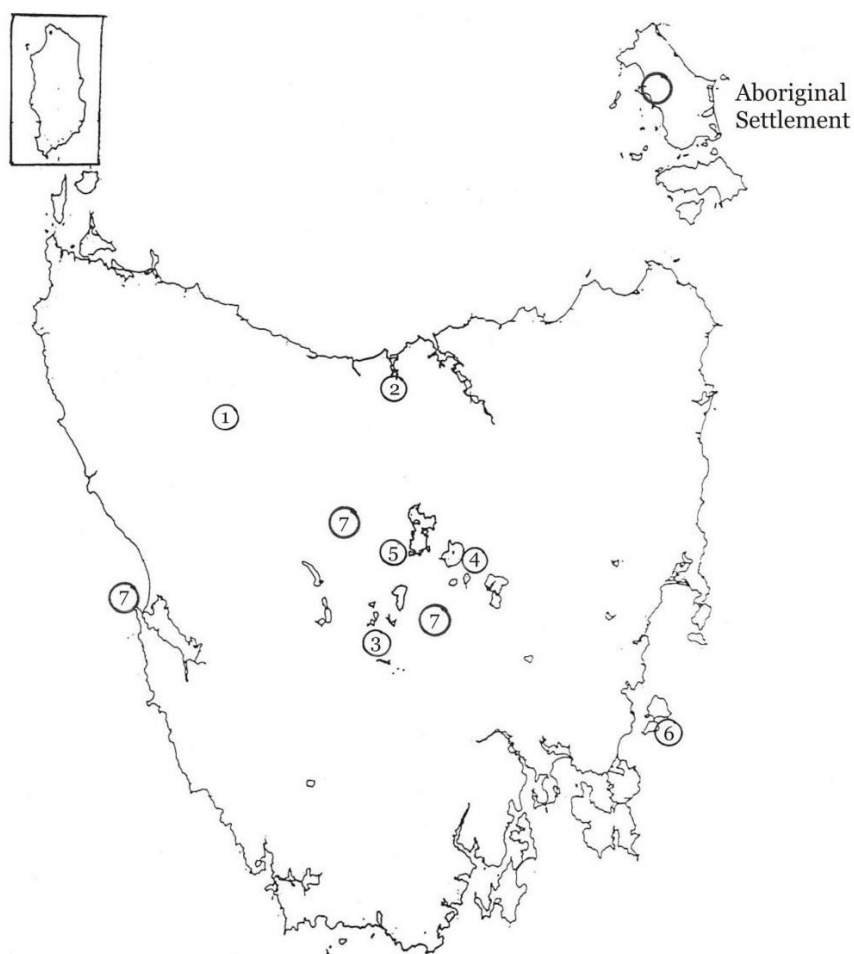
Obviously the people were open to new inspirations even figurative interpretation.

Bonwick makes a most interesting reference to "a red hand" on trees and rocks (97) but no locality is recorded (6:137) but is it correct?

The most common painting was that around the outside and inside of shelters. An extremely interesting account by Calder refers to charcoal drawings on bark, the scene was of two men spearing a kangaroo which had a missing tail and the fore-legs being about twice as long as the hind. Included was a dog and an emu with some other designs - "Not badly done" (6:137). But the most impressive drawings portrayed was a native fight with men dying and "flying" all over it (6:138). However, Roth was suspicious of their authenticity (6:138). It may have been recalling Australian Art.

Peron's discovery on Maria Island of tombs with the inner surfaces of some of the best and largest bark crudely marked with characters similar to those on the forearms of the natives (6:137) must be regarded as extremely important. Here we have evidence of spiritual art and a deep mystic concern for the event of death and the importance of the body and spirit.

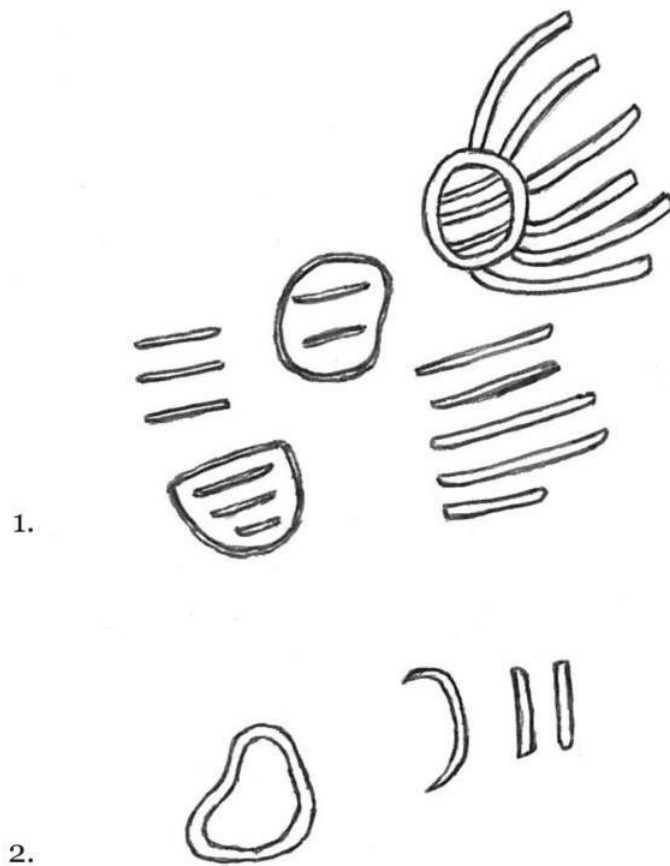
The use of bark was as a canvas employing its underside surface - that is the surface that was original against the wood.



“DRAWINGS - BARK ART”.
(Approximate Areas).

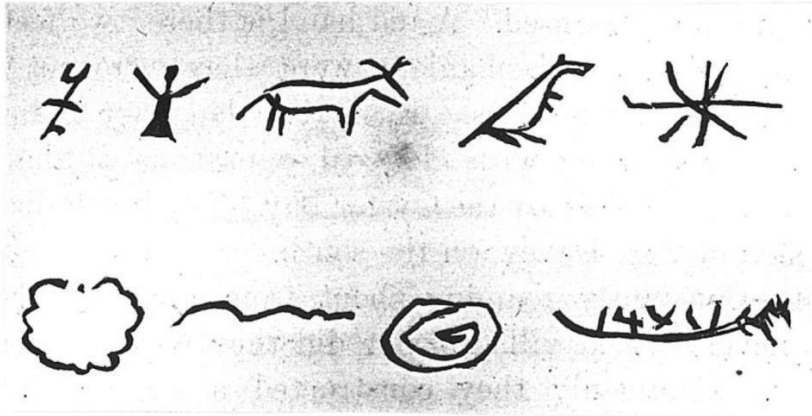
1 to 5 are Robinson's (12) observations, 6 is Baudin's (86).

1. (12:197) Used charred wood for drawing.
2. (12:214) Crude drawings inside bark of hut.
3. (12:514-6) Crude drawings of circles, broad-arrows, men and women.
4. (12:563) Drawings of men, women, trees, many circles some with a central dot.
5. (12:571) Mostly well done - birds, beasts, humans.
6. (86) On bark near “Wigwam-type” burials (cremations).
7. (225:47) Early colonial recordings.



BARK ART. MARIA ISLAND TOMB.

(Inspired by Lesueur Pencil Sketch 1802). (86).



(Ref:225:47)

Sketches made by settlers from drawings on a tree or bark, said to represent (some of them),

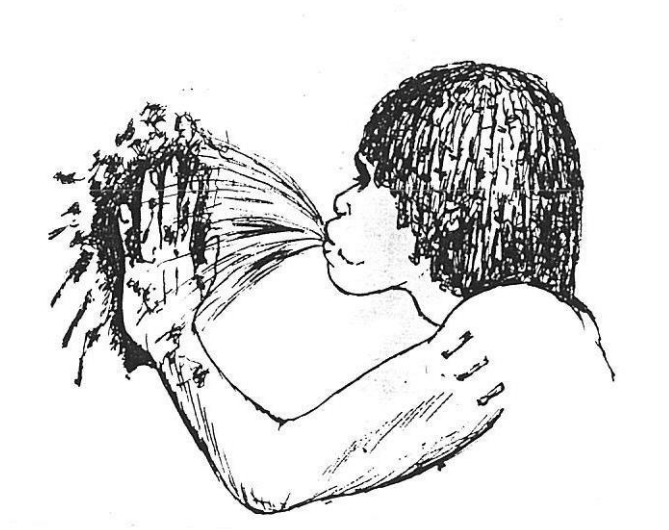
“The sun, the moon, some snakes, & 5 persons in a boat”.

My Opinions: -

A person?, a person, a horse, a wallaby, a star?

a tree, a snake, a snake, a boat with people.

PALAEO - TASMANIA'S CAVE ART



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"Cave Art"

Mainland Australian Cave Art is well known and acclaimed worldwide but in Tasmania it is rare. However what is known is of great importance.

Two sites existed in the Derwent Valley near Hamilton. The first was reported by De Teliga and Bryden in 1958 (97). However the sites have since been destroyed under the waters of a Hydro Electric Commission dam at Meadowbank. It had contained a number of rare hand stencils, other markings and (unknown) drawings (97).

The second shelter was reported in 1975-6 by Stockton;

"The paintings consist of three clear but faded hands stencilled on red-ochre and several indescribable lines in yellow, whilst on other parts of the walls of the cave red-ochre marks are found, mostly in the form of irregular blobs" (96).

The resemblance between Australian stencils and these were striking. Stockton suggested that just possibly they could be Post-European, as a group of Sydney natives were brought in the 1830's to help capture the remnant Tasmanian people. They are known to have spent some time in the general area (96). However, with the subsequent discovery in the South West and Tasman Peninsula, the sites seem to be more likely Tasmanian. The reference to "yellow ochre" is particularly interesting as it is rare in availability and usage.

Further inspection of about 300 other rock shelters in the Meadowbank area revealed nothing except in some cases blobs of red ochre adhering to the walls (96).

In 1981 a pioneering series of trips were undertaken to investigate the Archaeological potential of rivers that were under threat of flooding by another proposed Hydro Electric Dam.

In the summer of 1986 it was announced that a "Gallery" of cave paintings of unknown age had been discovered along the Maxwell River. Since then two other sites have been found, "Wargata Mina", Cracroft Valley and the "Keyhole Cavern", along the Weld River.

The first cave comprises twenty three hand stencils outlined in red ochre interestingly they are in a section twenty metres inside the cave in total darkness - this is exceedingly rare in Australia (205:34). At least more than five individuals, both left and right hands, are equally represented with one showing an amputation of the middle finger at the first joint.

Small patches of ochre exist on ceilings and some strikingly large as well as uniform blood red ochre patches were found on five rock protrusions near the cave entrance to the passage that leads down into the hand stencil gallery. Are they a warning marker to a ritual area? (M.R.A.S. : 12).

The discovery along the Maxwell River in the South West of Tasmania of caves with art work set deep within its interior set in complete darkness (221:225) must be regarded as one of the most exciting event in Tasmanian "Prehistoric" research. Its obvious mystic spiritual meanings are lost to us but for people so many thousands of years ago to have ventured into the deep recesses of a frightening environment shows a complexity of thought and belief we can only wonder at.

The cave was originally known as "Ochre Cave" but now due to a long outstanding recognition of Aboriginal contribution to this part of the world it is now known as "Ballawinne" Cave and is through this word we have still an association with the ochre.

While rock engravings appear to apply to the period since the post glacial maximum (c. 3,500 B.P.) ending, discovery of what appears to be traces of blood proteins and human red blood cells in the cave art ochre - being mixed deliberately together - have yielded older dates;

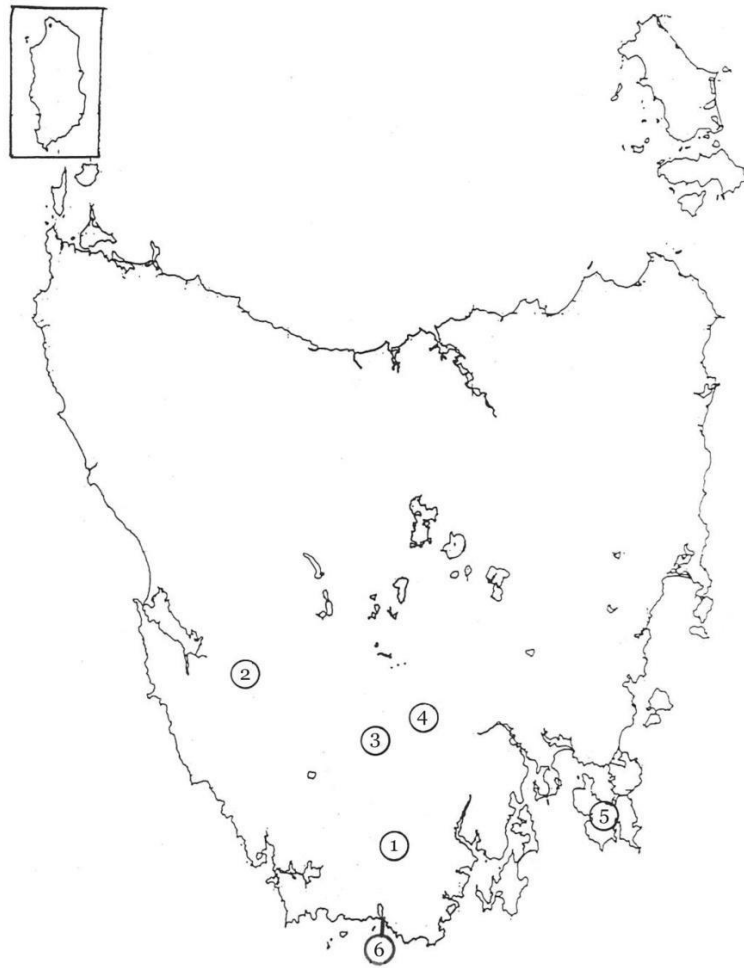
$10,730 \pm 810$ and $9,240 \pm 820$ B.P. (221:226).

The blood could have been used as a fixative or could be a result of blood-letting ceremonies (221:227).

The Maxwell River sites are older than 14,000 years, actually c. 20,000 (11:11) and this is within the time range of Europe's "Cro-Magnon" cave paintings of the Aurignacian Period. This establishes another parallel, yet unrelated by any association, between these northern and southern hemisphere peoples.

Some fifty plus Pleistocene occupation sites have so far been discovered in the South and South West of Tasmania, the remains of a specialised hunting economy mainly targeting one particular species, the "Bennett wallaby" (221:223).

A very unique site, a rock shelter, in the area of the New River in far Southern Tasmania has figurative art work, feet outlined some intagliated, human figures are said to be associated and evidence suggests not only created with hard pointed stone but metal chisels which is obviously Post European, the art is at the entrance and immediately beyond (see section "Petroglyphs").



“Rock Shelter / Cave Art”. (Approximate Locations)

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Wargata Mina | (Cracroft Valley) |
| 2. Ballawinne | (Maxwell River) |
| 3. Keyhole Cavern | (Weld River) |
| 4. Megs Mit & Unnamed | (Derwent Valley) |
| 5. Unnamed | (Tasman Peninsula) |
| 6. Unnamed | (New River area) |
| 7. Not marked on map, only known as “On the South Coast”. | |

List of Known Sites;

Map Number:	1
Site Name:	"Wargata Mina" (i.e. "My Blood"), formerly "Judds Cavern".
Locale:	Cracroft Valley, South West.
Cave Dimension:	Extends 1.7 km with 4.3 km of passages.
Art Chamber:	10-16 m in diameter. The stencil gallery known as "Dregena Lewnana" (i.e. "Hand Den").
Exposure:	In total darkness, 35 - 60 m from entrance as well as a gallery about one kilometre inside. (244:369).
Art:	Two groups of art : 23 hand stencils (6 left, 3 right, includes a child's, 14 unknown), smears, patches. (218:227). The one kilometre has seven complete arms as well as hand stencils including a number of children's placed very low down on the Southern Wall- a family group (244:369).
Art Location:	On walls of the chamber entrance, walls of chamber (2 - 3 m up). Two panels.
Remarks:	Pigment contains human and mammal blood. Red ochre used.
Dates:	c. 10,730 and c. 9,240 B.P. (218:227).

Map Number: 2

Site Name: "Ballawinne" (i.e. "Ochre"), formerly "Ochre Cave".

Locale: Maxwell River, South West.

Cave Dimension: Has two entrances, 15 m long opening.

Art Chamber: 7 m high, 8 m across.

Exposure: In total darkness, 15 - 25 m inside.

Art: 23 hand stencils (5 left, 6 right, 12 unknown), patches.

Art Location: At narrow cave entrance, ceiling, floor, 2 panels,
5 prominent blazes on rock protuberances at entrances
and in art chamber.

Remarks: Red ochre.

Dates: c. 14,000 B.P. a nearby small sealed occupation deposit
with ochre (221:226).

Map Number: 3

Site Name: "Keyhole Cavern".

Locale: Near "Bone Cave", Weld River, South West.

Cave Dimension: 10 m wide x 1 m high entrance, 20 m long.

Art Chamber: 25 m wide x 2 m high.

Exposure: Some shaft sunlight for short time, dim light, 50 m from the entrance.

Art: 3 hand stencils (1 right, 1 left, 1 unknown), smears, ring of blobs.

Art Location: Low ceiling, cracks and hollows in walls.

Remarks: Red ochre.

Dates: No date from site, but nearby un-associated "Bone Cave" has produced a date of c. 29,000 B.P.

Map Number: 4

Site Name: "Megs Mit" and an unnamed rock shelter.

Locale: c. 10 km from Ellendale, Derwent Valley, Southern Midlands.

Cave Dimension: Large.

Art Chamber: -----

Exposure: Apparently only rock-shelters. Overhangs?

Art: "A number of outlines in red of human hands" (140:81).

Art Location: Inner walls.

Remarks: Sandstone shelter. Now destroyed by Hydro-Electric Commission dams. Limited data. Red ochre.

Dates: c. 800 B.P. Occupation. Art possibly only a few hundred years old (221:230). Some suggestion of c. 1830's work by Australian Imported Aborigines.

Map Number: 5

Site Name: None?

Locale: On Tasman Peninsula, South East.

Cave Dimension: Large.

Art Chamber: ----

Exposure: Apparently only rock-shelter. Overhang?

Art: Single hand stencil.

Art Location: Inner wall?

Remarks: Sandstone shelter. Red ochre.

Dates: Art possibly only a few hundred years. Not suggestive of Australian Aboriginal work in c. 1830's as never visited the area (221:230).

Map Number: 6

Site Name: Unknown, but as it is a secretive protected site it may have an Aboriginal name.

Locale: South Coast (I will not disclose area), New River area.

Cave Dimension: Apparently small but high enough to walk into.

Art Chamber: Actually part of entrance and small inner section.

Exposure: Some limited protection from prevailing weather.

Art: Figurative and abstract, human feet either outlined or filled it, possibly human shapes. Without a doubt extremely important. A gallery in form, petroglyphs, possibly eroded painting.

Art Location: Walls, possibly extends onto ceiling.

Remarks: Evidence of two periods and two types of pounding tools. Produced using a metal tool it seems on some images i.e. the intagliated feet.

Dates: Some suggestion that could be c. 3,000 years old. The metal tool work post 1804 or did they obtain tools from the French expeditions pre 1804?

Map Number:	7
Site Name:	Unknown.
Locale:	South Coast.
Cave Dimension:	?
Art Chamber:	?
Exposure:	?
Art:	Lines in charcoal and red ochre.
Art Location:	?
Remarks:	Seems a rock-shelter. Only a casual Archaeological visit without research?
Dates:	None obtained.

The south west river valleys uniqueness in other respects, such as its "Thumbnail Scrapers" some made from an impactite, "Darwin Glass", suggests no contact or a cultural separation with the adjoining south east, principally the Southern Midlands yet we have through the hand-stencil art a possible association. So far hand-stencils seem to be confined to the southern part of Tasmania but it must be stressed that the lack of evidence in the north may be due to lack of preservation more than anything else.

Again, it is dangerous to suggest a definite cultural exchange or association between the south west and south east although a closeness of the Weld and Derwent Rivers may reflect some contact. It is just as highly suggestive that a similar tradition originated from a far south contact between the two such as along the Cracroft Valley and eastwards along the coast up the Derwent. Historic suggestions have the Port Davey people going north to near New Norfolk which is on the Derwent.

It is all speculation without evidence and we cannot disregard anything especially a common art that they had without the necessity of exchange of ideas or traditions.

Suggestions regarding rock paintings in caves may mean that they were intended as "_____symbols of an emerging group identity_____" and "_____stencils may have enabled particular groups of people to identify their association with particular caves or perhaps tracts of land such as whole river valleys" - (Rosenfeld, 218:226).

But does this explain what seems to be a child's hand and the fact that the images are in some instances deep inside caves that could only be accessed with a light from a torch. The mixing of human blood with the ochre seems all to be much more complex and mystic than just announcing ones presence and territorial claim.

Suggestions of pounding/abrasions to release spiritual energy from rock surfaces may have a relationship with, can I suggest, a uniting or release of similar spirituality by instead of impacting but by leaving an attachment, even a closer relationship being your own spiritual outline. I cannot justify any belief that it is merely a "I was here" ego trip.

What else is to be discovered in this remote area?

An incredible legacy to all the world, not only the Aboriginal Tasmanians.

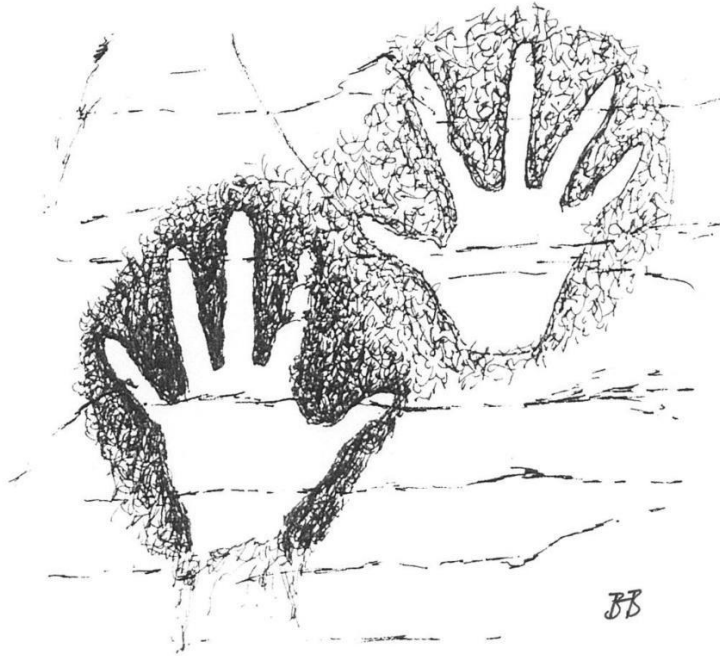
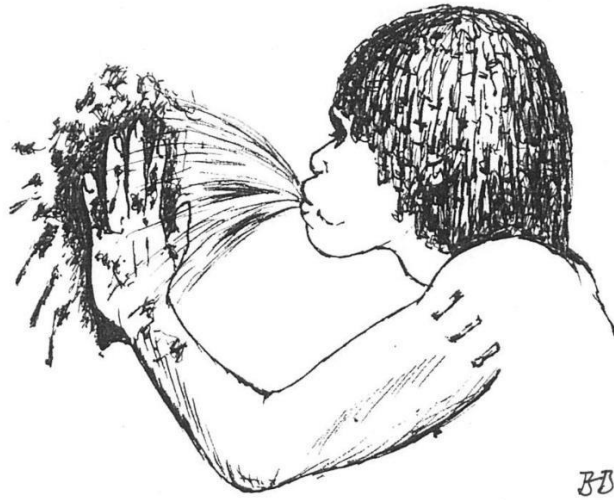
Prior to 1976 an exhibition by research worker Peter C. Sims on behalf of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra produced a small pamphlet (258) in which he mentions a sandstone cave south of Cape Sorell (on the entrance to Macquarie Harbour), he stated "_____completely decorated with linear and naturalistic designs". The ceiling (14 foot high) having lines and the walls linear designs, apparently the cave floor had circular motifs and three naturalistic figures of "_____a fish-like figure_____and two sets of animal tracks_____" Sims suggested probably of the now extinct Tasmanian Emu!

This is the only mention I can find of this art at this site, but I believe it is a complex gallery of great significance.

A confused statement comes from the Westlake Papers (231:21);

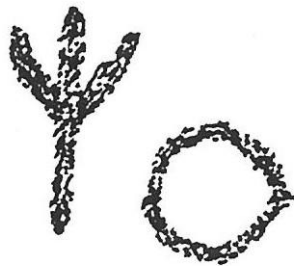
"Mark of a hand with fingers spread out" made in charcoal - that of a woman? left hand up the Huon (River)".

Was it in a cave or on bark or a stone surface? We are not told.



Hand Stencil Art

PALAEO - TASMANIAN PETROGLYPHS



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“Abbreviations Used”

The following list applies to all my works and are abbreviations used.

(12)	Reference – consult “References” in each work. E.g. (12) = Friendly Mission.
(12:21)	As above but denotes the page number in a work.
(12:20/7/31)	As above but the date in that work.
A.S.L.	Above sea level (the present).
B.C.E.	Before the Christian era (formerly just B.C.) or "Common Era".
B.P.	Before the present (1950)
B.S.L.	Below sea level (the present).
C.14	Radio Carbon Dating E.g. C.14 9,120 ± 200 B.P.
C.	Circa = about E.g. C. 8,120 BP = About 8,120 before the present.
Cal.	Calibrated.
CR	Protected by “Copyright” and not to be reproduced etc for my publications.
G.A.R.	George Augustus Robinson.
Kyg	Thousands of years ago. E.g. 10 kyg = ten thousand years ago.
L.G.M.	Last Glacial Maximum (C. 20 - 18,000 B.P.).
M	Metres e.g. 100 M.
P.G.M.	Post Glacial Maximum (C. 6 - 3,500 B.P.).
P.P.S.	Palawa Pleistocene Speakers.
S.L.	Sea Level.
T.S.W.F.T.	Tidal Stone Wall Fish Traps.

"Petroglyph" (Rock Engravings)

Tasmania's Palaeo-Tasmanian Aborigines have left behind very little obvious evidence of their long history. Natural features such as rock shelters give little to the casual visitor, a floor of crushed shell - the same as can be seen on the coast - middens that could be overlooked as natural high tide deposits. To those more observant, stone artefacts may exist. So excluding the tidal stone wall fish-traps, that may or may be not Aboriginal, and the stone structures along the Upper East Coast, the only real visually significant Aboriginal evidence of their 40+ thousands of years presence are "Petroglyphs", that is rock engravings, and these are usually in very remote places, not remote to the Palaeo-people but us, with a need to trek by foot from the nearest road which could be kilometres away.

Besides this the main distribution is in the west, where "going can be rough", or more recently in isolated areas of the North East and Central Plateau Highlands.

By far the most famous are the engravings set in galleries, often submerged under Late Holocene sand, north of Mount Cameron West which is itself north of Marrawah, the closest township.

No exact locations are given in these notes by me because of respect to the Tasmanian Aborigines and to do my bit to protect them against the senseless vandalism that does occur in Tasmania. At least a quarter of these sites have been desecrated (359:162).

Before I go any further I wish to express my admiration to Peter Sims of North West Tasmania, without a doubt the most experienced and learned person (the "Doyen" (359), on the subject of Tasmania's Palaeo-rock art.

Peter and I go back some 50 years as casual colleagues in the research of Palaeo-Tasmanian people. In the following notes re: the "Mersey Bluff", Devonport, petroglyphs, I am of a different opinion on some "motifs" with him and for this I would apologise.

Peter is at this time (2012 A.D.) continuing his outstanding research on petroglyphs and no doubt it will be another significant contribution to the subject. My little paper here is only a summary of various publications and in no way can be compared to Peter's extensive knowledge.

Tasmania's petroglyphs comprise;

1) "Geometric Art", comprising a small range of designs (motifs)

and

2) "Figurative Art", even more selective and extremely rare.

The following notes are intended to explain their characteristics and associated subjects of importance.

"Distribution"

It was originally believed that "petroglyphs" in Tasmania were confined to Coastal Tasmania from about Three Hummock Island to Port Davey, all West Coast with the exception, of some disputed (but at least one circle) at the Northern Coastal Mersey Bluff and other circles near Point Sorell just further east.

Those suggested coming from the eastern half of the island, Tasman Peninsula in the south east and isolated undocumented suppositions elsewhere were all found to be not engravings or presumed to be the work of non-Aborigines.

The chance discoveries on the Central Plateau as well as confirmation of Aboriginality of the Blue Tier petroglyphs (359) has greatly extended the distribution into the east. The Launceston Gorge has also added to the number, its locale is no surprising considering the natural environment that even to "whites" suggest a sort of spiritual place of great beauty. The actual site has not been located (Peter Sims 2012).

The distribution map shows rough positioning of sites.

In 1997 we were told that only eight authenticated sites existed; Sandown Point, Ordance Point, Greenes Creek, Mt. Cameron West, Trial Harbour, Nelson Bay, Monster Creek (Tas 1792) and Cape Grim, all on the West Coast (221:231).

Now subsequently, there are it seems at least 20 but I am not sure if all are accepted as "authentic". As seen it is not a confinement to the West Coast any more. I have no doubt more exist, probably covered under ever moving sand or vegetation - regretfully tree roots do damage to some rock faces, let alone sand blasting, so how many have been so destroyed is anyone's guess. As well, it is possible that some exist in montane areas yet to be discovered.

Regretfully, today's farmers and graziers and others who utilise remote areas for recreation are loath to report anything Aboriginal because of fears of losing use of the land. I have no doubt some people are aware of some material, even some may have destroyed it, thus attempts to protect have had the opposite effect - I blame no one but the politics played out have cause heart-ache to those genuine in concern. However acts of vandalism are inexcusable and those perpetrating such "crimes" should be punished.

Point Sorell Area" (Site 11)

Back in 1966 whilst attending a weekend seminar by Rhys Jones and Harry Lourandos I recall a discussion by Mr. Charles Turner of Burnie (now deceased) and a photo he showed of a lone small engraved circle on Dolerite. According to Peter (15th Nov. 2011 email) this was on a hill overlooking Northdown Beach, West of Point Sorell. Additionally Peter told me that "some engraved circles on a rock on the westward side of Point Sorell" exist. These are the most eastern petroglyphs I know of until one comes to "Meenamatta' (in the Blue Tier Mountains of the North East), although mention is made of the petroglyph in the Cataract Gorge, Launceston. (359:161), a concentric circle (Peter Sims).

So actually in the Point Sorell area we have two separate areas of petroglyphs.

"Tiagarra" (The Mersey or Devonport Bluff) (Site 11).

The nearest other site is west about fifteen kilometres from Point Sorell, the Mersey Bluff, and is without a doubt the most discussed site being the subject of much debate as to whether they are petroglyphs or natural markings.

Originally the Devonport Council installed a small Museum concentrating on the Aboriginal Heritage and as a tourist initiative, more recently it has been run by the Mersey Leven Aboriginal Corp. Inc. as an enterprise (pamphlet c. 2008). Its name is "Tiagarra", a Bruny Island word for "keep" (229:255), why a south eastern word for a northern area was chosen is strange.

At this site which has a beautiful view across Bass Strait and clearly because of its natural setting it must have been of significance to the Palaeo-people. Midden evidence and some stone artefacts exist. Regretfully no real ethnological evidence exists that I know about, being settled too late, that is Post 1830, when the last Bands had been destroyed.

I feel that some petroglyphs do exist, circles, but only a few and anything else is natural! Let me explain.

The "markings" have undergone a great deal of critical examination (44) and there are two camps of thought. They were first studied by a school teacher, A.L. Meston c. 1934 (112) and it was he that believed he could recognise images of abalone, emus, snakes and other "things".

The markings have been inspected by archaeologists and they have been hesitant in accepting them (44:2), (186). I have no intention of arguing the pros and cons but the action of small marine type life forms are known to create irregular markings on rocks and the tree roots are notorious for burrowing along stone outcrops as with those supposedly on the Tasman Peninsula and along the Derwent Valley (44:2).

Additionally E.O.G. Scott, Assistant Curator of the Queen Victoria Museum at Launceston in 1931 personally doubted them being the work of humans (150:129).

One point I would like to make is that the so called "emu", (it could be just a bird), has some obvious flaws. The tail is upright, the lines of its form are irregular in depth and other lines that are connected to the "form lines" are ignored (see Fig 10 and Photo 80B).

Additionally I would like to make reference to the studies of Murray (1980) in which he explained that he believed that the combination of two factors: - "(1) That the curvilinear, concentric and radial jointing; and (2) the erosive and invasive action of roots, and/or rhizomes - is suggested to be sufficient cause for the Mersey Bluff markings". (111)

In 2005 a further inspection was made by a respected Geologist and in the following pages this unpublished memo by Jennings is quoted.

I am not sure but I believe that it is possible the findings of this earlier inspection is in part the basis for the story. "Bluff is no sham" (The Examiner Newspaper, 10th November, 2009) in which Peter stands by his opinion that the markings are petroglyph - how many and what they are I am not sure but he is quoted in the paper as saying he found some 240 (Mest on found 74).

The following is too important not to quote. The source is David Leaman's "The rock which makes Tasmania" (314: Addenda vs 5 1/2005). The quote is from an unpublished 1972 memo for chief geologist Jennings and museum Director Gregg regarding the inspection of the Mersey Bluff suggested Petroglyphs. I cannot say the following is a direct quote of the memo but is from (314);

"Many joints are short, curved, and faint or incipient but most show traces of early weathering".

and

"Many of the "carvings" are linked forms of notched joints and thus are natural effects".

also

"There is no hint of working or shaping and the depth and continuity profiles do not suggest enhancement of primary features".

The memo however does go on to say;

"Some rarer features are distinctive and include concentric circles about 150mm in diameter with wide grooves. These are reminiscent of the plateau carving. The width of grooves and their shallow form indicates sculpture. These may not be natural features".

The conclusion re: the bluffs "carvings" is;

"I concluded then that most features were probably natural and offered fluky forms which might be interpreted as animals, but that a few might be genuine carvings".

An additional note refers to P. Murray's (111) conclusion that none were genuine, assigning all of them to curvilinear joint effects enhanced by root and rhizome - underground stem of roots and leafy shoots - activity.

So while most of the markings regarded as petroglyphs by earlier reporters are not so, some are, especially some circles.

However it must be remembered that on mainland Australia natural lines/grooves are sometimes included in the human work (359:165) and this may explain the Devonport Bluff and confirm Peter's opinions.

"Central Plateau" (Site 13).

On the 25/11/1999 an article in the Launceston newspaper, "The Examiner", reported that a series of concentric circles measuring c. 2 x 1.5 metres, set high up on a vertical outcrop of Jurassic Dolerite had been discovered, (Fig 7). Its exact site is not known to me, (because of security reasons to stop vandalism), but apparently is west of the Great Lake the nearest town, it seems, is Miena. To execute such a work of art would necessarily mean the usage of some sort of structure, probably a wooden frame work, I think that suitable wood may be in short supply in the proximity of the engraving necessitating the transport of timber some distance away. Such work suggests a special significance for any enterprise (314:168).

A final suggestion is that some doubt on their Aboriginality requires more geological investigations as there does not appear to be any signs of pecking or rubbing abrasions, at least obviously (personal discussion - Don Ranson Feb, 2009).

Of great interest is (314:Plate 63), in this work we are told that the markings are elliptical in form, (oval, slightly acute at each end, rather narrow and broadest in the middle), and flat cross sections of the carvings showing that these are not natural features, and although some dispute some of the Mersey Bluff the Central Plateau has engravings that are beyond dispute. Suggestions being that they may be solar, astronomical or religious (314:168).

The Moorlands immediately west of the Great Lake seem to have been a place of spiritual significance. Economically the area is very poor.

The area within its south east near Lake Fergus and the nearby Skitterball Hill and plains although not rich in artefact scatter do have ethnological evidence.

A "cupule" site exists near Cradle Mountain (site 20) (362:6) and I presume that this is not Site 13 (in these notes) being concentric circles.

"The Western Ranges" (Site 15).

The Moors of the Central plateau are not the only area inland with reported petroglyphs. Graeme Calder in his work (317:42) tells of "_____ a fine example can be found near Lake Mary in the Western Ranges" and (317:260, note 177) that this information was sourced from a Mr. Randall Trethewie of Longford (photographs and personal comments to Calder).

This is an incredible discovery! For it lies north of Lake Margaret and just east of the southern most part of the Tyndall Range. The nearest towns are, Queenstown c. 10 kilometres south and Rosebery c. 24 kilometres north. And c. 33 kilometres from the coast to its west.

Stone artefact scatter, including Darwin Glass, and ethnological information about a defunct band living around Queenstown is known (12).

Obviously, not all petroglyphs have been discovered and clearly can no longer be confined to the coast.

However, my information is limited and until confirmed as a petroglyph it is best not to speculate too much.

"Preminghana" (Site 3)

This is the Aboriginal name for Mt. Cameron West - sometimes referred to as Mt. Preminghana (236:25) - situated on the Upper West Coast. The actual site is some distance north, not on the actual mountain.

This is the largest and most complex petroglyph art site known in Tasmania, an incredible gallery of artistic achievement and we are told widely recognised as one of the most outstanding of any hunter-gathering society (205:338).

Set in calcareous sandstone, a relatively soft material, it is a wonder that it has survived. Regretfully, some decades ago two slabs were removed to be put in the two museums in Launceston and Hobart. If it was not for the natural protection of drifting sand that covered it, it would have been completely destroyed by salt spray, violent storms, wind and rain let alone rhizomes. Its discovery in 1931 was due to the exposure by wind erosion and in 1830 Robinson who passed by it never mentioned its existence being it seems hidden (205:338).

The site comprises at least two large and several small groupings. The motifs are circles, concentric circles, barred and circles that overlap, rows of dots, crosses and trellis type designs (205:338).

Amazingly there are also bird-tracks as well as a human track (205:338), (Fig 6. No. 1) the sizes of the engravings are from a few centimetres to more than a metre in diameter. (205:338).

Excavations in 1969 contributed considerably to the knowledge of the site including its area and its importance.

"Swandown Point" (often referred to incorrectly as "Sundown Point") (Site 4).

Not too far south of the Mt. Cameron West site, it too has a significant gallery but in comparisons it is small, (see photo 83A & B and Fig 6).

The laminated siltstone offered the artists a canvas to work on.

They pecked some 250 plus marks on about 100 separate panels.

These are weathered and very shallow.

Diameter measurements average c. 20 - 30 cm ranging from c. 8 - 60cm. Four graphic forms have been recognised;

- 1) Clusters or speckled areas,
- 2) Solid dots or pits - these are larger and deeper than 1).
- 3) Linear open designs (of dots in lines),
- and 4) Linear closed designs (of dots linked together in a solid line).

The most common motifs are;
circles (oval or circular) some 45%, and speckled areas.

Additionally there are concentric circles, speckled areas within circles, overlapping circles, straight lines, curved lines (singularly or in sets), sets of dotted parallels as well simple linear designs comprising dots and simple dotted designs which include crosses (205:341-2).

Within these galleries is a particularly appealing design (Fig 6. No. 2) comprising two concentric ovals with a sort of satellite arrangement of eight small circles and a separate circle of the same size above them and to the right.

This unique (as far as I am aware) piece has been utilised by the University of Tasmania (U-Tas) regarding Aboriginal studies and may be a copyright. A scattering of speckles across the panel exists (in part 205:341-2). Its importance seems significant because of design, size and its one-time conspicuous setting. It was said to be;

"_____the dominant visual element of the site".

Its removal to the Tasmanian Museum has destroyed its significance.

The two principle components of rock art sites are "The Site and its Cultural Content" they are inseparable, if they are then the site has no cultural significance (360:2).

At "Preminghana" and Swandown Point exists what has been described as a wide range of motifs superimposed on each other, both are complex arrangements of overlapping circles, smaller circles, straight lines, curved lines and dot designs, so much time and effort means great importance (mainly 205:342).

"Meenamatta" (Site 18).

Situated in the Blue Tier Mountains, North West of St. Helens in Tasmania's north east it was originally inspected in c. 1957 and rejected as being the work of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, instead suggestions were made that they were connected to the Tin Mining Enterprises of c. 1912 - boundary markers (359:162) or in some instances, such as linear grooves, the results of tree roots rhizomes). Indeed one inspected area on the peak of Mt. Michael is still suggestive of rhizome action or other natural agents. (359:166).

"Meenamatta" has, at this time, at least three (groupings) site areas, set in a mountain peak environment that has a marvellous panoramic view. Its elevation is c. 800 metres above sea level.

The petroglyphs are amongst granite and feldspar outcrops and large boulders some up to 6m in length.

The sites are suggested as "mountain sanctuaries" and specifically one site, BT3, is mentioned as no doubt having ceremonies performed on it (359:165) the other sites likewise were significantly important in ritual activities. Other sites may exist nearby yet to be discovered. This ritual use of mountain peaks is a first in Australian research (359:161).

The four sites have a coded reference BT1 to BT4 but only the first three are believed to be petroglyphs. A very selective summary of these three are;

- "BT1" At least 70 engravings, more or less circular. The most prominent are near perfect straight lines, circular markings about 11 cm in diameter..
An alignment of these cupules, runs over eight large boulders for c. 19.5 metres (359:162), a suggestion is that they are "emu tracks" (325:22) (Fig 8).
- "BT2" Near BT1 and under turf are four rows of similar cupules comprising 7, 5, 7 and 10, a total of 29.
Two types of engravings were recorded, percussion grooves and the cupules, all are heavily weathered on feldspar that has some quartz material within it.
Eight, or more, individual cupules with other weathered ones suggest c. 50 (including the 29) exist.
The diameters are 5 to 8 cm.
Numerous linear grooves are present but except for two made by percussion the research is not sure if petroglyphs (359:163-4).
- "BT3" Finally, further west at the highest peak on a prominent granite boulder about 2 metres long, set in a conspicuous position in it is a very large cupule, 115mm in diameter and 40mm deep.
Another cupule is on another nearby boulder and close to this are numerous smaller ones, some clustered some in a straight line.
Linear grooves present, is suggestive of possibly being incorporated into the known carvings. The grooves being possibly natural.
The possible use of already present natural lines we are told occurs on the Australian mainland and no cultural distinction is made between them and petroglyphs, both being a part of the creation stories that may have taken place during ritual ceremonies (359:165).

This suggested connection between petroglyphs and naturally formed indentations I find especially interesting because when viewing the so-called "emu" (Fig 10) (which it is not but is it another type of bird?) at the Mersey Bluff I was concerned that research observations, back in about 1965, only seemed to record those lines that made up the suggested shape, I thought this was a bit convenient, however perhaps unwittingly the other lines, if natural, were never the less a part of the symbolic use

of a bird anyway. Sorry, I am still not convinced about this "emu", as possibly others are, - yet?

- (359:167) Summarises the "Meenamatta" sites as of two motifs,
1) Cupules - of different sizes - some aligned, grouped or singles.
2) Linear grooves - including convergent line motifs.

These motifs are suggested as quite likely related to concentrations of natural rock markings.

Finally, the present day Tasmanian Aboriginals have apparently given an Aboriginal name to the "Blue Tiers" , that is "Meenamatta". I could not find the meaning for it but a very similar word (obviously the same) "Meenamata" is the name given to a lagoon on the summit of nearby Ben Lomond, possibly Lake Youl or Baker (236:17).

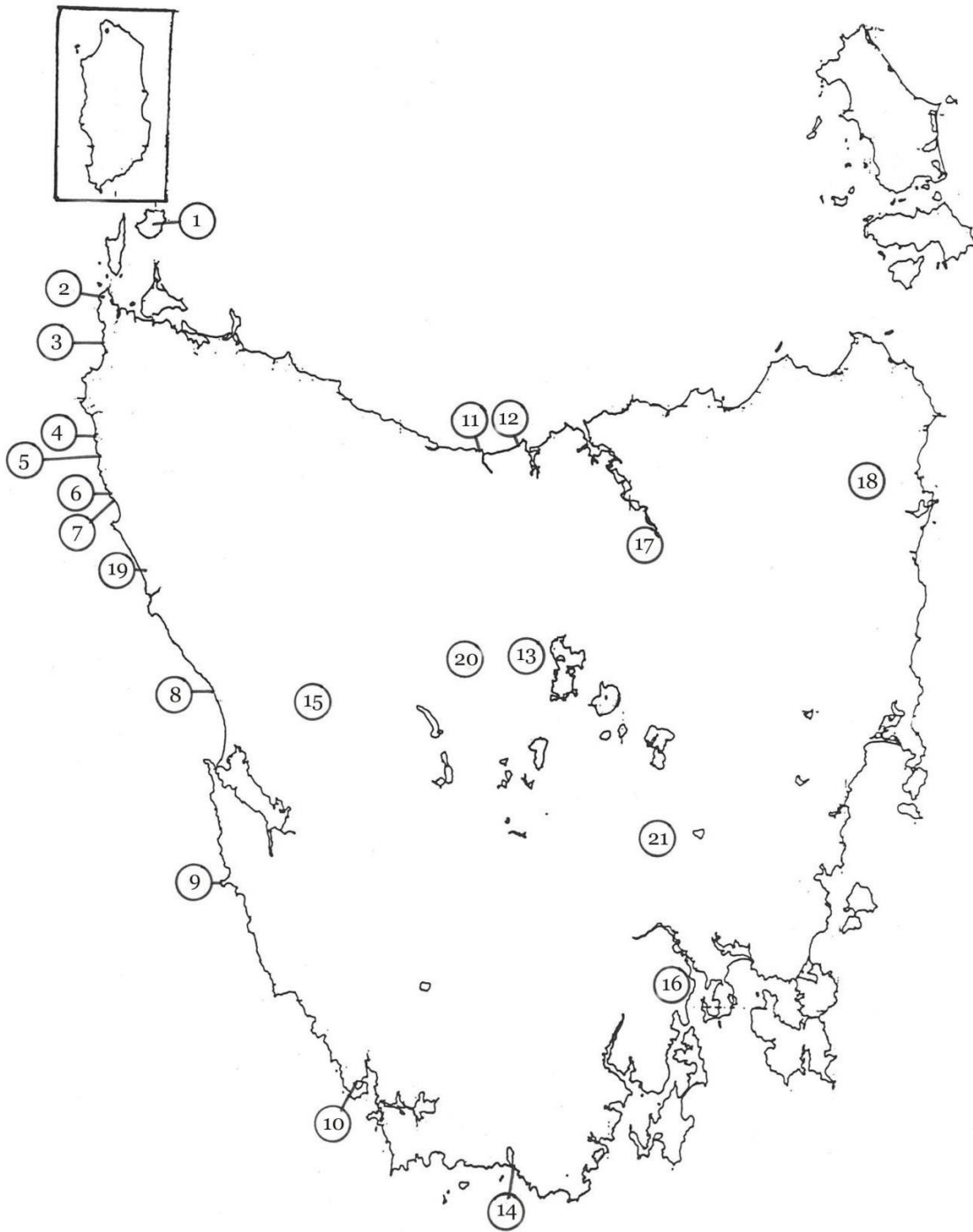


Fig 1

Approximate Sites of Petroglyphs
(See following List).

Other Sites

I have only discussed briefly seven of the possible 21 petroglyphs sites in Tasmania while in a more casual way mentioned the other 14 when appropriate, not that they are not important but because they are best summarised in the following "List of Petroglyph Sites".

However Site 21 in this work (Photo 332) lies in the Southern Midlands and may be a cupule - possibly two - set within an irregular circle. The site requires investigation especially when it seems it is the only one known in the area.

Status

By this I mean have all the 21 sites been accepted as authentic. In the following list I have a column utilising the following;

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--|
| A. | Authenticated. | That is accepted as definitive petroglyphs, eleven sites. |
| B. | Some acceptance. | Still a difference of opinions but some at the site authenticated generally. Only one site. |
| C. | Now un-located. | Believed to be authenticated. Three sites. |
| D. | Geological acceptance. | That is some Archaeological disagreement but geological acceptance, suggesting authentic. Only one site. |
| E. | Believed to be. | Figurative art that is unique but still I believe has authenticity. One site. |
| F. | Unknown - some doubt. | Cannot be here listed as "A". Now un-located in some cases, three. One subject to investigation. |

"List of Petroglyph Sites"

No.	Site	Nearest Locale	Raw Material	Number of Petroglyphs	Motifs / Designs etc	Status	References
1	Three Hummock Island (North end of Coulomb Bay).	Part of so-called Hunter Group. Far North West Coast.	Granite	6+	Circles and an oblong shape.	A	134:30 154: Plate 1
2	Opposite the Doughboys.	Cape Grim. Far North West Coast.	Calcareous sandstone.	one + dots	Circle with dots around it. At a spring and a cave. Now un-located. Robinson found it by chance as he did Greene's Creek.	A	12:20/2/1834, 12:24/6/1830, 221:233, 12. 88:124
3	"Preminghana" North of Mt. Cameron West.	North of Marrawah. Upper West Coast.	Soft calcareous sandstone.	1.404 + 7 bird tracks + 1 human track.	Whole galleries - rows or column of dots, large circles common, concentric circles, overlaying and barred circles, crosses, rows of pits, trellis-like designs, circles from a few centimetres to more than one metre in diameter, many designs only occur here, large bird (emu?) tracks, one footprint. Pecked and abraded.	A	221:233, 235.
4	Swandown (Sundown) Point.	North of Nelson Bay. Upper West Coast.	Laminated mudstone.	252 (45% circles)	Circles, (ovals - irregular common, symmetrical less common, speckled areas within ovals, set of curved lines, over-lapping circles, simple linear designs, rows or columns of dots. Smaller gallery than No. 3. Pecking only.	A	(1981 Robert Gunn), 221:233.
5	Nelson Bay.	North of Temma. Upper West Coast.	Schist.	C. 5	Circles.	A	Tunapi No. 1, P:5, 221:233.
6	Ordnance Point.	South of Temma. Upper West Coast.	Laminated mudstone.	A number!	Circles. Pecking only.	A	(1983 Cosgrove) 221:233. Peter Sims.
7	Greenes (Green) Creek.	South of Ordance Point. Upper West Coast.	Laminated mudstone.	75	Circles only, one with a cross, pecked and abraded. One of two sites (the other, Doughboys area) discovered by Robinson.	A	(1977 Stockton) 221:233. 205:343. 12:818 N 70.
8	Trial Harbour (The "Ringing Rock").	Remine. Mid West Coast.	Granite	19	Eroded arcs of rings and rings -7? Rings (circles) c. 12, diameter 6" - 15" (15 - 38cm), circles with dots in centres. Engraved on the so-called "Ringing Rock" - one of the most unusual petroglyph sites in Australia.	A	140:81, 221:237 221:237
9	South of Point Hibbs.	Lower West Coast.	?	?	Circles. Now un-located.	C	Peter Sims.
10	Bond Bay.	Port Davey, South West Coast.	Schistose Slate.	190	Cupules (single or four rows), five sites, parallel rows of indentation.	A	110, 359:161
11	"Tiagarra" Mersey Bluff	Devonport. Central North Coast.	Dolerite.	240+ ?	Circle and suggested figuratives (birds, snakes, abalone etc.) Some disputed.	B	Various Peter Sims.
12	Northdown Beach.	Port Sorell. Central North Coast.	Dolerite.	1 + others.	Circles, two sites.	C	Peter Sims.

13	West of Great Lake, Central Plateau.	Miena.	Jurassic Dolerite.	One Unknown number	A series of giant concentric circles in a single motif. Two by one and a half metres, up on a vertical outcrop - unique! Some dispute it seems others accept Seems possibly other exist.	D	25/11/1999 Newspaper. 308, 314:Plate 63
14	New River area.	Far Southern Tasmania.	Stratiified sandstone.	A Gallery.	Figurative in and around a rock shelter entrance, human figures? A number of images of feet.	E	Newspaper Photo 14/4/2004.
15	Near Lake Mary (Mary Tarn)	Western Ranges area, inland Central West.	Dolerite	An unknown number	Concentric circles.	C	317:42, Peter Sims
16	Parliament House	Hobart, South	?	?	?	F	359:161 Peter Sims.
17	Cataract Gorge.	Launceston, inland North.	Dolerite?	One	Concentric circle, now un-located.	F	359:161, Peter Sims.
18	"Meenamatta".	Blue Tier Mountains, North East.	Granite, Feldspar	c. 50	Three sites. Cupules and grooves.	A	359.
19	Monster Creek, (Tas 1792) Upper West Coast	North of Pieman's Heads.	Metamorphised siltstone	4	Circles (one with a bar), possible? dots.	A	221:231, 362.
20	Near Cradle Mountain.	Cradle Mountain.	Dolerite.	?	Cupule.	F	362:6.
21	"Apsley Cave".	Upper Jordan Valley,	Triassic sandstone.	1?	Possible cupule come irregular circle. Doubts suggested	F	The writer.

"West and East"

Back in 1968 the Archaeologist Harry Lourandos recognised the significant differences between Western and Eastern Tasmania, (69), indeed the island is about a 50/50 in those terms, however the vast Central Highland/Lake District that lies virtually in a "dead centre" position within the island is hard to include in one part or the other separation areas of west and east, so requires, I suggest individual acknowledgement

So it is that when a study is made of petroglyphs we find significant differences that require attention to try and understand why.

The first is its environment, the second its economic potential for Palaeo-occupation and the third is the types of petroglyphs.

A detailed study is obviously warranted so it is my intention to only briefly explain what I see that explains the differences mainly in a summary form.

"Western"

"Eastern"

Environment	
Mountainous, deep river valleys, High rainfall, Hostile environment, Lashed by storms, Thick rainforest, sedge, moor, Fire-sticking of little use.	Some mountains, open landscape, often. Much lower rainfall, Very pleasant environment, Few storms, Open sclerophyll forest, Fire-sticking very important.
Economic	
Macropods - limited small areas. Emu - limited small areas. Possum - limited small areas. Seal - large colonies. Molluscs - very rich. Crayfish - very rich. Fresh water - extensive. Use of fire - limited. Seasonal food - mutton birds (especially in far North West). Semi-sedentary. More a coastal exploitation.	Macropods - vast areas. Emu - large areas. Possum - vast areas. Seal - not exploited significantly. Molluscs - south rich, north limited. Crayfish - more limited. Fresh water - some droughts. Use of fire - extensive. Seasonal food - Egg season prominent (around lagoons and Estuary flood plains). Prominent nomadic. A complexity of coast and hinterland exploitation.

Petroglyphs	
More extensive. Galleries. Greater variety, elaborate. Circles prominent and groupings. Concentration in Upper West Coast. Coastal. A great seasonal concentration. Very obvious, open to viewing. Mt. Cameron West - use of soft material.	Very few. Isolated groups. Confined variety, simplistic. Cupules prominent with lines. Concentration in North East. Montane. Possibly small group of visitors. Very secluded. Montane - use of very hard material

There is no doubt that the creation of rock art is directly related to the importance of the site utilised. This importance has to have, in a way, connection to an environment that has economic value and which because of this attracts a significant population coming together, possibly seasonally, also performing rituals probably to give thanks and to perpetuate the happy life they are enjoying.

It would seem that where as the Upper West Coast reflects this, the inland mountain north east site, (the only one known in the area), possibly suggests a desire to travel to an area that is "sacred" even secretive, with a surround showing a dramatic panoramic view of their rich environment. We do not know, perhaps it was a male ceremonial ground which could explain its remoteness.

Returning to the West Coast more pertinent the Mt. Cameron West and Swandown Point area, we have in Late Holocene (recent) times an eco-social tradition of concentration of Bands in this rich area for mutton-birding (further north on the islands) and activities that took place in the better conditions of the summery time.

This concentration of people as far as Port Davey, Devonport and even the Central Highlands, was a time of obviously ceremonies and considering, length of time, large population, feasting and soft workable material, (at least at "Preminghana"), more extensive works of art could be executed. To the south of the site is West Point. To the north the Islands, both incredibly rich in food-stuffs, perhaps this rough midway point attracted a concentration for rituals. It would seem that it was not that secretive as suggested in the distant north east mountain sites because of their open viewing to passes by and the vastness of midden material. It would therefore seem we have two distinct different meanings for the sites use.

The use of the sites are therefore possibly totally different and had it seems different significance to these completely separate people. Although one culture, Tasmania's Palaeo-people had each their own distinct characteristics in economics and traditions, each reacted in a way that was best to achieve the greatest benefits from their distinct environments. Tasmania was therefore within itself unique while sharing a common culture.

A significant difference in these two areas of the far north west and far north east is that the north west people had water-borne craft and exploited the so-called Hunter Group for mutton-bird while the north east people had no such craft and did not

exploit their richer islands for mutton-bird or seal. It seems they had a mystic belief that the islands had to be avoided - "The Land of the Dead".

It would also seem that since the north east montane site had no resources then we must ask why this place? Is it because of its view of the islands, a mystic land as said?

The possibility of undiscovered petroglyphs both in the west and the east cannot be ignored, no doubt others exist, but due to vegetation and/or sand-drift they have not been found.

The west has a considerable amount of midden scatter and in the area it is known that the specific sites were selected for "villages" or hut-groupings so these may have close by yet to be discovered petroglyphs, this does not mean every location will have them, just possibly.

The east, with its more nomadic life style, still could have undiscovered coastal petroglyphs but with so much visitations by those interested in Anthropology it is not likely many will be found. Yet not far from the mountain site near Friendly Beaches - Bay of Fires extensive creations of stone arrangements are highly visibly known. These seem unique, if not in design then in quantity, and reflects the artistic capabilities of its people.

Is it possible that with the north east vast quantity of dolerite, a hard material to work on, deterred the creation of rock-engravings but the impressive naturally dramatic formations were used instead for mystic ceremonies - no need to "chip away at them" they were symbolic in themselves. Is it also an explanation that cupules were best executed using natural lines as part of the overall design, where at Mt. Cameron West with its soft material and little or no significant outcrops as in the north east, there was a cultural need to express themselves, a need for an obvious object to concentrate ceremonial activities around.

On consulting the word-lists, no Aboriginal word or name was found for rock-engraving but two words for;

"Circle"	was	Lowamachana (Oyster Bay people), and
		Rawunna (Bruny Island or Southern people).

The words being a little ambiguous in their usage (229:183).

"Motifs"

Motifs i.e. decorative designs and patterns in Tasmania comprise;

- Cupules - Small, circular, hammered, cup-shaped hollows, pot-holes sometimes called dots, pits or cup marks (221:136) even indentations. Some "dots/pits" exist in rows or columns, these are;
- Aligned cupules - A distinct series in more or less a straight line. They have been identified as a distinct characteristic of Tasmania's rock art, the most common motif, they are said to be a specific type of art associated with high mountain peaks (evidence exists elsewhere in the world for this belief) (359:161). See Figure 3 No. 1 and 2, Figure 4 and 8.
- Circles - Circles or ovals are the most common Tasmanian motif. Indeed their prominence, because of their obvious shape that stands out to those who come across them, is still significant. The use of circles in other cultures for various reasons whether it be as a border, an eternal - never ending, no beginning or ending symbol or as a design that catches the eye is well known. What it meant to Palaeo-Tasmanians is unknown. Was it connected to the (shape) of the sun and moon? This is discussed later. See Figure 2.
- Concentric circles - Concentric means "having a common centre". Actually as a motif it is a smaller circle within a larger one. There seems to be a high number of them at "Preminghana" and Swandown Point. Examples exist of three circles, concentric with two smaller circles, a bar with a circle and even an "ankh-like" (Egyptian symbol Fig 2, No. 8) or a bar with an upper circle and lower right angle bar.
- Circles (others) - There are some examples of circular motifs that have additional engravings within their border. Speckled, barred, having a central dot, a cross, with a lower inner circle, a part (vertical) bar, a cross with four dots, some overlap each other. Grid-lines or bars some with three smaller circles as well as a prominent concentric circle with 8 - 9 small satellite-like circles. Other exist as seen in Figure 2.

It should be pointed out that although c. 99% of motifs are of a circular design (221:322) actually it is oval shapes that are more common than symmetrical circles (221:231), whether this is due to the artists lack of creation or actual intent is hard to say.

Some circles are pecked in outline, others grooved, but may be due to the material being worked on other than a specific design.

Lines - Excluding cupule types we have straight and curved, perhaps originally meant to be more straight.
Some may incorporate natural marks on the stone. Some are in sets others simple linear forms. See Figure 3 No. 3.
Also called "Abraded grooves".

Speckled areas - This is small chipped/ground markings - dot arrangements can be larger than mere chipping. See Figure 3 No. 4.

Galleries - While there are some isolated - mainly circles - petroglyphs, there are groupings of motifs at a number of sites with a few large areas covered extensively with various motifs often inter-tangled e.g. "Preminghana". See Photo 81A and 81C.

Within these "Galleries" are complexities of "trellis-like" designs, natural lines and marks that are interwoven into the overall design of the geometric art.

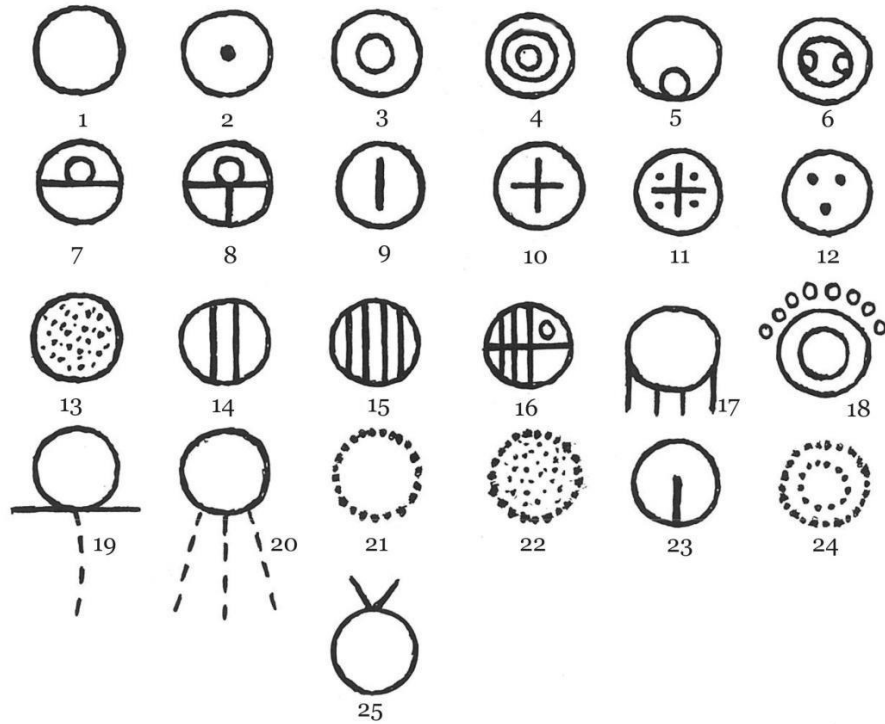
We cannot be sure what the meanings are for these motifs, this is discussed in these notes under "their meaning". What has to be considered is not only what these pitograms (pictorial symbols used as a form of represental "writing") mean but, when a part of a composition, what is this all meant to relay. Perhaps they were not meant to be read as such but more of a continuation, an addition, of the individual motifs already engraved.

Of course we cannot disregard the possibility that some were purely works of art, although this is greatly doubted.

I have not studied any site but I am sure Peter Sim's work more than covers the finer detail of the subject.

Note: Due to possible copyright infringement I have stylised the various motifs I have come across to show what the designs look like, but it must be stressed they may have been taken out of context when separated.

CIRCULAR MOTIFS



Circular motifs, some concentric (No. 3, 4, 18, 24). Many singular items also formed into combinations, even as parts of galleries at some sites like Preminghana and Swandown Point.

Although inspired by (159) they are all stylised.



Fig 2. Examples of some other variations utilising circles.

“LINEAL & DOTTED MOTIFS”

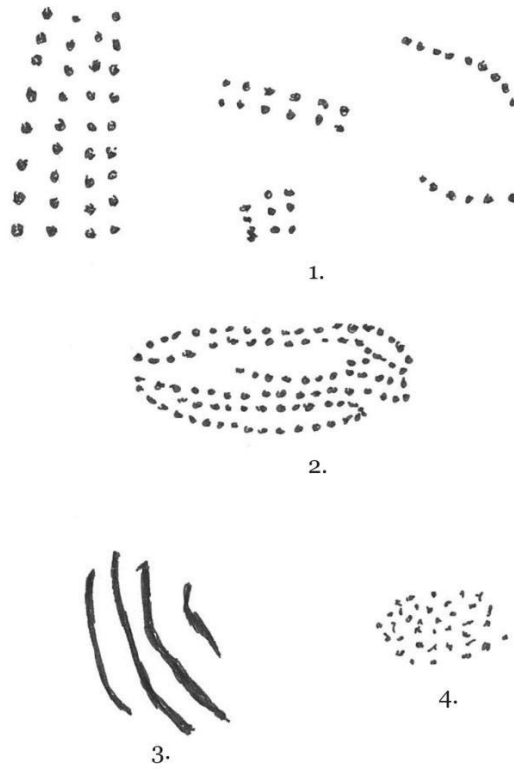
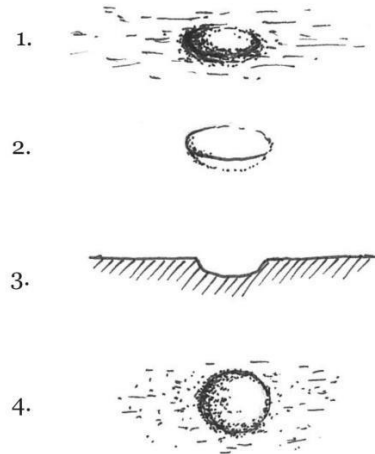


Fig 3.

1. Lineal dots.
2. A specific design in lineal dots.
3. Lines.
4. Speckled areas.

"CUPULES"



BB.

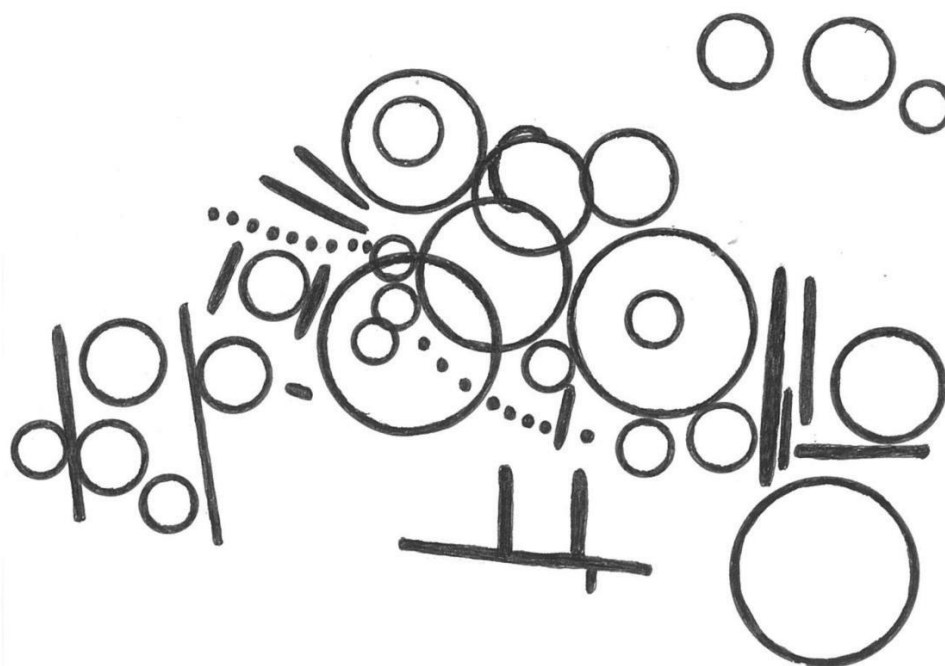
(Artists Impression only)

1. Eye view at c. 45°
2. Eye view but suggesting depth
3. Sectional view
4. Aerial view.

c. 24mm in width
12mm in depth

But only suggested as varied greatly.

Fig 4.

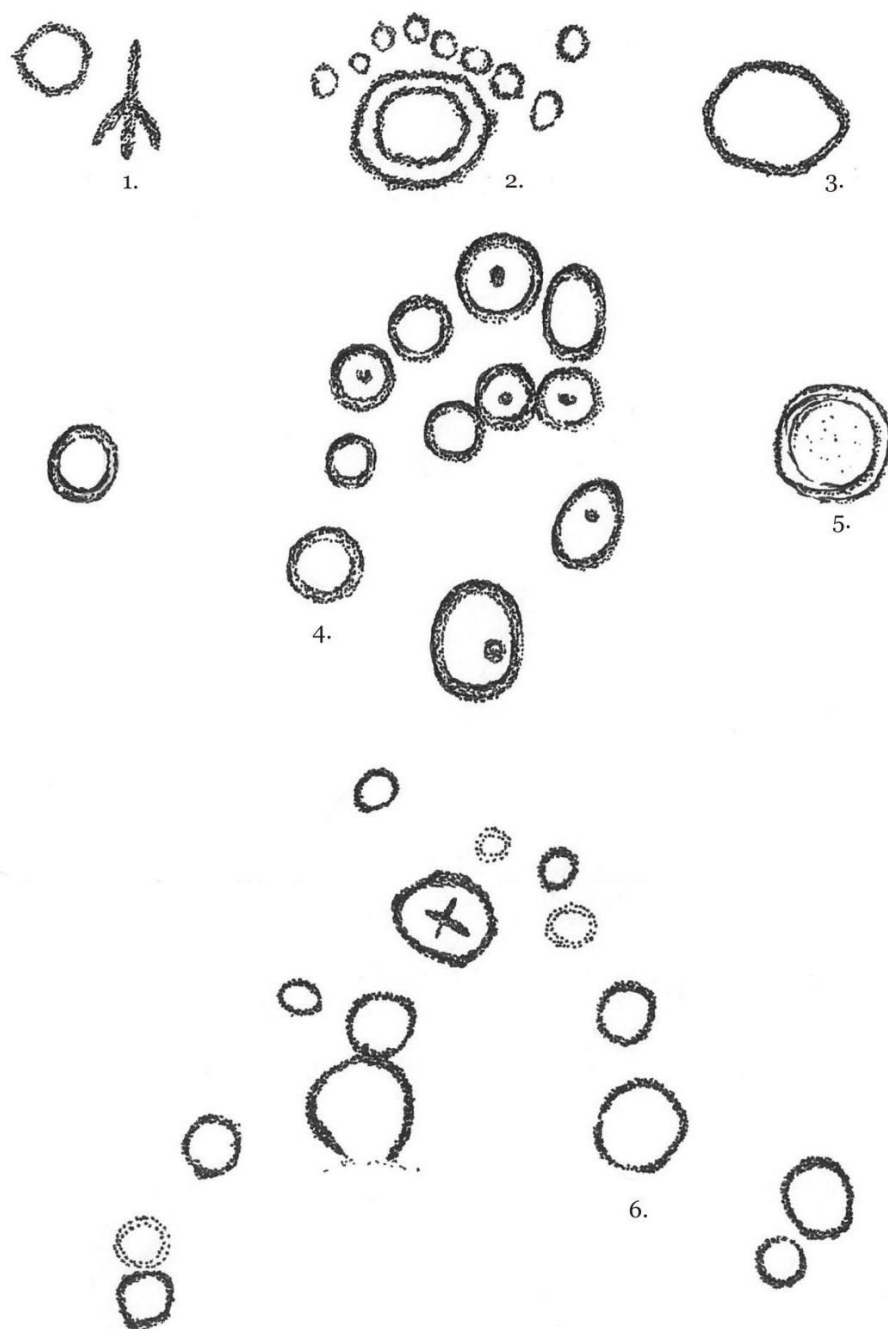


**STYLISTED REPRESENTATIONS OF MOTIFS
IN A CLUSTER.**

JB

Warning - Since I have stylised this art, being inspired by a photograph of a section of Swandown Points Gallery, taken by R. Gunn in 1981 and held by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, it is possible that some attribute of the art has been compromised, which was not the intent.

Fig 5.

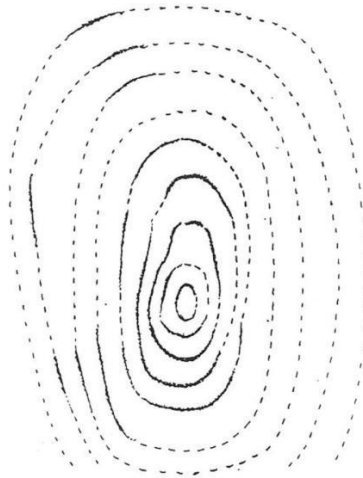


EXAMPLES OF PETROGLYPHS.

1. Bird track and circle, "Preminghana". (Inspired by Photo R. Edwards).
2. Circles, Swandown Point, (Inspired by Photograph R. Gunn).
3. Swandown Point. (Inspired from Photo B. Brimfield).
4. Trial Harbour. (Inspired from R. Cosgrove).
5. "The Circle", "Tiagarra".
6. Greenes Creek. (Inspired from J. Stockton).

Fig 6.

“HUGE CONCENTRIC MOTIF”



An artists impression of the series of concentric circles on a dolerite column some 2 to 3 x 1.5 to 2m.

Western Lakes of the Central Plateau.
The dotted line is a suggested shape.

Fig 7.



Fig 8.

Artists impression of “Emu Tracks”, cupules,
on Blue Tiers site (Inspired by (325:22).

“Meenamatta”

"Figurative Art"

The only figurative Rock-Art known was from Preminghana that is until a small article appeared on Page 6 of the Examiner Newspaper on Wednesday 14th April, 2004! It was a "note" reporting a Hobart Doctor - Stephen Bennett - stumbling across a small cave on the coast back in 2002. It was a report concerning the Doctor's fears of the heritage Department's lack of interest - nothing more was reported.

Because of fear of vandals and other idiots damaging the unique site the location is a secret and should remain so but that should not stop other work being done and a report should be released - without its exact location.

The Doctor thought it may be a hoax understandably but they are not! Weathering at the entrance prove a substantial age.

It seems they are of possibly two types set on a sloping stone wall - a true gallery of figurative art and images of feet, (Figure 9).

The first and oldest are outlines and the second intagliated (artistic work that is completely filled in). The first appears to be executed with stone tools but the latter with what seems to be metal tools - chisel usage. This means that since the former exists in a weathered combination and the "metal tool" intagliated art is in the deeper areas (or so I am lead to believe) that a very long period of traditional art (possibly from 3,000 B.P.) was practiced. The metal-tool executed art proves it was practiced up to the close of Palaeo-history.

If the use of metal-tools (the first recorded) was not enough the actual images are more amazing comprising "stick-like" people and feet (included a child's size) - it is a pity that at least the full galleries have not been copied (they may have) and released (they have not!).

So, one site exists, could there be others? - Of course there could!

The figurative art, specifically the foot prints, are both outlined and intagliated, and although I only had a single poorly reproduced newspaper photo I was somewhat surprised to see in (221:129) drawings of near identical art, number K30 and K31, showing foot prints from Karolta, Olary in South Australia. A radio carbon date for K30 was c. 20,000 B.P. (221:127).

The inland South West was occupied from 35 to 10.25 kyg (C¹⁴) and art in some caves utilising ochre so far reveals that it was practiced from the very beginning, 35 kyg, until at least 15 kyg (218:225), it can be said that the original Palaeo-people brought with them into Tasmania art their ancestors had practiced on the Australian mainland.

It has been suggested that the cave-art sites are ceremonial places a non-utilitarian side of their culture (218:225) and the function of their art in their society may have been to identify a particular social group with that particular place or places (218:226).

Within, more or less, the realm of "figurative art" is the representation of animal features. At the Mersey Bluff opinions, as seen, suggest birds, snakes, molluscs etc. But more reliable is the accepted large bird tracks - emu it is thought - at Preminghana (Mt. Cameron West) on the Upper West Coast. Incredibly there is also a "human track" that has survived (205:338).

Turning to the other side, and near parallel (west to east), of Tasmania on the Upper East, situated inland on the Blue Tier, a part of the Mt Cameron Range - another coincidence - is what seem to suggest an "alignment of Emu Tracks" (325:22) Fig. 8. However the photo appears to be a single line not that of a two legged beast. Perhaps it is poetic licence.

The well known associated father of Australian Archaeology, Fred McCarthy, when seeing some of the North East markings is quoted as saying that they bore a resemblance to the "foot" and "kangaroo-foot" designs of the Australian mainland engravings (325:21).

During an interview by Westlake in 1909 (231:15) he recorded that around the Bruny Island area drawings on freestone or sandstone were made of birds, beasts and fishes using "flints".



FIGURATIVE ART FROM SOUTHERN TASMANIA.

Fig 9. Taken from a poorly reproduced photograph in "The Examiner" Newspaper (P.6 - 14/4/04). I have tried to only draw what was obvious.

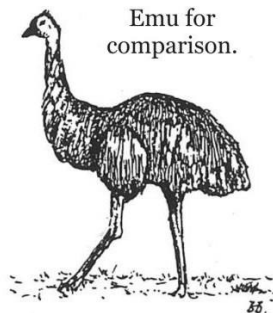
"Tiagarra"

"The Emu"

Mersey Bluff.

(Although generally referred to as an "Emu" it may be better referred to as just "A Bird" - if that is what it is!)

Emu for comparison.

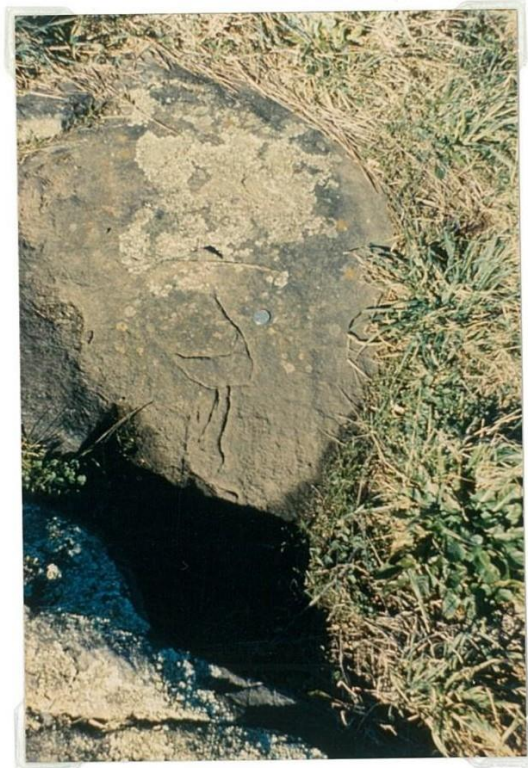


→ N

C. 1/3

BB Fig 10.





“Tiagarra”

Mersey Bluff

80B

The co-called “Emu”.
(20c piece for scale)
(Regretfully this photo was printed in reverse).



80C

The most likely Petroglyph.
(Possibly the only one).



Photo 81A

Petroglyph Gallery

“Preminghana”



Photo 81C.



81B

PETROGLYPH GALLERY

"Preminghana"



83A

PETROGLYPHS

SWANDOWN POINT



83B

PETROGLYPHS
SWANDOWN POINT



332

PETROGLYPH ? at "Apsley Cave",
Southern Midlands. (Scale: inches).

"Creating the Art"

Obviously a great deal of physical effort was necessary to create these works of art, so how did they do it?

Lourandos obtained the assistance of a mason who after inspecting the art arrived at the opinion that they were executed by the "twist and grind method" (47). Lourandos also states that the;

"Technique used is of heavy and probably repeated incision and possibly punching" (114).

with "rubbing" on some to produce their good sharp edge.

At Swandown Creek and Ordance Point the creation is suggested as "pecking". Only due to the hard stone while at Preminghana and Greenes Creek it was "pecked and abraded" being soft and easier to work on (221:235).

The tools used in all cases were no doubt various sized pebbles and cobbles with some of a more pointed edge to produce finer work. A punch technique utilising two stones, one a hammer is also suggested. At all times the tools had to be harder, perhaps just as hard, as the material being engraved.

Meston in 1932 suggested that the system used for producing circles was that a rough circle of dots were hammered or chiselled and then united by rubbing grooves between each dot (Fig 13). He found a chisel shaped piece of quartzite and another pointed stone in close proximity to the engravings at Preminghana. Excavations at the same site produced some large pointed artefacts - basalt and quartzite - probably chisels used in the sculpturing of the petroglyphs (205:338).

The outlining of circles could have been free-hand as obviously some were - a number of circles are rough in shape, some being even, in part, less circular - or as Robinson suggests first executed with a forked stick (Fig 14) being used the same as we use a compass (12: 6/12/1831).

There is no evidence that they painted the engravings. If so they most likely used red ochre. But it is possible, even likely? The age sustaining power of the paint and the extreme open locales would prevent any evidence being retained.

As seen the art is always, with one possible exception, in an open exposed area. The "canvas" it is on can be flat outcrops or inclined slabs, some possibly collapsed after the work was executed, others as on the central plateau, actually on vertical rock.

Access to creating the art is usually easy but some examples suggest some sort of scaffolding as with the Port Davey art being about 2.4 metres from the ground, did it require even a platform?

But even more incredible is what seems to be the already mentioned series of concentric circles on the Central Plateau three metres or more high and had to have had some sort of scaffold or ladder.

Specific Techniques

It would appear that four distinct techniques were employed in the creation of the art, but before the actual removal of particles - chips and dust - it may have been the custom to either preliminarily outline the design by drawing it using a charcoal "pencil" (burnt stick) or using a crayon of ochre, possibly just marking the rocks patina with a sharp stick as Robinson mentions (12) or another type of sharp/pointed material, stone or bone. As suggested it might have been "free-hand" perhaps a pounded or rubbing action that was to continue when actually executing the desired design.

It must be remembered that as the site was regularly visited, perhaps once a year for hundreds if not thousands of years, then what we see today no doubt is the total sum of such visits, perhaps sometimes different specific techniques were employed by some artists on the same motif.

The techniques - as suggested there are four distinct techniques, these are;

Grinding, peck pounding, hammer/punch pounding and abrading which includes rubbing and scratching.

The "tools" employed included hammer-stones, other percussion stones that had a more pointed edge and pointed/wedge/chisel edged stones. These tools were necessarily of harder material than that surface being engraved usually igneous.

The characteristics of the four techniques is summarised and exemplified in Figure 11.

Defining the techniques is useful:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Grinding - | Crushing dislodged particles into grains and/or powder by usually a semi-circular twisting action on a chisel-like stone, that is the suggested "twist and grind" (47). |
| Pecking - | Striking with a sharp stone to dislodge chips/grains, percussion pounding. |
| Hammer/Punch - | Pounding in a more precise nature, dislodging chips/grains by percussion using a hammer onto a hand-held sharp pointed stone positioned onto a directional spot. At the same time a "twist and grind" action may have been incorporated into the technique. |
| Abrading - | A dragging - pushing motion using an elongated sharp object to create a groove, a "rubbing" action creates a wider line where as "scratching" a thinner, sharper line, scratching done with a finer material - pointed. Fine dust - powder produced. |

"Rock Engraving - The Techniques"

Technique	That is	Action	Surface Contact	Tools Employed	By Products
"Grinding"	Goughing, twist and grind.	Semi circular motion.	Continual.	Pointed hammer-stones.	Crushed grains, mainly dust/powder.
"Pecking"	Percussion pounding.	Direct downward impact.	Instant impact.	Pointed hammer-stones.	Chips mainly, some dust/powder.
"Hammer-punch"	Percussion pounding with multi tools.	Direct downward impact onto another tool.	Instant impact.	Hammer-stone and a chisel-like stone.	Chips mainly, some dust/powder.
"Abrading"	Rubbing, scratching.	Back and forwards usually.	Continual usually.	Pointed wedge/chisel shape edge stone.	Fine dust/powder.

“ROCK ENGRAVING TECHNIQUES”

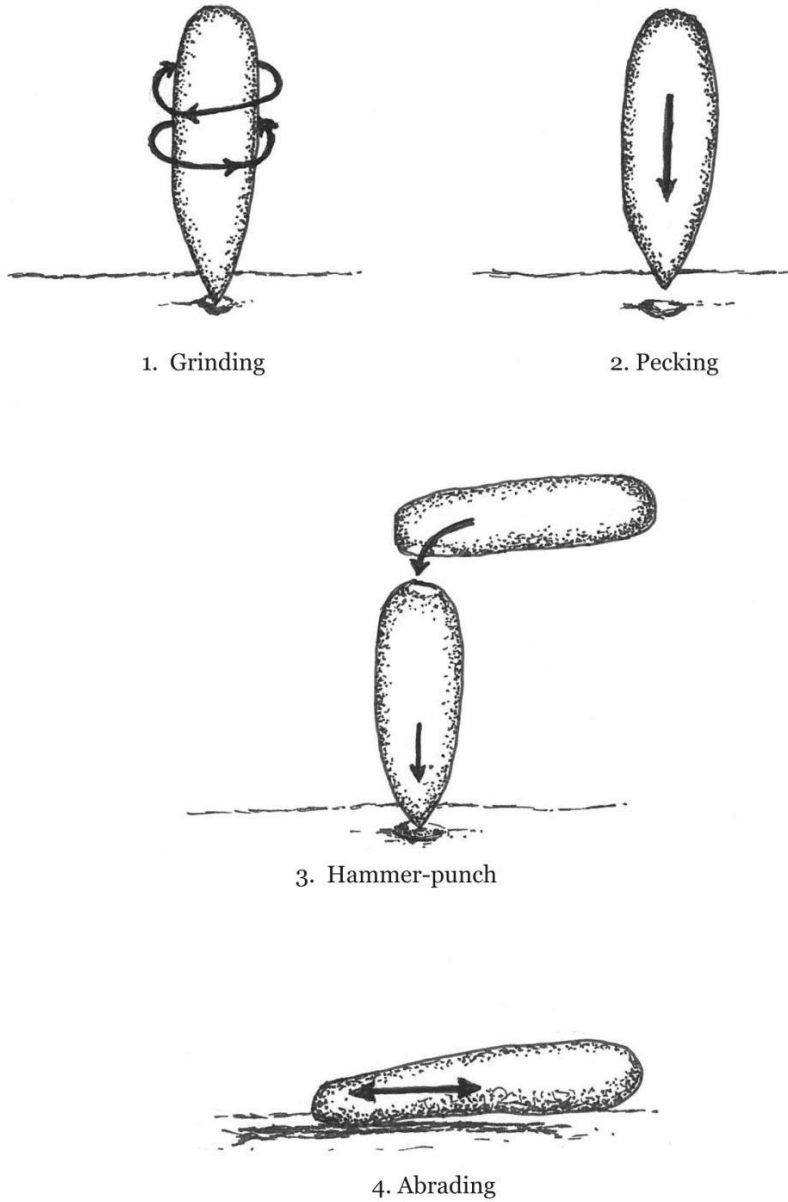


Fig. 11

(Note: The utilisation of the tool-type in 1, 2, and 3 was also possibly used for abrading).



Pecking.

Grinding or hammer-stoning
leave similar indentations.



Pecked and abraded.



Abraded only.

Fig 12

Artists Impression of Engraving

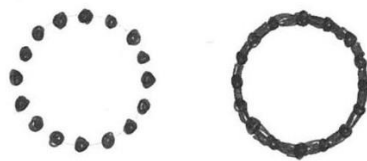


Fig 13.

Meston's suggestion of outlining
a circle by pecking then grinding
the areas between as in Fig. 12.

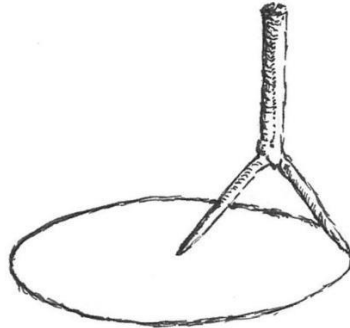


Fig 14.

Forked stick used to outline
a circle. According to Robinson
(12:6/12/1831).

Originally Robinson thought they
used scissors that had been
“obtained” from settlers (12:514-6,
542-3) until shown by his Aborgines
that they used a forked stick.

"Their Meanings"

As seen some suggestions are that they have possibly "solar, astronomical or religious" connections (314:168). In Tasmania there is no doubt this is correct but regrettably we have little to go on when considering exactly what their meaning is.

"Circles" (Fig 2)

On the Australian mainland "circles" - the principle motif in Tasmania - are known to have various meanings depending on area to area. Such meanings are said to be waterholes, fire, base of a tree, cave, a particularly named site and in modern times even a "billy can". Concentric circles as campsites, breasts, stone, well, rockhole, fire, hole, fruit or a hill but usually relate to the presence of an ancestral being (221:155, 158).

The only Tasmanian ethnological information available is that coming from Robinson (12) who recorded that his Aborigines told him that the "barred circles" at Greenes Creek were white men and the "plain circles", black men (see Fig 2, No. 1, 9) (12:4/9/1833). This seems illogical as the reference to "white men" could only apply to the recent and the engravings are obviously pre-colonial. However the reference it seems to humans or ancestral spirits cannot be in itself so easily dismissed.

A very logical possible explanation is that the Aborigines with Robinson regarded them as sacred and their true meaning may have been disguised, that is as we are told, a deliberate avoidance of telling their true meaning (325:24).

It is also a remote possibility that his companions just did not know their meaning but considering the practice of using circles still in other art at this time it is not likely. Perhaps different people had their own traditions or was it just a sense of humour? (The Aborigines I have had the privilege of knowing have this wonderful quality).

In the November 1993/January 1994 edition of "Geo Australasia" an article on rock engravings in the Olary District of South Australia (not far west of Broken Hill) has interviews with a Les Wilton, an Aboriginal Elder, who has described the meanings of some engravings, although he could not describe some spirals suggesting persons unknown to him - ancestors made them!

He explains meanings of "circles" (the most common Tasmanian art motif) as a "mob" (group) of people, that is a "band". An oval shape with one part more pointed is a travelling "mob" and the pointed end the direction of travel (212:45). Other suggestions are that circles represent the moon while speckles/chips inside the circle (Fig 2 No. 13) means stars (221:160).

Other Australian sources explain that circles denote young girls breasts whereas concentric circles with a bar represent old women's pendant breasts (Northern Territory sourced (221:161). But more often it is the female genitals being represented in a symbolic way (221:162). Is figure 3 No. 2 from a Tasmanian site an example of lineal pecking of this type of representation? Also the Southern Midlands possible petroglyph (Site 21, Photo 332) utilising a natural feature might also be included?

In desert art of Australia circles are linked to freshwater, the concentric ones being ripples on the surface. But they can also represent "ground ovens", an animal track being the type of animal being cooked (221:160).

Suggestions that circles could represent boundary markers should be considered but it is difficult to establish this.

Whatever the meaning, especially circles, it is evident that they mean different things to different people.

It is dangerous to interpret the same meaning of a symbol for two areas especially when the separation is a vast distance, but it has some merit in the possible meaning of a circle being a band.

But many Tasmanian circles have additions to the overall presentation, does this suggest variations of and/or more than a single group utilising the same area, obviously some sort of important significance exists but what was it?

Imagination is a wonderful thing, it is the foundation of creating art but it can be a very dangerous and misleading agent when unqualified beliefs are made especially in interpreting ancient rock art. Suggestions are essential but not if made as facts. Evidence is necessary and that is hard to obtain.

I have already mentioned Robinson and interpretation re: circles given to him but it must be pointed out that in all Robinson's journals no rock engravings were pointed out to him by his Aboriginal in his party nor mention of their existence (12:20/2/1834). Perhaps they did not know of them - Robinson found them by accident - if they knew of them then obviously they wanted to keep them secret, we do not know!

Patsy Cameron (325) explains that the significance of specific areas or places at which ceremonies were enacted prompted them to add symbolic petroglyphs there (325:23). Patsy also explains that no definitive ethnological interpretation of what the markings mean exists (325:21).

Robinson writes (12:402, 403, 464) that the "moon" was a female, a mother and that the "sun" was her child. Perhaps we have some relationship between some circles even cupules. Whatever the situation we can have no doubt that within the Palaeo-Tasmanian's culture there was an implication of a complexity with the cosmos and the metaphysical, with the mountains of the North East a link to the sky they represented symbolically using petroglyphs. (325:21-23). What the relationship the West Coast people had has not been, as far as I am aware, suggested.

Whatever the Tasmanian meaning was for circular motifs (99% of petroglyphs are said to be this design (221:322), we can say that they were extremely important and not confined to just rock engraving but also in bark paintings and importantly on the human body - cicatrices, that is skin surface cutting. Being so highly exposed although they were mystic were not of a secretive symbolic nature.

Additionally in the Pleistocene "Keyhole Cavern", Weld River, South West we have what is clearly a circle in ochre "_____Ring of Blobs____", amongst hand stencil art (218:230) and is suggestive of mystic - ritual ceremonies.

We will never know the real meaning of the symbols and if today's Tasmanian Aborigines have any knowledge it will never be made public. Considering that often - at least on mainland Australia e.g. Uluru (Ayers Rock) - ceremonial places were separate for the sexes, and since any Palaeo-customs would be only available from the female side, because only they survived as wives to the "Eastern Straitsmen" and could pass on native traditions, the meaning may be limited.

Some traditions may have been not confined so not only daughters but sons could have received knowledge.

The contamination of non-Tasmanian traditions from Australian women let alone the influences of their white fathers is not something to ignore.

It is an obvious conclusion that petroglyphs and their surrounds had a mystic association with the people and their spirits. It is suggested that places like "Meenamatta" tell the story of the "Ancestral Beings" and the petroglyphs are imprints left behind by them (325:23), perhaps they were initiation places, perhaps to do with sustaining their economy, making sure success in future foraging?

A great deal of effort was put into creating this art, especially when one considers some of the hardness (Swandown Point) of the stone and in some - although rare - instances the sheer area of the galleries ("Preminghana"), and in itself shows how important these areas were to the culture. But it would have not been a single occasion of the undertaking but a repeated visitation, probably each year at about the same time, of a group who re-vitalised the beliefs with ritual and re-newing the images physically, even creating new ones that in turn in the future would also be re-vitalised.

This is explained (221:158), motifs must be maintained, not altered, and that, at least in mainland Australia, "it is to bring out the power in the rock" (221:150). Indeed in Tasmania, especially the West Coast, the lack of perpetual maintenance by artists has seen apparently the slow disappearance of engravings.

"Lines" (Figure 3).

Straight or curved lines exist in Tasmania but are sometimes hard to recognise because often, it seems, they are either natural or modified being incorporated into the composition.

In Australia straight lines are representations of straight paths between important places, spears, kangaroo tails, a back bone, trunk of a tree or digging sticks etc (221:155).

Earlier in this work I expressed the belief;

"_____If today's Tasmanian Aborigines have any knowledge (about what the art means) it will never be made public".

It would seem I was wrong! Because in the Sunday Examiner" 3/3/2013 there appeared an article "Heritage Treasure Trove in the West". I always hesitate referring to newspaper information but in this case Michael Mansell is pictured, of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, and no retraction etc. has appeared in later editions so I presume what was reported he accepts.

The article shows the Sundown Point petroglyphs and I quote;

"The two-day tour he (Mansell) has planned would also include rock carvings at Sundowner Point.
What can be seen on the tips of rocks sticking out of sand that has gradually covered them is just a glimpse of what_____".

and here I will continue to emphasise;

"_____EXTENSIVE MAPS SHOWING CAMP SITES AND WALKING TRAILS".

Well! how does Michael know this? It is a concern if it is just a presumption or worse made-up for a tourism venture!

"Cupules" (Figure 4).

These cup-shaped indentations, 50 to 80mm long, but in a rare case 115mm with a depth of 40mm, have been as seen discovered in the North-East Inland Tasmania being particularly prominent associated sometimes with grooved "lines" but no "circles".

The other art sites in the West do have dotted indentations usually in lines it seems (e.g. "Swandown Point") (Figure 3, No. 1). They do not appear to have the size either in width or depth like those of the North East and could it seems be more of marks in an overall design instead of the execution of a significant feature making up a design or as individual engravings that become a part of a gallery design.

It would seem we have a distinct difference in the North West - West to the North East.

As usual (221) is extremely important as a reference and we are told that "cupules" (pot-holes if you like) are not - utilisation marks i.e. not used for economic purposes or the result of such enterprises as grinding seeds or ochre. Although ochre was ground for artistic purposes the holes were not art but only a "tool" in a preparation capacity. Cupules are "art" (221:146).

Additionally, in some Australian mainland places, cupules were used to maintain/increase the creative powers of the "Ancestral Beings" - spirits - allowing their powers to flow through to nature's creations that were connected to that "spirit" so benefitting the living people, their descendants. The story being of greater complexity in its undertaking than just that.

It was the dust from the pounding that contained the life's essential essence of the "spirit", sometimes the actual cupule was nothing more than a by-product of the ceremony and not of importance itself (221:146).

However, obviously the site of the enactment was itself of real significance. In the mountain area of the North East of Tasmania we have, it seems, such a place but does the complex art of, say, "Preminghana" at the opposite side of Tasmania, although possibly being just as significant, had a different artistic approach? - it seems so.

It would seem that in Tasmania three "types" of cupules were incorporated into the culture.

1. Non Pitogram;
being just the result of pounding to release spiritual material -
dust and chips - singular or in groups of no recognisable design
(Fig. 4).
2. Pitogram;
 - A) Lines of cupules - non motif other than as cupules.
 - B) Lineal motif - designs made up of dots (small cupules),
abstract forms (Fig 3. No. 1).
 - C) Tracks - Large lineal cupules representational motifs (Fig 8)

3. Vesicles;

Naturally caused rock hollows incorporated into or singularly used as cupules for spiritual purposes.

Some sites have only a single petroglyph, e.g. opposite the doughboys at Cape Grim, others have a few as on Three Hummock Island, while rarely we have a whole gallery, Preminghana. Obviously some areas were much more significant than others but it may be that some places due to economical reasons attracted larger and lengthier meetings of a number of bands. Suitable raw material has to be present to etch out the art. Perhaps this would explain why not too far south of Preminghana, at West Point, we have no petroglyphs - as far as I am aware - yet the area is the largest in the overall area with vast resources evident by the incredible number of midden mounds and remains of domed-shaped huts. However, we cannot ignore the fact that at Preminghana the raw material is such (softer and conducive in area) that it attracted usage for deep engraving.

Already mentioned under "motifs" I have explained that we do not know if the galleries should be read as a complex story or whether the motifs should be interpreted for their own individual meaning. The duplication of a motif, like a circle, only being a continuation of a meaning of the motif not a saga. However when you see a circle with an emu foot print it does question whether we have a two motif story like a band/hunting group after an emu? (Fig 6, No. 1).

Another point is the obvious significance of some petroglyphs that are rather unique in design, requiring a greater effort in design and execution while placed in a very prominent position within the site.

Such are the circles at Swandown Point (Fig 6, No. 2) with a concentric circle surrounded at its upper half by a line of eight small circles and a single one to the upper far right, and the very large unique cupule, 115mm in diameter and 40mm deep set on a large boulder on the mountains uppermost point (359:165). This suggests a focal point of significant ritual activity.

This study has only been touched on but it does show how complex the palaeo-Tasmanian's spiritual activities were. Of course we cannot rule out the possibility that some petroglyphs were just for art's sake but I believe this is highly unlikely, it is more of artistic appreciation and capability being directed into a mystic-spiritual purpose. A celebration and thanks to continue their good fortune and protect themselves?

So it is that Anthropological work in central Australia has revealed that a concept exists that one can achieve a desired result by marking rock by hammering or rubbing with increased or maintenance ceremonies as well as hunting magic - to bring out the power in the rock (221:145), this suggests it was also practiced in Tasmania.

"How Old Are They?"

The engravings are of obvious antiquity but how old are they?

Excavations at "Preminghana" suggests a possible date of about 1,500 to 2,000 B.P. (88:124), but it is not conclusive.

Since then we have established that the coastal middens of nearby West Point date only back to 4,000 B.P. and as all known engraving sites are coastal it seems possible that the date of c. 2,000 could be more accurate than first thought but with so little ambiguous information it is impossible to say more.

The Tasmanian engravings are similar to those from Central to South Australia, again we do not have conclusive dates although it has been postulated that since the main motif is a circle then there may be some relation, but if they are then they must stem from an early period when Tasmania was joined to Australia. (88:124).

The November 1993/January 1994 Geo Australasia Edition (212) explains the new technique of dating petroglyphs by measuring the amount of rock varnish that has accumulated on the engraving. The points in the procedure are;

The virgin rock has varnish layers on its surface,
The action of engraving removes the varnish layers,
A wet period produces micro-organisms,
This produces oxidation of manganese,
Wind blows dust and tiny particles of clay that are cemented into it.
This finally forms rock varnish.

It is an experimental technique and has its critics. It samples the age of organic matter trapped beneath the varnish.

Utilising his method (Dr. Dorn of Arizona State University) he has obtained a minimum age of 40,000 + B.P. for some of the Olary District engravings. The oldest in the world so far.

We must not lose sight of the fact that older than 6,500 B.P. Western coastal sites do exist submerged off the present coast and two possible thoughts come to mind if we believe that an Australian mainland connection exists: -

- 1) That older rock engraving sites exist now submerged and the present are more recent works executed only when the older sites were lost.
- 2) The known sites which are very close to present high tide are of pre-Late Holocene origin and were originally not associated with Late Holocene deposits.

The high mountain petroglyphs on the Blue Tiers ("Meenamatta") are particularly important because of their location and research has shown that regrettably they are difficult to date. A suggestion is that they may be c. 1,875, to 1,406 B.P. or roughly c. 1,687. (359:167).

It was also explained that most petroglyphs would be unrecognisable after 5 to 8,000 years (359:167), and this is for those set into granite, unprotected coastal sites of sand-stone looking into a very hostile sea with wind and sandblasting let alone salt water and vegetation would make survival very limited in time unless protected by sand cover.

At Swandown Point petroglyphs on siltstone have a high degree of patination suggesting "____an antiquity of several thousand years at least" (205:342).

"The Westlake Papers" make reference to drawings on freestone sandstone made with "flints" of birds, beasts and fishes (231:15) - I must admit I find a great deal of uncertainty with this information but it may refer to graffiti by natives at settlements.

"The Panaramittee Tradition".

Island Tasmania has been isolated from mainland Australia for some 14,000 years, culturally at least more than 10,500 years. Tasmania was first populated at least 42,000 calendar years (the oldest known site is Inland South West c. 40,000) by people probably coming from the west and suggestive of the area of the lower Murray River in South Australia.

So a cultural relationship is obvious and has been suggested that an area near Olary in the rivers area become a "type site" (a named area for a specific cultural tradition) for what has been suggested as the oldest art style in Australia, "Panaramittee".

It is a complex subject but can be briefly referred to as a style of motifs; generally small, less than 20cm comprising mostly circles, concentric circles, cupules, abraded grooves, meandering line figures, mazes, sets of parallel lines, arrangements of dots, nested arcs, circles with bars or deep central pits, spirals, !crosses, !grids, !stars, !wheels, !arrows, tracks, crescents, and human feet (221:179). Additionally, figurative motif range is restricted to tracks, mostly birds, macopods and human and are rare being made up of lines or solids executed by mainly pecking and some abrading (221:179).

Note: ! means "_____a picture which has a shape best described as looking" - like the mentioned object (221:77), with no implication of it being one.

As an example, the Olary Site comprises;

35% circles, 28% tracks, 16% dots, 13% abraded grooves, 7% lines, with 1% of more complex designs (221:125).

In Tasmania circles far outweigh any other motif, while tracks are rare.

Interestingly stone artefacts that are associated with the Panaramittee Tradition are of the Tasmanian type.

Three stages for rock art in Australia has been suggested (not Tasmania) with Panaramittee being the oldest, that is pre 10,00 B.P. but this has been challenged, suggesting that the "style" is actually a series of regional distinct styles, not a single universal artistic tradition (335:109).

Dating methods trying to establish the age of material sealed below the varnish of the actual markings has been carried out using the cation-ratio (CR) method (221:350). This method depends on determining the ratio of calcium and potassium to titanium concentrations within the rock varnish (221:350). Dates from c. 24,000 to 12,000 B.P. have been obtained.

The three stages suggested for Australia are;

Early Phase	? < 40,000/30,000 - 10,000 B.P.	Animal tracks (macropods, birds), abraded grooves, geometric symbols (circles etc), finger markings.
Later Phase	10,000 - 4,500	Shallow incisions - single strokes.
Late Phase	4,500 - 1,000 >	Pigmented art.

The suggestion is that the early phase applies to Tasmania and as it was separated prior to 10,000 then it was isolated from later traditions.

However this three stage suggestion is open to sorts of arguments, the evidence is sketchy, often unsupported, vague and confused. Never the less considering the Tasmanian long history and its ultimate isolation prior to 10,000 everything points to the suggestion that their art has a strong relationship with the first traditions of Greater Australia.

PALAEO-TASMANIA STONE ARRANGEMENTS



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2012

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"Stone Arrangements"

Archaeological evidence clearly shows that the Palaeo-Tasmanians did construct stone arrangements both coastal and inland, even in the Central Highlands. But a problem exists in trying to qualify all of them as Aboriginal. Trying to distinguish between Aboriginal creations and just piles of stones formed by pioneer farmers clearing land for cropping is not easy and must be guarded against at all times (107).

Besides this is the ambiguous "Tidal Stone Wall Fish-Traps" on the coasts, principally in the central north. A separate investigation (B45) suggests strongly that most if not all of today's traps are post Aboriginal, but, and there is always a "but", some may be reworked Aboriginal constructions. No dating has been possible so far to guarantee an actual age, (see following photos No. 25 and 278).

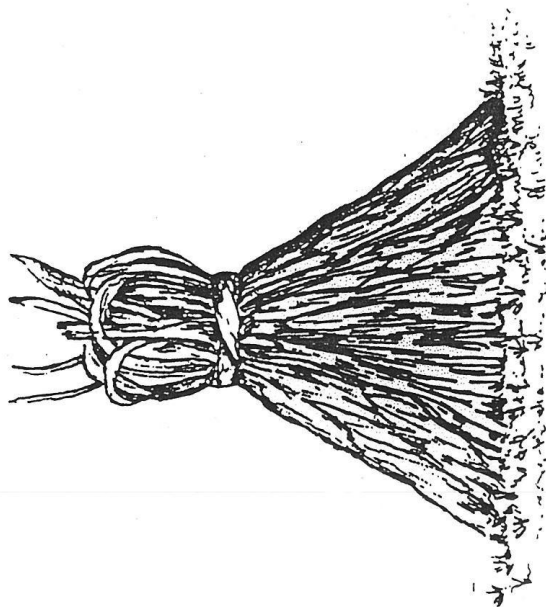
All Tasmanian arrangements are constructed from close at hand, relatively small, that is normally being of a component size that can be picked up or in some cases rolled into position. They are purely stacked without mortar - dry stacked - held in position by clever assemblage and gravity. Their height is often a single tier, a few centimetres. Whether they are "art" is a debatable issue not covered here.

The designs that exist to our knowledge, meaning no doubt more must exist that have not been discovered, are

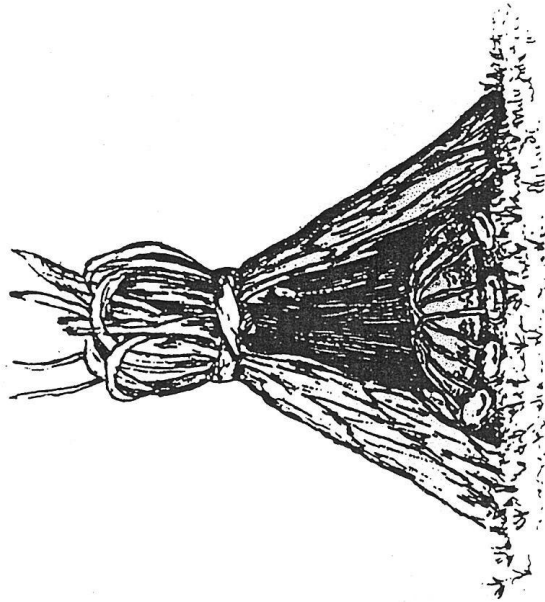
Cairns, walls, paths - some superimposed, pits,
designs either in a group or separate lineage
even circular-like, mounds and burial covering
slabs/stones.

The first recorded discovery of the use of stones in a construction is that of the French Maritime explorer Peron in 1802 (86). Peron referred to "tombs" on Maria Island and his parties drawings clearly show some stones used in the construction (see the following drawings). Later in this paper is some brief information on other burials utilising stones as coverings, even suggested walls.

What was supposed to be "burial mounds" south of Ross, numbering 70 - 80 and described as irregularly, covered more or less rounded stones, about one metre in diameter and very low - hardly above the ground - turned out to be nothing when dug into many years ago, showing supposition is worthless without proper investigation.



Original Structure



The opened structure showing the ossuary
(the section containing the cremated remains)

Maria Island Tomb

(Discovered 1802 AD by Peron)

This structure seems to be similar to the "wigwams" described, perhaps the idea of the tomb was to resemble the house of the living.

Inspired by (86:69/85)

33

On the 8th June 1830 Robinson was near Richardson Point, north of Ordinance Point on the West Coast and recorded;

"Passed a heap of large pebbles. The native had placed them in different forms, some resembling rooms, gardens, passages. Probably it was the children of the natives". (12:170).

Plomley, who researched and published G.A.R.'s journals, made a note 92 (12:231) referring to Roth's comment (6:110) of the above, "_____ may have been no more than such playthings".

Although perhaps children may have made the shapes - it is as I have found that cairns can be the work of children, even little excavated pits of stone along beaches, a research discovery while investigating the Tidal Stone Wall Fish Traps.

On the 28th February 1997 in "The Examiner Newspaper" (Launceston) a brief report and photographs was published of a discovery west of the Great Lake (see the following drawing made of the photos). The resemblance to G.A.R.'s description is striking and since the area, a moorland, was apparently a "special place" of ceremonial significance, a case may be made for "ritual".

Stone arrangements are costly and consuming to nomadic peoples, obviously only being constructed for good reason, although the just mentioned designs would not demand great effort, others such as the pits in the Bay of Fires would. It must still be admitted that if about 40 individuals took part in any of the Tasmania constructions none of them would take very long to create, even the "fish-traps".

By far the most impressive area is the "Bay of Fires", situated on the Upper East Coast between Eddystone Point in the north and Binalong Bay (North of St. Helens) in the south.

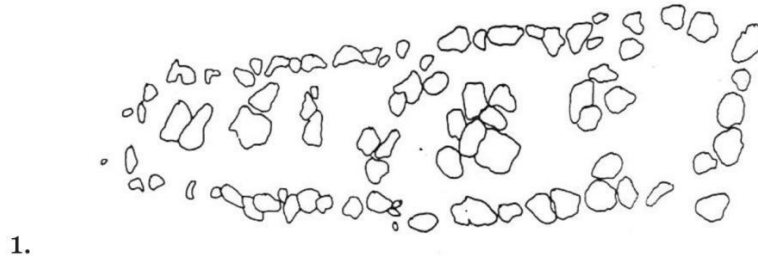
In 1965 Rhys Jones discovered a linear arrangement of stones about 90 metres long numbering 140 flat stones and set in a shell midden of Aboriginal origin. Excavating the site Jones found a second similar arrangement stratified c. 30cm (one foot) below the first (44). In 1830 Robinson recorded a similar structure on the West Coast (88:177).

A sequence of occupation and construction was obtained by Jones.

At some unknown time, people constructed a linear stone arrangement on a sand dune. After this at c. 750 B.P. people camped on the site and around it, midden material (humus) accumulated and at some later date a new structure was constructed on the material (88:174).

About 115 metres north of Jones' excavation another stone arrangement comprising 43 stones, 6 metres long running north-south was discovered. Nearby a pebble beach are bird-nest shaped pits but we have no knowledge of who built them (88A:208).

**“FLOOR PLAN OF STONE ARRANGEMENT
IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS c.2M X 3M).**



1. Shows, as best as possible from photographs available, the distribution of individual stones.
2. Emphasising the design with a number of stones in contact.

Some distribution of stones is obvious but generally a distinct un-natural design is evident with a grouping “A” in a central position and seems to suggest importance.

These type of creations also exist in the southern section of the Bay of Fires (see following photographs). Although my inspections (briefly an hour) did not reveal any "pathways" (linear), a considerable number of "bird-nests", cairns and other curved built-up arrangements were obvious, about 30 cubic metres of stones have been commercial removed recently suggesting much lost!

Suggestions why they were constructed range from hides to kill seal, territory markers, burials, dwelling foundations, / cooking places to pure mystic/ceremonial purposes - we just do not know.

The Bay of Fires arrangements are all constructed using immediately available material, stranded storm beaches about one to four metres above the present sea level. This suggests they may have been formed during the disputed "Post Glacial Maximum". The sea level on the North Coast is suggested as c. 180cm and c. 60cm on the east maximum, and a date about 6,000 B.P. (107). This is the "Milford (Rise) Level". (187:52), (190:4), (338:11). The maximum ended c. 4,000 (338:12) then continued to drop to its present level c. 1,600 B.P. (B58:93). If we accept this then the most likely oldest date for the arrangements is post 1,600 years ago.

Although I have included this paper in a composite work on "Art" the question remains are they art? Obviously fish-traps are not, being economic, but others such as cairns, have uses that elude us, could well be. I have included all types as a safeguard against incorrectly excluding any.



232

Semi-circular Stone Arrangement



238

Another semi-circular Stone Arrangement



243

Small cairn - delicately stacked
(is this a "copy" recently done?).



252

Large complex cairn.



250

Deep, "Bird-nest" shaped arrangement/structure with raised rim, looking seaward.



255

A "Grouping" of arrangements - looking north. The distant beach-line is approximately where Jones excavated lineal "Pathways".

The following are some Archaeological findings;

Maria Island (Central East Coast)

Near Edina Point	A series of at least 7 pits	(320:46)
(On a cobble beach)	(1.3 x 1.3 x .4m).	
	One mound	
	(1.1 x .9 x .35m).	

Butlers Point (Central East Coast)

North of Friendly Beaches	Pits and a cairn	(320:52)
(On a cobble beach).		

Ile Du Nord (Central East Coast)

North of Unfortunate Cove		(320:47)
(Raised cobble beach).		

Bruny Island

(South East Coast)	Pit, mound and wall	(320:47, 52, 56
	type like on Partridge Island.	& 58).
	Pits (11), a wall, a stone feature.	

Bruny Island (S.E. Coast)

Daniels Bay	First - roughly horseshoe shaped, (204:58)
(on Intertidal Flats)	open end facing towards
	the shore. (Fish Trap? My comment).
	Second - dispersed over a wide (204:58)
	area (said by an elderly man
	to be Aboriginal Fish Trap, but
	"it is more likely, in fact, that they
	are of European origin".

Partridge Island (S.E. Coast)

Just off South Bruny.	Stone arrangement, 5 shallow	(204:55).
(On a pebble beach).	pits.	

Recherche Bay (Far South Coast)

Eliza Point	Pit, mound and wall type	(320:52)
Quiet Cove	Pit, mound and wall type	(204:58)
		(204:58).

Sterile Island (Far South Coast)

East of Recherche Bay.	A stone arrangement (pit,	(204:56)
	mound and wall type).	

Actaeon Island (Far South Coast)

East of Recherche Bay.	Possible stone arrangement.	(204:56).
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(Butler Point, Maria, Ile Du Nord, Bruny and Recherche all similar (320:52).

Bluff Hill Point (North West Coast)

Between Arthur River and	6 (7 ?) U-shaped stone hearth -	(320:52)
West Point. 700 m inland on	like features. Pit, mound and	(204:58)
Old Billy Creek.	wall type.	

"Nant", Bothwell (South West Midlands)

On a private property

Two groups of stones, one five
the other three placed in a
vertical position - the points
upwards. This was in 1895 (231:44).

Additional information in (231) refers to Burials;

Pardoe Beach, Devonport (Central North Coast).

Sand dunes

Three separate burials, skeletons
in a crouched position with stones
covering them. This was in 1909. (231:57).

Alum Cliff Farm, Mole Creek (Inland Central North)

Farming property

Stones over a skeleton and
a wall on each side.
This was in c. 1909. (231:59).

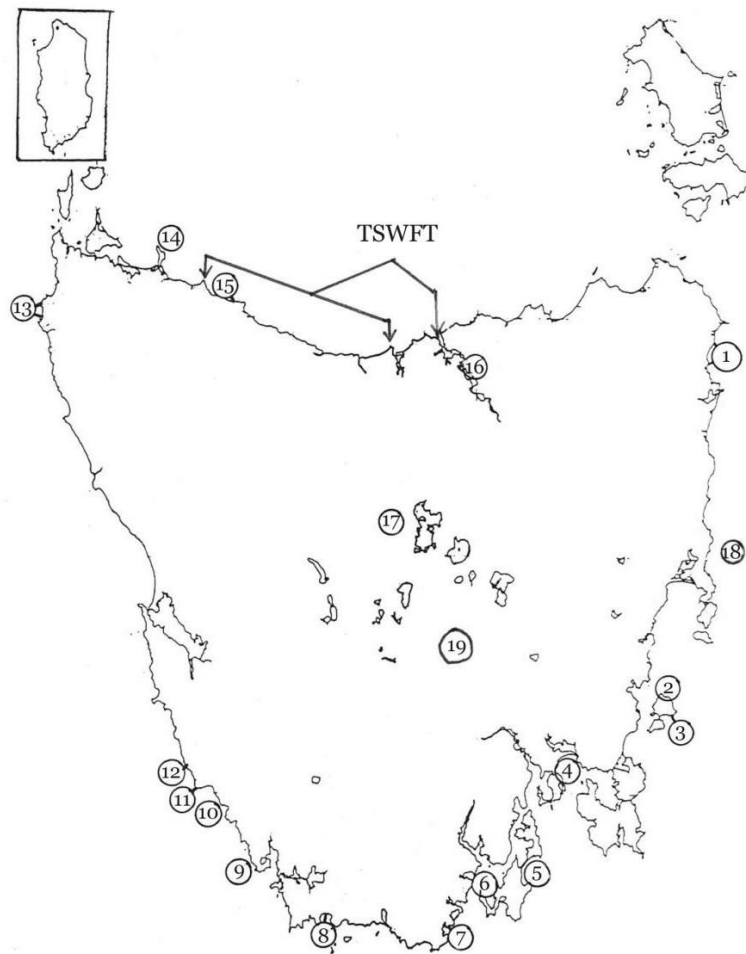
A "general" piece of information is;

"_____ that the Aborigines always covered their graves with a large
flat stone". (231:58).

The pits, mounds and cairns suggest ceremonial and/or spiritual activities (320:47).

The Bluff Hill Point hearth like features could be ceremonial, route marker or
boundary indicators of two bands (320:52).

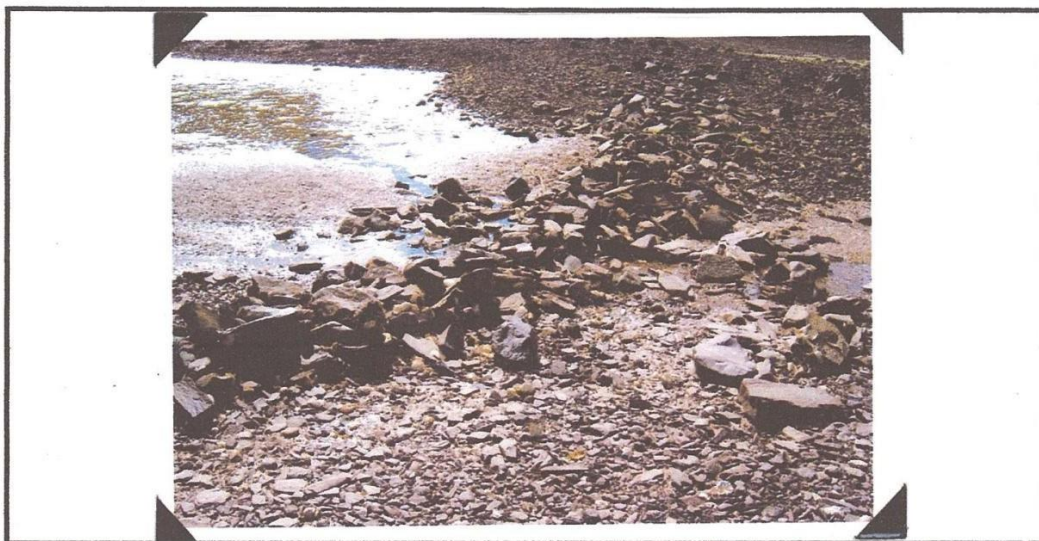
Other stone arrangements, supposedly between North and Highfield Point, North of
Stanley, supposedly circular pit like, the "Duck Hole" at Cox Bight in Southern
Tasmania, Low Rocky Point, Mainwaring River, Granite Point and Paradise Lagoon
on the South West Coast, and West Point on the Upper West Coast.



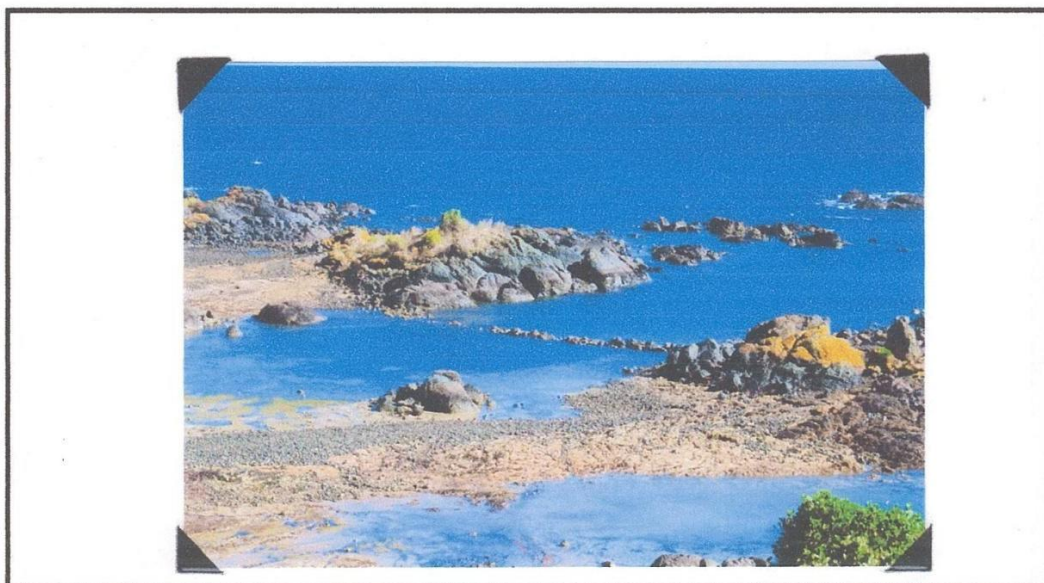
"STONE ARRANGEMENTS"
(Approximate Locations).

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bay of Fires. | 9. Granite Point area. | 17. West of Great Lake. |
| 2. Ile Du Nord. | 10. Near Paradise Lagoon. | 18. Butlers Point. |
| 3. Maria Island. | 11. Low Rocky Point. | 19. Bothwell. |
| 4. Pitt Water area.. | 12. Mainwaring River. | |
| 5. Bruny Island. | 13. West Point & Bluff Hill Point. | |
| 6. Partridge Island. | 14. North of Stanley. | |
| 7. Recherche Bay. | 15. Jacob's Boat Harbour. | |
| 8. Cox Bight. | 16. Fourteen Mile Creek? | |

"Tidal Stone Wall Fish Traps"



25. West Arm, Port Dalrymple area, northern Tasmania



278. Near Penguin, north west coast, northern Tasmania

The most extensive study was undertaken by Scott Brian Cane in 1980, entitled "Stone Features In Tasmania" (338). Cane's study concentrated on coastal areas in the Upper East and West as well as an area on the North West, Jacob's Boat Harbour. Other areas of coast were the Lower Channel District including the Recherche Bay District in the South and near Pitt Water in the South East.

About 250 structures were located and recorded made up of;

102 pits, 19 enclosure pits, 106 mounds, 4 dry stone walls,
3 pebble ridges, 2 paths, 5 levelled tracts of pebbles,
5 linear depressions, 3 stone alignments and a pebble
enclosure (338:115).

The 106 mounds varied in types, the most numerous was the "isolated circular" type, some 64. Other shapes being oblong, "C", "V" and "U" shaped, some linear, circular jointed or square. Some with depressed centres and depressed margins (338:115-6).

Other terms for "mounds" being cairns or heaps (338:7). For "pits" depressions, hollows (338:6).

Raised pebble beach's are the settings for the structures caused by possibly glacial melt water (338:11) and/or more recent storm wave action (338:12). Actions of the last inter-glacial, c. 120 kyg, high sea level may have caused some (338:12). Not enough research has been done on the study of these raised beach pebbles. A more likely suggestion is that inland pebble beach's were stranded after inter-glacial falls in sea levels (338:12).

The Post-Glacial climatic optimum (P.G.M.) of 6,000 - 4,000 B.P. is not suggested sighting, "no evidence to support a higher sea level - " (338:12). (From my studies others disagree!). Additionally Hails & Hoyt (1971:259 & 263) are quoted; "storm waves can deposit pebbles several metres above high water" (338:12).

Two main types of construction procedures are quoted;

- 1) Transported stone - walls, ridges, mounds, alignments,
- 2) On site available stone - built in pebble beach's and material removed to form pits (338:5).

Of special importance in Palaeo-studies is the Bay of Fires in the Upper East Coast as seen. The Northern section, South of Anson's Bay was the area investigated and 74 stone formations (34 mounds, 38 pits and 2 alignments) were recorded (338:14).

Cane recorded;

Mounds (the 34) as 17 isolated circles, clusters, "special featured", and associated with level "pathways" of pebbles.
Two mounds had depressed centres and two the same but had a large standing stone (338:34).

Pits (some 35) were three types

- 1) Simply sunk into the pebbles, shallow to well defined = 14
- 2) With continuous raised rims = 13 and
- 3) With only a proportion of the rim being raised
above the level of the surrounding pebbles (338:38) = 8.

Three other pits were sub-rectangular and low rimmed, flattened depression associated with 1), large spoon shaped depressions (338:39).

Stone structures as we know are very difficult to date. Sometimes stone artefacts of obvious Aboriginal work, e.g. stone cores, flakes, can suggest possible Aboriginal construction but it is possible they were included as a part of the structure by Europeans. Dating by association, that is within a midden that has yielded acceptable absolute dates such as Jones' excavations at the Bay of Fires are acceptable truths.

Structures that include for example a "beer can" well within them obviously suggest European activities.

Attempts by "dating " using Lichenometry Techniques" proved of little use. This system tries to establish how long lichen, (a plant composed of fungus and alga in association with and growing on rocks), has existed - the average per year can be 1.5 to 5mm - but it is very unreliable due to environmental conditions (338:40-41).

Any structures associated with limpets shell accumulation, is likely to be Aboriginal, being foreign to European diet in Tasmania and unlikely to be the result of seabird activities because it is very difficult for them to remove these molluscs from rocks (338:138).

Natural agencies, geomorphological forces (actions of waves) have to be considered but Cane's opinion is that they are not major agents in their construction (338:122).

Tree pits he believes are a possible cause of some of the more vaguely defined pits but seems unlikely for the larger - well defined pits. These tree pits are a result of dead tree roots rotting away leaving a depression (338:122-3).

Other causes investigated were possible shipwrecked mariners, whaling activities, sealing, surveying and settlers (338:124). Surveying can leave cairns, settlers can clear stones putting them in piles and recent European involvement such as vandalism and activities of holiday makers were all considered (338:135).

The possibility of some structures being Polynesian burials was discussed. In the whaling period, c. 1803 to 1850's, crews of Maoris and Chatham Islanders were employed. Burial customs included earthen and stone mounds (338:128).

Chatham Islanders specifically buried their dead within boulders on beach's, but no evidence exists of Maoris creating mounds of heaped pebbles. There is a remote possibility that some stone formations could be Polynesian burials (338:129). Use of some stones in Tasmanian Aboriginal burials are documented, (Baudin Expedition), (338:49).

The final conclusion put forward by Cane is that some are likely to be natural (338:148) but the belief is that the great majority are of human construction (338:123). European agencies cannot be ignored but less likely as they are impractical creations (338:148).

The majority are believed to be Palaeo-creations (338:148).

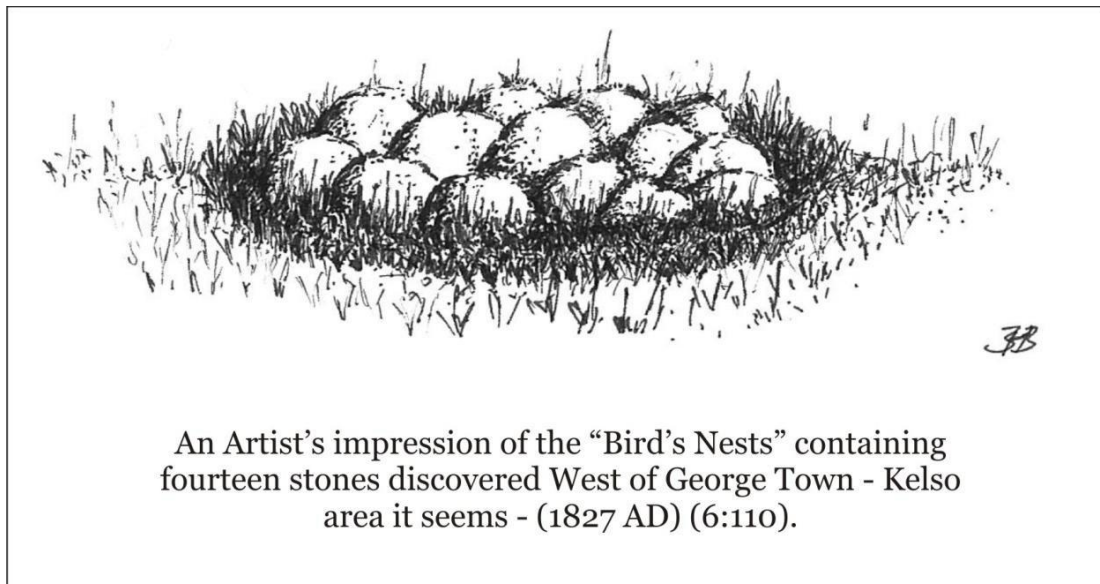
A final note is that on a couple occasions, at East Arm near Fourteen Mile Creek on the Lower East Tamar and the small stony beach just West of Doctor's Rocks near Wynyard, I observed what may have been circular groupings of stones about two metres in diameter. They were slightly raised and very difficult to trace. Too large for fishermen's fire-places they could be "foundations" for wind-breaks.

"Bird's Nests?"

"_____ numerous small places in the form of bird's nests, formed of grass, having constantly fourteen stones in each". (6:110).

This recording was made in 1827 by W.B. Walker when exploring "West of George Town" in Port Dalrymple, I believe it was around Kelso on the opposite side of the Port across the Tamar River.

The "nests" were associated with what seems to be a ceremonial structure surrounded by huts. A great deal of "waddies" - throwing sticks/stick clubs were evident but few spears.



I cannot locate any other discoveries in Tasmania and although petroglyphs on the "west coast constantly have circular motifs, some with pecking within them, it is taking it too far to make any comparisons with the "nests" if that's what they are.

But outside Tasmania, in Australia, petroglyphs are known sometimes portraying or suggesting bird nests with eggs, usually emu. Such examples are from Port Hedland in the North West of Western Australia, three examples of nests of ten duck eggs and two nests of 15 and 13 emu eggs (221:168). Another is from South Australia's Olary Region, circle with 15 eggs in a nest and is associated with emu tracks (221:175). On the Australian mainland their emu has up to 20 eggs, usually 9 to 12 (221:175) I am not sure if the extinct Tasmanian emu had similar.

Regretfully the Kelso bird's nests are not elaborated on regarding the size of the "egg-stones" and it is possible that they were representing swans or ducks not emus. The egg season (spring time) was extremely important in Tasmania and the number of marsh birds in Port Dalrymple was vast as recorded by the Maritime Explorers, regretfully it is not so now. Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) have 4 to 6 eggs (38:29) and the Pacific Black Duck (*Anas superciliosa*), both previously common in the Port, have 8 to 12 (38:33), symbolically 14 may have to do with inducing an increase.

Additionally there is another clue at Kelso that suggests connections with marsh birds, that is "waddies", a very popular hunting weapon in downing birds. With so many at the site and with an obvious ceremonial structure - was it a look-out symbolic in hunting birds? - It is not unrealistic to suggest the site was a ritual place to enhance the supply of birds for economic reasons.

It would seem unlikely that other Tasmanian areas did not have similar practices but evidence is lost to us.

Whatever their purpose it is "art", symbolic in its representation but realistic in its execution showing creative skills.

Palaeo-Tasmanian Body Decorations



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2013

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"Body Decoration"

I have included within this art form,

Cicatrices (Body scarring),

Body Painting, and

Hair decorations.

The last, hair decoration, is actually an extension of body painting but requiring separate discussion.

Cicatrices are probably more significant as an art form, and are strongly related to the art practiced on non-human canvases, stone and bark, they existed in a permanent state on the peoples bodies until they died.

There was no need to renew the scarring. No evidence exists of reinactment. However body painting and hair decorating was an ongoing practice requiring continual attention, its function seems to be more personal and social where as cicatrices are suggested as ritual.

"Cicatrices"

Cicatrices are scars, not tattoos. The scarring of the body was merely cutting into the skin and into the subcutaneous (under skin) tissue (224:45) where as tattoos is the injecting into the skin of ink (224:39).

The Palaeo-Tasmanians never practiced tattooing.

The procedure of creating cicatrices was with the use of a sharp cutting stone flake, later bottle glass was used if available.

After the laceration was made, which we are told by an eye-witness that the "____ fat - literally rose and turned back like a crimped (small fold) fish_____" (224:43), it was kept open by filling with grease inducing a flesh elevation (224:42) Powdered wood charcoal with red ochre was mixed with the grease (12:283) This elevation of the flesh was c. 1.27cm (half an inch) (86:40). This process kept the wound open making the tissue continually heal itself (6:125).

Although the gash marks varied depending on what was desired, one measurement was 2.54 cm long, .50cm deep and 1.27 cm from an adjacent wound (224:43).

The final achieved scar was the same colour as the rest of the skin, so the cellular membrane had not been destroyed (6:126).

We have no evidence of any reported infections.

N.J.B. Plomley is yet again the principle researcher on this subject, his work, *The Tasmanian Tribes & Cicatrices as Tribal Indicators Among the Tasmanian Aborigines*", (224), is essential reading. Much of the information contained in this composite work on the Tasmanian Aborigines Art has been sourced from his work including "Friendly Mission" (12) and other incredible works of early explorers like Baudin (86).

On the first subject of just the "operations", it must be explained that it seems probable that the procedure was not optional. It is recorded that one poor young girl was held down, screaming, while she ordealed the procedure, but another report is of a young male actually being in great spirits, enjoying it (224:43) - no doubt to show his bravery and to hide his pain. A female carried out the surgery (6:126), but we are not sure if this always happened, nor who operated on females.

There is no doubt that both men and women were scarred, although some doubt may exist about all bands having their women scarred.

Some information points to puberty being the time that the ordeal was undertaken, at least the males (6:126), but other reported some males were not so treated (86:107).

Children estimated to be 12 or 15 were observed without cicatrices (86:54), puberty though is suggested for males to be 14 - 16 (225:58), however another report is that almost all the women and children were scarified (223:282).

The custom may have varied between bands. One report says men and women (6:126) another mainly men it seems (224:43). It could have other significance like status in the community.

The purpose is said to be both ritual and to beautify (224:45), and within the designs to distinguish band members - that is to show which group you belong to. Plomley's work (224) explains differences of some six bands.

Although I have just confirmed its artistic side, there was another, being "medical". Robinson refers to the "sun" (circles) and "moon" (crescent) decorations to remove inflammation (12:256) and (224:43) refers to lacerations to relieve pain. I feel that Robinson may have got confused with nominating specific shapes, more likely random cuts (see drawing in this work (224:59) upper chest lacerations against those that are regular in design and composition).

Obviously if medical not art. However, the other designs are artistic even if ritual. For beauty or decoration then definitely art.

The meaning of the "ritual" aspect is a mystery. Which markings were ritual or non-ritual? We do know that some of the cicatrices were not "mystic" because it was carried out in front of Europeans at camps (12:283). Of course some may have been, but were not recorded, being hidden.

I have already explained the possible variations amongst the bands, a few are worth mentioning.

Some suggestion that the Western people had less cicatrices than the east (6:63), eastern mostly had crescents cut (12:263).

South Eastern women had semicircular cuts on their bellies (6:126), and the women had three of them supposed by the French to remove a great part of their child bearing wrinkles (223:294) - an interesting notion!

The Oyster Bay people made "ring dollars" in the small of the back (206:122).

Port Davey and Bruny Island women had three scars on the back of each leg - peculiar to them (195:17).

The Maria Island people had more stripes on their arms (224:40).

The enclosed drawings clearly show that the length of the cuts varied greatly from a few centimetres to c. 250. The widths varied from possibly a few millimetres at both ends, to c. 10mm, this suggests that as the incision progressed in length it widened.

Circles were said to be 4 to 10 cm in diameter (12:581 N69).

The following is a list of the various designs and some additional information of value. No attempt has been made to elaborate on which bands practiced what. All listed were symmetrical, obviously artistic. Although I have tried to separate the gender, the information is inadequate to guarantee confinement to one or the other.

Most of the information is from limited sketches always depicting a frontal body view. An occasional reference is made about the rear view. We have mentioned that the back of some had duplications of the front (12:283), (224:44), as well as a passing reference to "buttocks" and "back of each leg, about mid calf" (12:143).

We are told that the head, face, forearms, hands and feet were not scarred (224:44). The drawings suggest selective positioning of groupings, around the shoulders, across the chest and horizontals across the belly sections.

Short lines;

Vertical, parallel groups of lines, comprising many cuts.

Situated on shoulders or across the chest.

Both men and women, but seems chest decoration not applied to women.

Some suggestion like necklaces around the neck (224:42) but may mean like necklaces not necessarily around the neck.

Same lines on women to side of lower abdomen.

Horizontal, seems isolated individuals,

side lower chest, just above hips.

Possibly on men? Could be medical.

Drawings suggest groupings of four to five (224:59) either vertical or horizontal around the lower torso.

Long lines;

Vertical, parallel, suggests two groups of three incisions, across chest, each side of breast, lower part of shoulder blade, suggests only men.

Horizontal, lower chest, group of three, only men.

Women had up to four on lower abdomen.

Not known if vertical or horizontals on women's legs, back, mid calf section, groups of three.

Semi-circular;

Possibly two types: Curved lines and "horseshoe crescents".

Curved lines,

Horizontal, in parallel grouping of three across abdomen of men, but suggestions of the same on some women "great semi-circular". (223:294).

Some suggestion that the lower of the three has a more emphasised curvature to the other two (224:69) or as in (224:59) the upper two.

"Horseshoe crescents";

Could mean semi-circular, or half-moon shaped, as description is often
"_____like the moon_____" sometimes in groups,

Positioned on buttocks, kidney area, over the back, shoulder blades,
probably elsewhere.

Circles;

Surprisingly only one drawing shows this (224:69), a male who has a single
circle on the right side of his abdomen.

They are said to be popular and "ring dollar shaped" (206:122),
generally each side of the backbone and above the hips, but this may
have been selective experience in recording.

Both men and women had this image, some up to c. 10cm in
Diameter. Some women had four, others three or two (12:581 N69).
Said by Robinson to be imitations of the sun or moon. (12:263),
this is without confirmation by the Aborigines it seems.

A fascinating observation was that some were covered with a number
of short transverse lines/dashes (12:581 N69).

Finally, the resemblance between petroglyph images and some cicatrices is evidence
of a long and continual art style.



Examples of Markings (224) utilising a single figure (224:71).

The hair style may be not compatible except in (224:71).



- (224:59) Suggestions of "Medical Lacerations" around shoulders. Because the lacerations otherwise are so many and complex it may be that he was a type of "Chief".
- (224:61) If drawn correctly he may have been a person of "Lower Rank".
- (224:69) Note the circle on his right lower abdomen.
- (224:71) Seems a rather haphazard decoration.
- (224:53) Note the three lines on his left upper arm.

Regretfully no images of females could be located.

"Body Painting"

Although the Late Holocene people had it seems discarded the use of animal skins for a coating of grease and ochre to protect themselves against the atmosphere, due probably to the wetter environment, there is little evidence that they deliberately decorated themselves in designs.

However we know that coating themselves with ochre was not just a practical solution to their means of existence but one of great enjoyment;

"He (Mannalargenna) is passionately fond of colouring or debauding his body with a mixture of ochre and grease" (12:895).

Another quote of Robinson explains further their love of decorating themselves, the occasion was a funeral;

"One of the natives on being asked why he painted himself, asked the enquiring individual, "What do you wear fine clothes for"? (12:594).

Although the custom was to normally just cover the body there are snippets of information that suggest sometimes some of their leaders utilised more than just an overall covering, but highlighted body areas. Plomley (211) in his list of Aboriginal attacks makes references to observations,

"Two chiefs highly painted" "Chief recognised by his ornaments and the quantity of paint on his face and body", finally, "A Chief present with head painted red". (No exact quotes).

It is possible that body painting may have not been confined to using red and black as in c. 1848 some settlers living around Huonville recalled, visiting Oyster Cove Aborigines who had been transported in 1847 from Wybalenna, whitening their faces when performing corroborees, this was apparently to frighten the rain away (371:258). What the pigment was is not said, perhaps a word of warning should be expressed in accepting this?

"Hair Decoration"

I am only too aware that this subject can be disregarded as "art", but like body scarring and painting, which I believe is an inseparable part of them, hair decoration brought out their artistic capabilities, hence its inclusion.

Not only is there a clear separation of style between men and women there is also enough evidence to show that, with the men, bands differed in how they announced who they were.

Regretfully we have only a few examples of band-styles, and considering they could have numbered up to 100 it would have been fascinating to see what the hair decorations looked like.

The emphasis on the men may be said to be one of pride in who they claimed membership of as well as a warriors role within the group. Perhaps styles varied amongst men of the same band, even signifying their role such as a "Chief" or great hunter.

Obviously it was also regarded as a cosmetic even a form of beautifying, in a male sense, their bodies.

The lack of such attention to long hair by the females is a significant thing that is not explained to us, except close cropping was regarded as femininely beautiful.

The Tasmanian Aborigines hair was naturally black and woolly, the women's even more so, possibly due to the close cropping (6:123).

This cropping was often done as close to the skin as possible utilising sharply flaked stone tools, shells and later glass from colonial bottles. Until the arrival of the glass single hairs were cut but the glass being considerably sharper permitted ten or twenty to be cut (6:124).

The Westlake Papers have a reference to cutting the hair by burning it, quickly putting it out by using a hand (231:22).

Although the hair styles of the women were completely different to their men, there were also differences amongst the women. Some were shorn completely, others on one side, while some had all the upper part shorn close leaving a circle of hair all around (6:123). Another description was likened to having a basin put on the head and the hair inside of it cut away (6:124).

Peron also observed that the women's hair was short, frizzed, black and dirty, red with ochre (6:124).

Before Peron, D'Entrecasteaux recorded that the southern coast women cut their hair close. A cord was twisted around their head several times or a simple circle of hair was retained (223:295). Robinson later on confirms this telling that the Bruny Island and the other southern people left a ringlet like the east and north coast peoples but more lower down (12:248).

The narrow ring of hair worn by women was an ornamental charm to ward off bad "devils" (spirits) (12:594).

The children's hair was similar to the women's in style (6:124) and may reflect the allowing of only initiated men the privilege of wearing their more elaborate styles.

Pubic hair shaving has only been recorded once (86:177) but we have a reference that the women were fond of painting their devery (12:491). Also see "ochre" in this collection of "art" papers.

Forehead hair was always apparently removed by both sexes (12:632) but as always with so many bands being destroyed before any recording was done it is impossible to be sure about such statements.

Cook's visit to Bruny Island in January 1777 ce reported that some (of the people) had their heads completely shaved, some only on one side, while others shaved the head but left a circle or border of hair all around the head close to the temples and neck of about 15mm wide (128:55). Were they all from the same band or more than one?

Men allowed their hair to grow long (6:123), generally although on the west coast the crown of the head was shaved. The shaved area being surrounded by a ring of hair about 20 mm wide, this coronet passing behind through the region of the exterior occipital protuberance. On each side of the forehead a lock of hair was left. Forehead hair was shaved but not off the low part of the neck (12:632). West Point (West Coast) did not use ochre on their head (12:549).

The men in those "bands" that did not shave any of their hair coated it with a heavy mixture of grease and red-ochre (6:123), this type of dressing varied somewhat.

Some matted each lock separately so that when the hair dried their locks hung down, resembling a bundle of painted ropes, or as one put it, "rats tails", about 100 mm long. Others commented on observations that they looked like "cork-screws" hanging down all around over the face and neck, down to the shoulders. Others refer to them as little pellets like peas, and when shook their heads rattled - this was greatly admired by them.

Other men plastered their hair to create an appearance on it as though it was covered with huge scales. Cook's references are that it was clotted or divided into small parcels, with the use of some sort of grease mixed with ochre (6:123), could refer to this custom.

Although it was generally a custom amongst most men to ochre dress their hair, it was not by any means done by all (128:52).

Marion (March 1772) while at moorings in the South East recorded that the native killed had the front of his hair powdered with a red dust (208:33), presumably only the front?

Interestingly Robinson recorded that the Tommy.ginny (inland north west people) red-ochred and daubed their hair allowing it to hang in long ringlets, the same as the Marmairrener (a central eastern people?).

La Billardiere commented that the men's hair created a cushion like helmet against blows from waddies, it was hard being able to break wood over their heads (6:124)!

Beards were also dressed in red ochre (6:125) as were their moustaches, see drawing (272:4) and two stylised drawings that follow.

A daily ritual of the men was having their hair done by women - presumably their wives. As soon as the morning star appeared and after sunrise they worked on preparing an acceptable adornment with the aid of mutton bird and penguin fat, with ochre or sometimes penguin fat, with ochre or sometimes charcoal (11:9). Obviously this was a seasonal use of the fat required and by the coast, what others used and when away from the coast is not known.



BB

Stylised drawings inspired by (86) and (272)

Emphasis on beards and moustache.

After the substance was prepared using a palette and hammer-pounding stone, and presumably using the hand to apply to the hair, it set hard as cement. Resetting to its desired appearance involved the use of a primitive curling iron in the form of a smouldering stick from the camp-fire. It was applied against the hair to soften the grease (164:6).

Preparation for a "dance" was a lengthy business taking about three hours to turn out a finished "hair-do" (6:123).

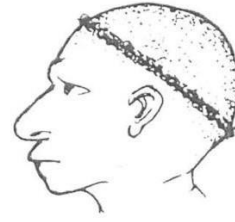
The importance especially of red ochre is shown when it was forbidden at the Flinders Island Settlement. A rebellion broke out and it was resinded (6:123).



1.



2.



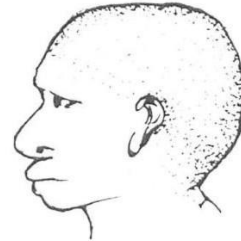
3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.

BB

“HAIR STYLES”

(Artists impressions for 4 & 7 other inspired by drawings).

1. Male styles (1 and 2).
The size of ringlets
varied between the

2. two shown, being
plastered with red ochre
and grease. (272).

3. Male and female - single
coronet. (86:10).

4. Male - ringlet with
side locks and
neck hair. (12:632).

5. Male and female,
uncut hair (86:5).

6. Male and female
close shaved hair.
(272).

7. Female - one side shaved
the other natural (6:123).

8. Male - short cut hair
with two coronets
close together, one
shorter. (159:16).

9. Male - shaven hair
with two coronets.
(86:39).

(Styles varied significantly from people to people).

But other hair decorations were employed, not just ochre. Flowers of the heath (12:249), fillet of gay flowers or festoons of showy berries (6:131), especially popular, by some at least, was the climbing Clematis or White virgin's bower blossoms, both men and women wearing them (225:26). Another favourite was the scented leaves and its pretty little red flowers tipped with green of the Boronia - this may be the "lemon-scented boronia" (*Boronia citriodora*, (232:22 - 23 No. 11).

Bonwick explained that at moonlight festivals the brow of a loved one was entwined with the sweet, blue, feston (climber) "*Comesperma*" (I think the "Purple Milkwort" - *Comesperma retusum* (232:64-65 No. 148). The mention of "moonlight festivals" is interesting suggesting special ritual significances.

But other items were used too, teeth, of the "kangaroo", short pieces of wood were used by young men. Feathers were stuck in the hair as well as strings of shells upon their bare heads (6:131).

Headbands were recorded, so called "interior bands" wore pith-heads strung together on plaited cord or rush (225:26). Common headbands, at least in the south, took the form of multiple twisted cords of fur, possibly human hair and plant material - bark of a shrub - circles of shells of a small whelk or skin of an animal, were all worn on shaved heads of both men, women and children (86:179). Both men and women were observed with head cords rolled in ochre and grease (225:26).



“HEAD DECORATIONS”

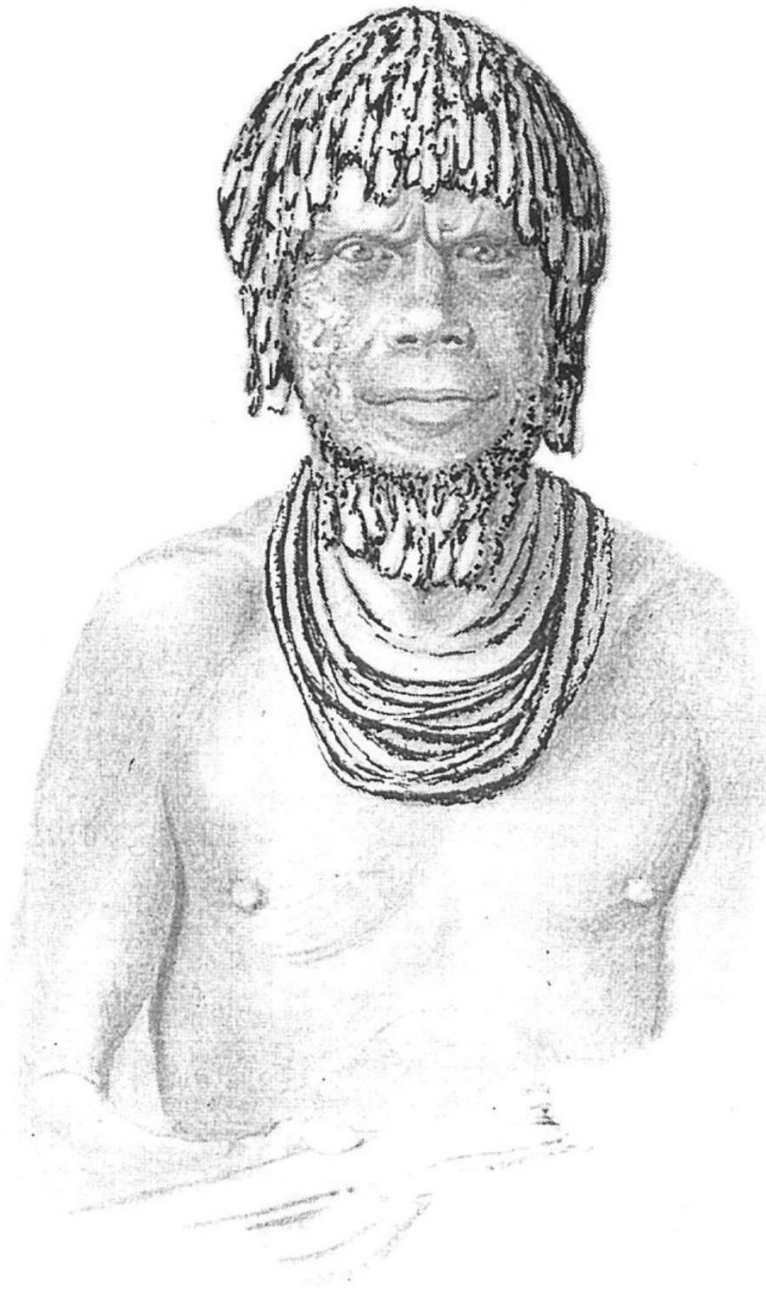
1. Taken from a “copy” (L.G. Shea. Government Printer. Tasmania. 49923 (Museum). Shows Governor Arthur in his proclamation to the Aborigines, 1830. (1828). It is the head decorations that may be white cockatoo feathers (Arthur has similar red feathers).
2. A fur head band - Baudin Expedition 1802 (159:16). - Crude drawings by Brimfield emphasising the decoration.
3. From a portrait in 1845 (227:Plate 30) of a “Big River” male - again a crude drawing by Brimfield to emphasise the decoration held in a head-band. Possibly feathers.



(272)

The young woman Jenny from Port Sorell people,
showing her close cut - shaved hair style so popular
with it seems all Palaeo-Tasmanian women.

Original drawings by Thomas Bock held by the
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery,
Launceston, Tasmania.



(272:4)

The renowned "Chief" Mannalargenna of the North East People.
Reproduced from (272), Thomas Bock's portraits with emphasis
on the Chiefs ochred hair and beard.

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"SCULPTURE?"

This art form of making three-dimensional forms by carving is all but unknown in Tasmania.

However we have what can only be said to be a strange piece of evidence, a journal note by George A. Robinson on 12th June, 1834 when he was at the Wandle River, c. 10 km directly west of St. Valentines Peak in the north west. (12:884-5). Sections of that days entry needs to be quoted to appreciate the evidence;

"_____Native - pointed out a spot about 2 miles (c. 3.4 km) to the north-west of Mount Bischoff - a thick woody country. _____said his father marked the trees here".

What is meant by "marked the trees" may suggest a route guide along a "road"/track, but then he continues;

"The youth said he would by and by show me where black fellows cut the trees with stone and make a large kar.ne.kut.tel.lay or porcupine" (an echidna).

The Aboriginal youth never did and Robinson makes no further entries about this.

It does suggest some sort of figurative carving or is it just a shape or motif as seen with petroglyphs. Plomley (12:917, note 98) refers to figurative art but drawings not sculpture.

As explained in that section about petroglyphs, in these notes, art had a mystic meaning involving spirits and the act of cutting trees may have had a similar use, one such possible piece of evidence in this regard is, and I quote;

"(Woorrady, a chief of the Bruny people) - said that the white men (French explorers) when they first came cut the head off a man on a tree and children, (I cannot work-out this reference to children but it seems a writing error by Robinson), that the natives destroyed it and that it is there still at Recherche Bay. Natives call it Wraggeowrapper, (a bad spirit), and when the children saw it they were frightened and run away. (This may explain above confused reference to children)".

Plomley (12:465, Note 197) explains that several expeditions left records of their visits and he suggests that the natives interpreted these as they would their own work. In this case as an evil spirit that had to be destroyed.

It would therefore seem that no real sculpture was practiced, indeed with only fire and sharp stone tools such would demand a lot of time and effort, but using tree trunks as canvasses as they did with rock-faces recording symbolic motifs is possible but it seems drawing with charcoal even ochre is more likely and we have evidence of this - see section "Drawing".