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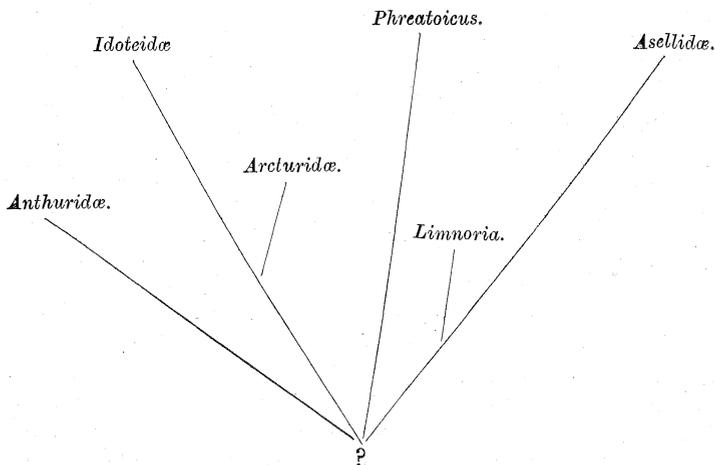
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NOTES ON "ROCK-SHELTERS," OR "GIBBA-GUNYAHS,"
AT DEEWHY LAGOON.

BY R. ETHERIDGE, JUNR.

SEVERAL fine "Rock-shelters" may be seen along the escarpment of Hawkesbury Sandstone forming the southern boundary of the hollow wherein lies the Deewhy Lagoon, between Manly and Narrabeen. Some of these were examined by Messrs. G. H. Barrow, R. Jenkins, and the Writer, and the following notes obtained:—

The Shelters are of the usual type seen throughout the Port Jackson District, recesses in the escarpment, overhung by thick, more or less tabular masses of rock, in some cases dry and habitable, in others wet and apparently never used by the Aborigines. The first examined lay at the south-east end of the escarpment, where the latter almost abuts on the swampy ground of the lagoon. The length was twenty-nine feet, depth sixteen feet, height from floor to ceiling four feet, the total height inclusive of the rock covering nine feet six inches. Interments did not appear to have been made in this Shelter, or if they had, we failed to discover any remains. From the regular and undisturbed condition of the hearth-earth, I think it more than

probable that such had not been the case in this instance. The following section was laid bare on excavation :—

	ft.	in.
1. Thin surface layer of black soil...	0	3
2. Yellowish-white fire layer ...	0	9
3. Black carbonized soil ...	1	0
4. Second fire layer...	0	3
5. Black soil, as before ...	1	0
6. Third fire layer ...	0	6
7. Black soil, as before ...	1	3
8. Fourth fire layer ..	0	6
9. Black soil, as before		

Feet—5 6

The black carbonaceous layers were of the usual kind found in these shelters, a mixture of earth, sand, humus, shells and shell-fragments, with an occasional fish or mammalian bone, and a few stones. The shells are the commoner species now living on the coast, more particularly those of an edible nature. The fire layers, of which we dug through four, without reaching the bottom of the shelter, consisted of a friable white, or yellowish-white, limy deposit, which, if at all dry, is most trying to the eyes when digging. The largest fire layer in lateral extent, and at the same time the thickest, was almost in the centre of the Shelter. This recess had clearly been long used by the Aborigines of the locality as a cooking place, and, it may be legitimately inferred, as one of residence also, for temporary periods perhaps considering their nomadic habits, but periods extending over many years.

A second Shelter some little distance along the escarpment to the west was next examined. This was seventy-four feet in length, twelve feet in depth, eight feet in height, with a total height from the floor to the top of the shelter rock of twelve feet. It was an unusually long and narrow retreat, and contained similar fire layers, although not to so great a depth as the first described. About nine inches below the surface soil we disinterred the partially complete skeleton of a young child, now set up in the Ethnological Hall of the Museum. As usual, the body had been protected by stone slabs placed more or less all round and above, but apparently not below it. The bones missing were those of the right hand, the left forearm and hand, the right foreleg bones, and both feet. The remainder were in a good state of preservation, and such of the teeth as are present are sound and very strong.

Beyond the position of the second Shelter the escarpment trends in a slightly north-west direction, and cuts the Manly-Pittwater Road. Between these points are a string of large Rock-shelters, and as the floors had been dug and explored by others we did not

pay particular attention to them, but the nature of the soil thrown out clearly showed that they had also been put to the same use.

The constant traces of native occupation thus afforded by these Rock-shelters, seems to indicate that the population, from an aboriginal standpoint, was a fairly numerous one, due, doubtless, to the facilities afforded by the proximity of the lagoon for procuring fish, which we know formed a very large portion of the food of these blacks.

I think we may accept a general statement to the effect that the Aborigines of the Port Jackson coastal districts were Shelter dwellers to a greater or less extent, and for the matter of that, those of other districts where suitable conditions prevailed. Wherever escarpments of the Hawkesbury Sandstone are traced along the various inlets and arms of Port Jackson and the Hawkesbury River, these rocky recesses are met with, and the majority reveal traces of habitation in some form or another.

Caves have from the remotest historical periods of the world's history been the retreat of man, and this we see repeated in Australia, in a modified form it is true, within the historical period. Such habitations here, however, do not strictly conform to the term cave, but fall within the designation generally applied to them, that of "Rock-shelters." "Caverns," says Mr. John Evans,* "are either long and sinuous, in places contracting into narrow passages, and then again expanding into halls more or less vast; while others are merely vaulted recesses in the face of a rock, or even long grooves running along the face of some almost perpendicular though inland cliff," the two forms owing their existence to causes of a different nature. The stone dwellings here described rather fall within the second category. They usually occur in cliffs and scarps, with horizontal bedding, but, the beds possessing varying degrees of hardness and permeability to water, the softer and lower strata wear away faster than the harder, leaving recesses of greater or less depth.

The contents of these aboriginal Rock-shelters are in the main simply refuse heaps, thus resembling those of France and Belgium, "containing the bones, fractured and unfractured, of animals which have served for human food, mixed with which are the lost and waste tools, utensils and weapons, and even the cooking-hearths of the early cave-dwellers."†

Eliminating the utensils, a more truthful picture of the contents of our aboriginal Rock-shelters could not be drawn. There is, however, no evidence whatever of cave or cave-shelter tenancy by man alternating with that of either a living or extinct lower mammalian fauna, similar to that found in other quarters of the globe.

* Ancient Stone Implements, &c., Gt. Brit., 1872, p. 428.

† *Ibid.*, p. 430.

Sir William Dawson has divided caverns into those of driftage, interment, and residence.* The Rock-shelters of Eastern Australia are clearly a combination of the two latter, similar to some of the European caves mentioned by him, such as the Dordogne and Mentone Caves. "The accumulation of ashes, bones, and other remains," says Dawson, "is in exact accordance with the want of cleanliness of the ruder American tribes, and also with the habits of a people who in summer live in the open air, or in temporary cabins or wigwams, and only in the colder months or in bad weather resort to more secure and permanent abodes."† No doubt this equally describes the occupancy of our Rock-shelters.

The absence of bones of mammalia in the refuse heaps at the mouths of the latter, other than those of recent species, is strong confirmatory evidence of the non-existence of man together with the extinct mammalian fauna of Australia.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW PELAGIC HEMIPTERON FROM PORT JACKSON.

BY FREDERICK A. A. SKUSE.

(Entomologist to the Australian Museum.)

HALOBATES WHITELEGGEI, *sp. n.*

(Plate xxvii., figs. 1-10.)

OVATE, widest behind the middle. Glauous above, with a silvery bloom; yellowish-ochreous beneath. Antennæ (including jointlets) and legs black, with a very minute greyish pubescence. Head with two triangular reddish-yellow spots, which do not meet on the hind margin.

Male and female. Antennæ at the base, antennal tubercles, prosternum, coxæ and trochanters, and a spot (more prominent in female) beneath the base of femora, in the fore-legs, coxæ and trochanters (with the exception of a black spot beneath), in intermediate legs, a spot beneath the apex of coxæ, and the outer margin of trochanters, in the hind-legs, fore and intermediate acetabula beneath, and margin of first and whole of second genital segment above, and all beneath, ochreous. Apical half of the

* Fossil Men, 1883, p. 222.

† *Ibid.*, p. 226.