

Boomerangs at Lord's

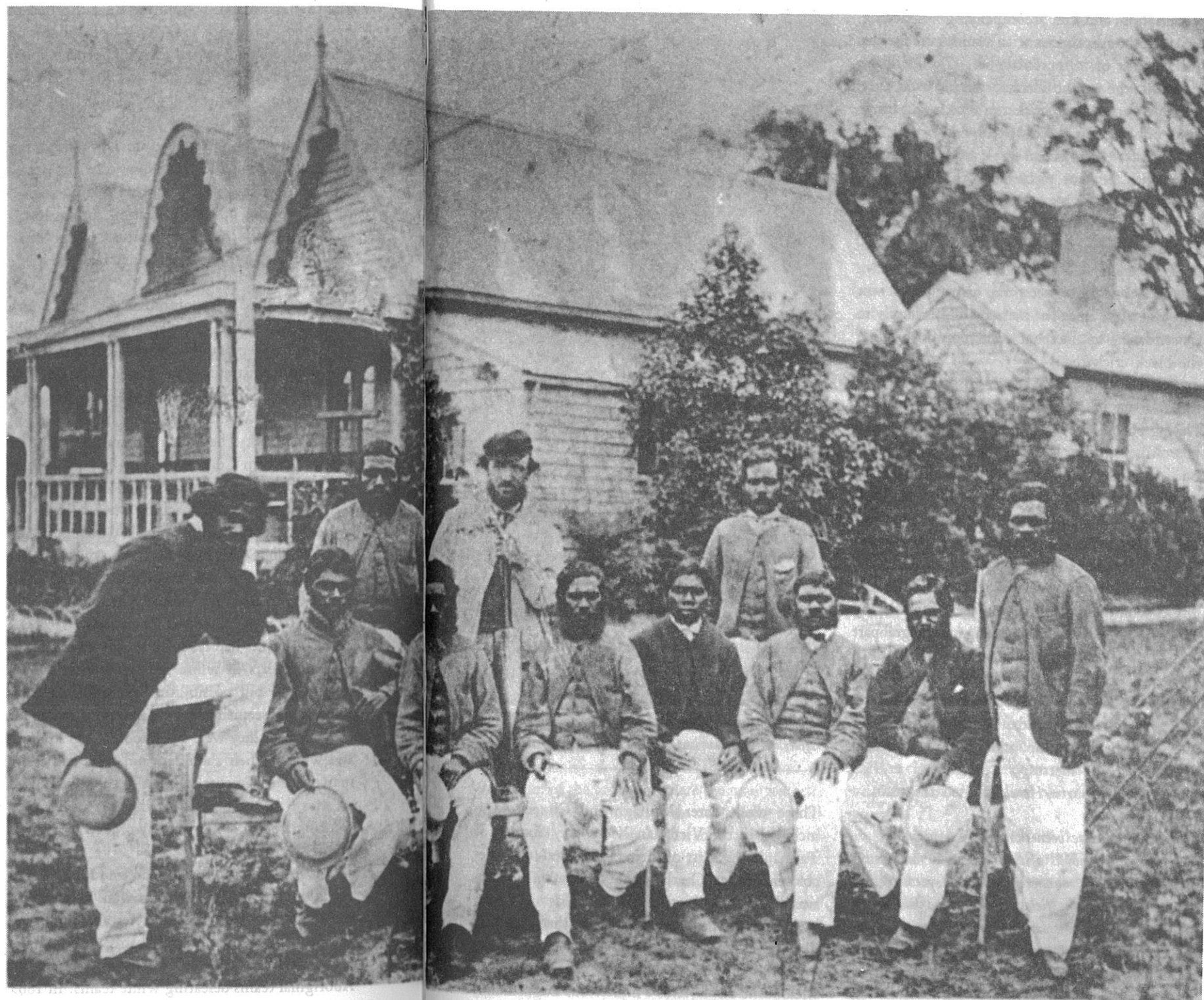
The Aboriginal tour
of England 1868

The tour by 13 Australian Aborigines ten years before a white Australian team was a venture that failed to yield big profits, but it put spear-throwing tribesmen who occasionally dressed in possum skins onto 40 English cricket fields. The Aborigines, all full bloods, were a curiosity in a world still debating Darwin's *Origin of Species*. They were a colourful group who avoided liquor as best they could and won as many matches as they lost at a time when Australia's white cricketers were simply not up to touring standard.

Their trip had its origins in the Lake Wallace region of western Victoria. The Aboriginal cricketers were chiefly from two tribes, the Madimadi and the Wutjupaluk, who ranged over land in the vicinity of the towns of Bringalbert, Apsley, Harrow and Edenhope. Most of them worked on properties where they were fed and clothed in return for labour and taught to play cricket by the sons of pastoral pioneers.

D. J. Mulvaney, in his excellent book on the 1868 tour, suggests that cricket's communal team

Some of the Aboriginal team that visited England photographed, before they left, in Melbourne. Tarpot, coach Tom Wills and Mullagh are at the rear. At the front: (L to R) Rose, Bullocky, Cuzens, Peter, Paddy, Dick-a-Dick, Watty and Twopenny. Wills dropped out of the venture before the side sailed



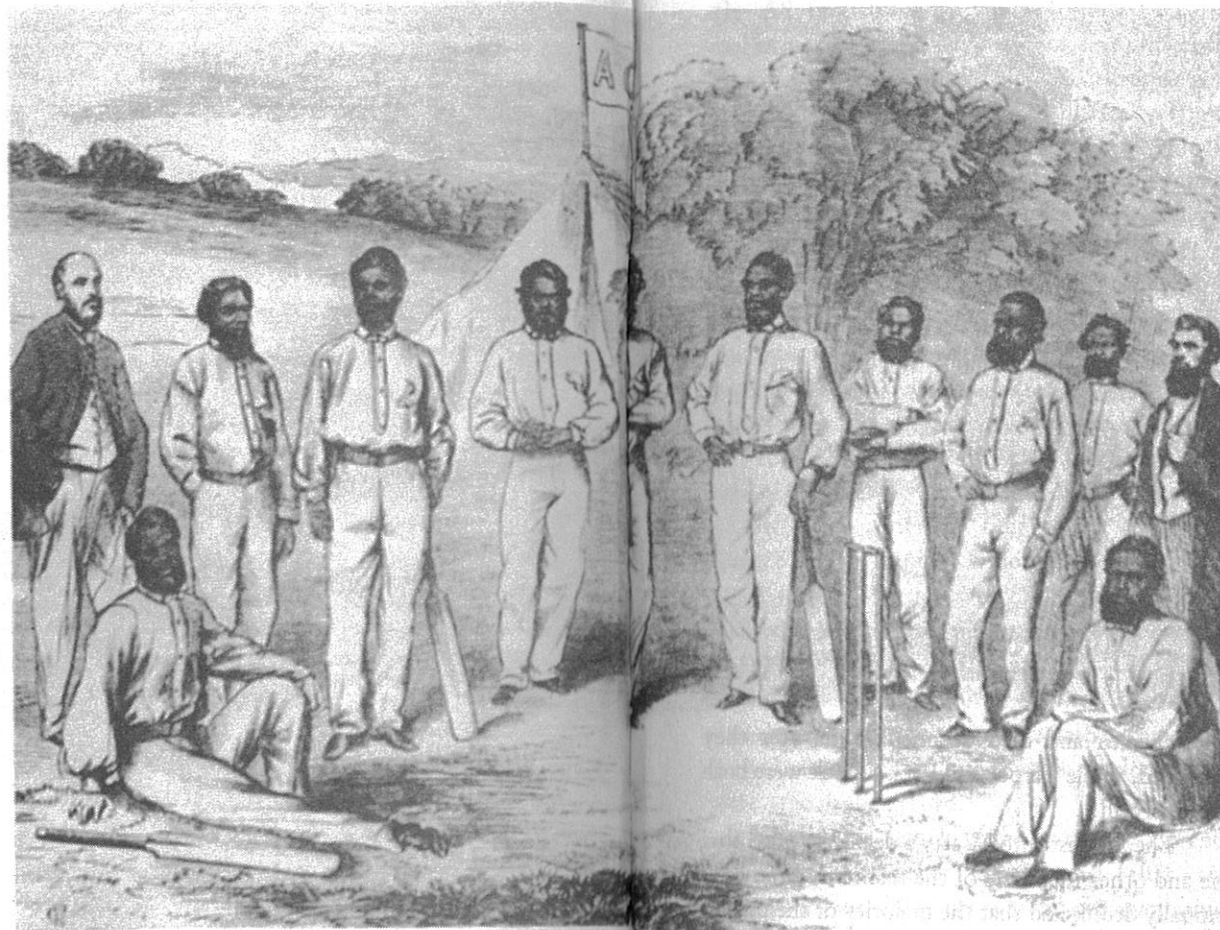
organisation and the accompanying barracking provided the Aborigines with a substitute for the lost rituals of ceremonial life. To William Hayman, who ran the Edenhope cricket team, they were just darned good cricketers who might bring some publicity to the district.

Initially Hayman had no thought of financial gain when he sent pictures of the Aboriginal cricketers to Rowley and Bryant, suggesting a sponsored match. Rowley and Bryant accepted the idea and arranged for Tom Wills to go to Edenhope to coach the team. Wills must surely have pondered the irony of accepting such a job—it was only five years since the massacre of his family in Queensland—but he spent seven months coaching the black cricketers.

On Boxing Day 1866 Wills and Hayman took the team to the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Playing before 10,000 spectators produced extreme nervousness in the players and seven of them were out for ducks. Johnny Mullagh's 16 and Bullocky's 14 enabled them to scrape 39 together. Mullagh dismissed both Melbourne Cricket Club openers cheaply but Dick Wardill made 45 before the club were all out for 100. Mullagh scored 33 in the second innings and Wills 25 not out, but the MCC won the match early on the second day by nine wickets. At a sports meeting, an integral part of early cricket matches, organised on the third day, the Aborigines gave a display of boomerang- and spear-throwing. Tarpot also ran 91.5 metres backwards in 14 seconds, Mullagh cleared 2.2 metres in the high jump, and also threw a cricket ball almost 101 metres.

The Melbourne *Herald* praised the team.

That they have been thoroughly acquainted with various points of the game was manifestly evident by the manner in which they conducted themselves on the field. Mullagh and Bullocky showed themselves to be no mean batsmen. They not only stopped balls, but hit them, showing good direction and strong defence. Their fielding was very fair.



The Aboriginal team that went from Western Victoria to Melbourne to play the Melbourne Cricket Club XI on Boxing Day 1866: (L to R) Mr Hayman, Captain, Sugar, Jellico, Cuzens, Needy, Mullagh, Bullocky, Tarpot, Sundown, Tom Wills, who umpired, with Officer and Peter seated in front

Three weeks later Mullagh and Cuzens were included in the Victorian XI to play Sixteen of Tasmania, the first of their race chosen for inter-colonial cricket. On the day of the match Mullagh was ill and Bullocky took his place. Tasmania won by five wickets, and the *Age* claimed that Victoria's defeat was due to Mullagh's absence.

One of the spectators at the Aborigines' Melbourne display was a mysterious Englishman,

"Captain" W. E. B. Gurnett, who offered Wills and Hayman a year-long contract for a tour by the team around the colonies and to England. Hayman returned to Edenhope at this point to recruit more players. (It is interesting to note that before enlisting a player he asked permission of the owner of the property where the man worked, although the Aborigines were not legally bound to the whites.) When Wills took the team to matches at Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat, the first suggestions that he and Hayman were exploiting the Aborigines were made, the first of several controversies about the team and the tour.

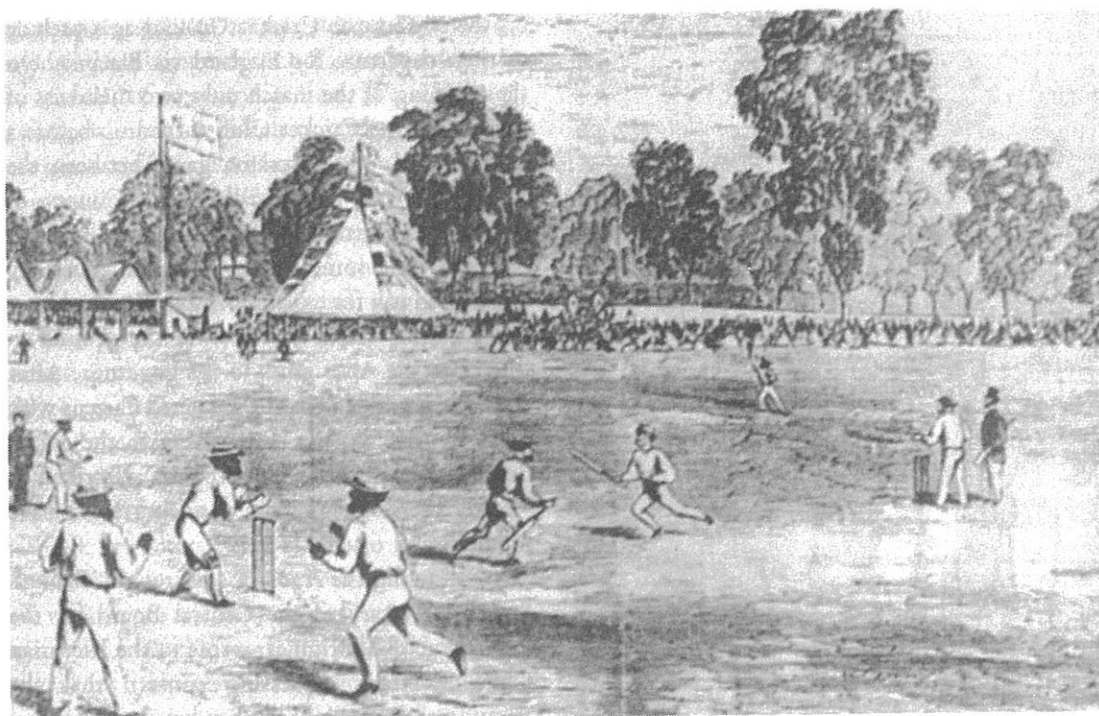
Advertisements appeared in Melbourne newspapers on 2 February 1867 announcing that the Aborigines would play a second match a week later

on the Melbourne Cricket Ground as a prelude to their departure for England via Panama. On the morning of the match only two members of the Melbourne Cricket Club turned up before a small crowd, but a scratch game between the Aborigines and a side called the "County of Bourke" was arranged. Although the *Age* had reported that some of the cheques issued by Gurnett to pay for expenses in Bendigo had been dishonoured, Gurnett arrived at the ground to introduce the Aborigines to the governor. After the day's play the governor presented Cuzens with a bat, a prize for the best batting in the game, despite the efforts of a newcomer described as "Paddy the slogger" who was reported to have hit hard and often.

Following the *Age's* disclosures, R. Brough Smyth, secretary of the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines, wrote to the Victorian Chief Secretary expressing concern that the Aboriginal team might be abandoned and left destitute in England. Smyth argued that the promoters of the tour should lodge a guarantee with the government to ensure the team's safe return; otherwise the government should cancel the tour. The Chief Secretary replied that the government had no legal right to interfere.

Amid suggestions that they would perish from disease in England, the Aborigines moved on to a two-day match against the Albert Club in Sydney. The governor of New South Wales watched the Sydney team defeat the Aborigines by 132 runs. Caffyn thought so little of their play that he challenged the entire team to play him at single-wicket cricket, but the challenge was not accepted.

Before the Aborigines took the field Captain Gurnett attempted to have Wills and Hayman arrested for breach of contract and play only proceeded when Charles Lawrence agreed to act as guarantor. Mulvaney believes that Gurnett was the one who defaulted and that this action was merely a subterfuge. Nevertheless, the team was left stranded in Sydney after the match and it fell



The Aboriginal team practising at the Melbourne Cricket Ground before their tour of England in 1868

to Hayman to hastily arrange games and raise enough money to get the players home. They returned to Melbourne, penniless, at the beginning of May. The local Lake Wallace paper, the *Hamilton Spectator*, concluded: "It is evident that Hayman and his blacks entrusted themselves into hands which were not quite trustworthy".

The black players returned to Edenhope and dispersed, all hope of a tour of England apparently gone. Hayman said he had lost £400 on the venture, Gurnett had not been seen since the last Sydney match and Wills had terminated his association with the team in Melbourne. The cost to the Aborigines had also been high. Sugar had died before the first match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, although he appears in photographs of the "Aborigine Cricket Club" taken before the game. His replacement Watty died on the road home, Jellico and Paddy never regained

their health and died of pneumonia after they returned, while Tarpot and Dick-a-Dick were both seriously ill.

The inquest into Watty's death revealed that he and other members of the team had been continually drunk and that the majority of the players had been completely unable to cope with the living conditions encountered on their trip. The survivors would be permanently affected by their exposure to the white man's city life.

Within three months, however, the team was reconstituted, its members practising daily around the shores of Lake Wallace. Charles Lawrence, who at that time mixed coaching with hotel keeping in Sydney, arrived in the district with George Smith, a former Mayor of Sydney, and a G. W. Graham, and they expressed themselves keen to back a tour of England. Lawrence took over the captaincy, supervised practice and designed striking uniforms that were to become a major feature of the team's subsequent appearances.

Lawrence had learnt from his experience with

the All England Eleven and produced separate uniforms for cricket and athletics. For cricket the team wore red shirts, known as Garibaldis, with white linen collars, white flannel trousers, blue belts and neckties, and blue and white diagonally striped flannel sashes, with merino undershirts for warmth. The outfit was topped off with coloured peaked caps, each player having his own colour. For athletics they wore coloured caps and trunks and long white tights, and for displays of spear and boomerang throwing and other warrior-like pursuits, they wore possum or kangaroo skins across their loins and shoulders.

Lawrence wore a white cap; Red Cap, a black cap; Mullagh, red; Cuzens, purple; Dick-a-Dick, yellow; Mosquito, dark blue; Peter, green; Jim Crow ("Neddy"), pink; Bullocky, chocolate; King Cole, magenta; Sundown, checks; Harry Rose, Victoria plaid; and Twopenny, the player Lawrence brought with him from New South Wales, wore a McGregor plaid. The players sometimes exchanged caps or wore sashes that were individually coloured but there is no doubt they were strikingly garbed.

Despite the debacle of the first tour Lawrence persuaded Victorian newspapers that the Aborigines would prove worthy representatives of the colony in England. Good crowds watched a series of matches to raise funds for the trip and newspapers declared that Lawrence's association with the team was "sufficient guarantee that on this occasion the whole affair is genuine".

The team departed from Edenhope on 16 September 1867, in a wagon so crowded that Cuzens was thrown out on his head when the wagon hit a rut. Luckily he was not seriously hurt, and was able to continue the journey with the other 12 players, a cook, Lawrence, Hayman, all their gear and the coachman. Charley Dumas replaced Harry Rose, who returned home to Geelong, where Tarpot also joined the party. Two of the players, Dick-a-Dick and Red Cap, were the trackers who had won Australia-wide admiration in 1864 when they found Isaac, Frank

and Jane Duff, the children who went missing from Spring Hill station, north of Apsley, for nine days.

At Warrnambool the team posed for special individual photographs. Only Johnny Mullagh, Cuzens, Red Cap and Bullocky wore their cricket ensembles, and by chance it was these three that proved the team's most reliable and consistent players in England. The rest wore animal skins or their athletic uniforms and were photographed with clubs, spears or parrying shields. They also played a match at Warrnambool, dismissing a local sixteen for 19 and 24 and scoring 140 to win comfortably. Mullagh made 48 not out and then took 10 wickets. Lawrence maintained firm control over his players in this match, which proved invaluable in discounting rumours that the majority of the team had been drunk when they left Lake Wallace.

The Aborigines next played a draw at Geelong and while the newspapers and the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines debated claims that they were being exploited, the team slipped aboard the *Rangatira* off Port Phillip Heads and moved on to Sydney. Almost unanimously newspapers applauded what Mulvaney calls "a shrewd and contemptuous gesture", and said that in smuggling the Aborigines onto the ship Hayman and Lawrence had been too smart for the Board.

After matches at Wollongong, West Maitland, Singleton and Newcastle, the team played two final matches at the Albert Ground. Big crowds turned out for the second match against an Army and Navy team which included William Caffyn. Almost 5000 people saw the home team dismissed for 64, with Cuzens taking 8 for 23. The Aborigines then scored 237, of which Cuzens made 86. It ended in a draw after the second day with Army and Navy 2 for 51, before 9000 spectators. Lawrence's team appeared in a display after the game. The highlight was a mock battle between two sides of six men, wearing possum skins and multicoloured headdresses made up of broad plaited bands of cabbage tree leaves and a crest of lyrebird plumage.



Tom Wills (far left) with the Aboriginal players after a practice session in Melbourne. The players had to be shipped out of Victoria in secrecy so as to dodge opponents of the English tour

Tarpot went on board the *Parramatta*, which

was to take the team to England, but became ill and had to stay in Australia. Lawrence, then in his fortieth year, accompanied the team with Hayman and Smith, who acted as business manager. After a voyage of three months, which included a stop in Hong Kong, the team reached



England for a tour that was to see them on the field for 99 days out of a possible 126. They faced a programme of only 10 matches when they arrived, but proved so popular they played an additional 37. Lawrence, who captained the side, took part in more than forty matches. Redcap and

Tiger played in all 47, Twopenny in 46, Dick-a-Dick and Mullagh in 45. William Shepherd, an old Surrey professional who travelled as the team's umpire, had to play in seven matches and captained them when Lawrence rested. Hayman was an enthusiastic scorer throughout.

They played mostly on rough fields. Only the main grounds employed groundsmen and even at Lord's a flock of sheep was left to graze for two or three days before games to keep the grass down. Just four years earlier the Sussex team had refused to play at Lord's because of the poor condition of the ground. Underarm and round-arm bowling coexisted with the overarm style that had become legal when the laws of cricket had been revised in 1864.

Cricket historian Arthur Haygarth wrote that the Aborigines played their matches either for £200 a game, or for the entire match proceeds less £20 paid to the host clubs. Haygarth described the tour as "very lucrative". Other writers of the time stated that although the tour was financially successful, expenses were so high that the profit was small. Nevertheless one of the sponsors, George Smith, profited sufficiently to buy several stallions which he sent back to Australia. Despite the fondness for grog they shared with white men, the team arrived on time for all its matches, and alcohol proved a problem only at Lord's, where Bullocky failed to complete the game.

"Nothing of interest comes from Australia except gold and black cricketers," commented the *London Daily Telegraph* when the team reached Gravesend and began practising for their first game on 25 May. Between then and the last match on 15 October, the Aborigines exhibited immense stamina. Travelling frequently in uncomfortable conditions over rough roads they overcame major setbacks, especially King Cole's death of tuberculosis in Guy's Hospital, London, on 24 June, and the illnesses which forced Sundown and Jim Crow to be sent home in August. Down to 11 plus their white leaders, the side overcame fatigue in a manner which one sportswriter considered

incredible. They played 11 matches in September and six in October, in cold conditions far more unpleasant than any encountered later by white Australian teams.

English newspapers found them a novelty at first and focused on their gait and their physical shape, but largely lost interest after the first few matches. *The Times* sent a reporter to the first game at The Oval and another to Lord's, but he wrote that the Aborigines' play was a "travèstie upon cricket". After that the paper ignored them. But, in a cold summer, they regularly attracted crowds of 5000. The *Sheffield Telegraph* dubbed their opening game "decidedly the event of the century". The *Rochdale Observer* called them "stalwart men, of manly, dignified and confident gait and bearing". Other papers expressed surprise at their "gentle and by no means unintellectual appearance".

There were no tea breaks in their matches and lunch occupied just 35 minutes between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. They were not provided with lunch and had to compete with spectators who crowded the refreshment tents. At York they were barred from the luncheon tent. This snub upset Johnny Mullagh but was treated as a joke by his teammates. Most centres looked after them well and the Surrey club entertained the whole side to dinner. A Surrey man, Julius Caesar, who had toured Australia with Parr's team in 1864, also acted as an umpire in one of their matches at The Oval.

Lawrence's skill in public relations served the team well. His informative press notes were quoted directly so that rival newspapers often used identical phrases. *Sporting Life*, for instance, was given a list of the players' tribal names and the common names by which white people knew them:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Dick-a-Dick | Jungunjanuke |
| Peter | Arrahmunijarrimun |
| Johnny Mullagh | Unaarrimin |
| Cuzens | Zellanach |

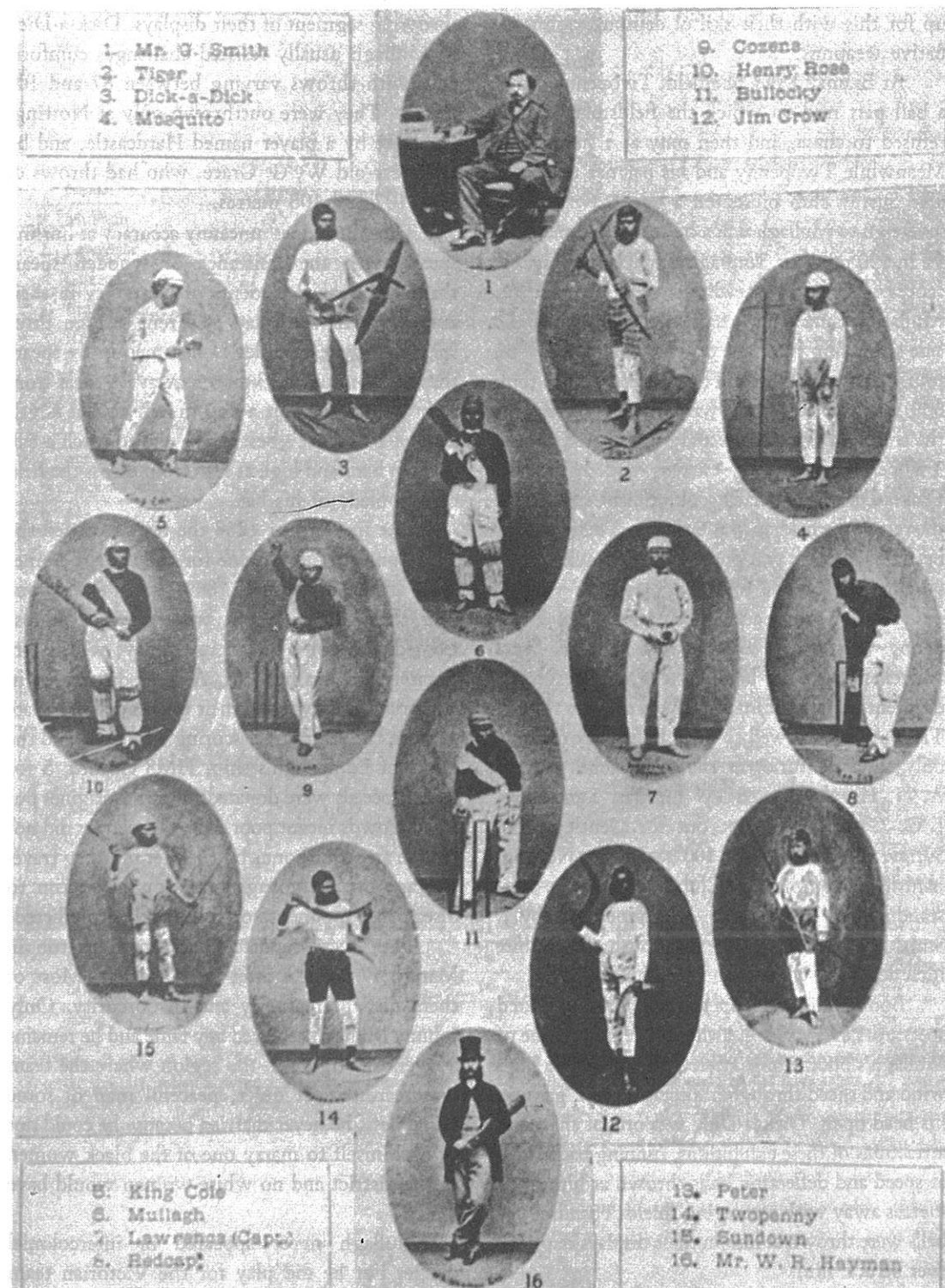
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|---------------|------------------|
| Sundown | Ballrinjarrimin |
| King Cole | Brippokei |
| Tiger | Bonmbarngeet |
| Red Cap | Brimbunyah |
| Bullocky | Bullchanach |
| Mosquito | Grougarrong |
| Jim Crow | Jallachmurrimin |
| Twopenny | Murrumgunarriman |
| Charley Dumas | Pripumuarraman |

Sporting Life noted that no arrival since "the ingenious George Martin brought Deerfoot from America to contend with English pedestrians" had been anticipated with such curiosity as that of the black Australians. The paper added that it should not be inferred that the Aborigines were savages—"they are perfectly civilised, having been brought up in the bush to agricultural pursuits as assistants to Europeans".

The Marylebone Cricket Club committee initially voted against staging a match at Lord's but later reversed their decision. They prohibited a sports display or an exhibition of warrior skills. Despite this the Aborigines recognised the crowd's wish to see their tricks and demonstrated their use of weapons. This historic match, the first by Australians at the game's headquarters, saw the men from Edenhope opposed to a Marylebone team which included an earl, a viscount, a captain, and a lieutenant-colonel who was out twice without scoring to Cuzens' bowling. Cuzens bowled 60 overs and took 10 wickets for 117 runs. MCC won with scores of 164 and 120, compared with 185 and 45. The Australians were hampered by Bullocky's absence in the second innings. W. G. Grace said the Aborigines played well and showed conspicuous skill at the game.

Only a handful of the players had real cricket talent but others, such as Charley Dumas, made

A photograph at Lord's of the Aborigines who toured England ten years before the first visit by white Australians. George Smith (top, centre) financed the tour and William Hayman (bottom) managed the team



1. Mr. G. Smith
2. Tiger
3. Dick-a-Dick
4. Mosquito
9. Cuzens
10. Henry Rose
11. Bullocky
12. Jim Crow

5. King Cole
6. Mullagh
7. Lawrence (Capt)
8. Redcap
13. Peter
14. Twopenny
15. Sundown
16. Mr. W. R. Hayman

up for this with their skilful demonstrations of native weapons.

At Bramall Lane, Sheffield, Twopenny drove a ball past mid-on which the fieldsman at first refused to chase, and then only at a sullen jog. Meanwhile Twopenny and his partner ran nine. The Surrey club presented a talent award of a sovereign to Mullagh when he scored 33, and then 73 in 130 minutes. Mullagh achieved the highest score of the tour at Reading, where he made 94. Mullagh, Cuzens and Lawrence dominated the side's bowling, sending down 4324 of the 4983 four-ball overs bowled. These three bowlers took 609 wickets, compared with 105 by the rest of the team. The wicket-keeping was shared among Twopenny, Mullagh, Cuzens and Lawrence. Dick-a-Dick occasionally took brilliant catches but the rest of the fielding was ordinary. Their running between wickets was poor, and there were some 60 run outs on the tour.

There were frequent accusations that Twopenny and to a lesser extent Cuzens were "chuckers", partly because few umpires could differentiate a legitimate delivery from a throw. The bowlers did well to limit their opponents to only three centuries in the 47 matches played: A. N. Hornby scored 117 for East Lancashire, J. C. Gregory 121 not out for Gentlemen of Surrey, and G. M. Royle 100 not out for Nottinghamshire Commercial Club. Perhaps the outstanding feat against the Aborigines was by J. Smith, whose 6 for 28 for South Derbyshire included four wickets in one four-ball over.

Boomerang and spear-throwing delighted spectators everywhere, although at Bootle one of Mullagh's boomerangs veered off-course in a high wind and sliced through a spectator's hat, gashing his head open. Dick-a-Dick was one of the great attractions of these exhibitions, running backwards at speed and deflecting balls thrown at him from metres away with a parrying shield. Hundreds of balls were thrown at him in these displays but none ever struck him.

A big crowd-pleaser was the cricket ball

throwing segment of their displays. Dick-a-Dick or Mullagh usually resisted challenges comfortably with throws varying between 87 and 100 metres. They were outthrown only at Nottinghamshire by a player named Hardcastle, and by a 20-year-old W. G. Grace, who had throws of 106, 107 and 108 metres.

The Aborigines' uncanny accuracy at hurling spears with the assistance of wooden spear-throwers amazed students of weaponry in their audiences. In a display at Trent Bridge three spearmen were completely hemmed in by spears thrown from up to 73 metres away. A spear from a throwing stick cut a dog in half at The Oval. One of Lawrence's best tricks was to catch a ball thrown hard and high at him from across the field on the blade of his bat.

Late in October 1868 the team boarded the 1118-tonne *Dunbar Castle* for the voyage home. They arrived in February 1869, almost exactly one year after they left, but were required almost immediately for a match in Sydney, which fortunately was washed out. A three-day match in Victoria was drawn and their tour ended in a spate of runs, the Aborigines scoring 9 for 331, and the Duke of Edinburgh's ship, HMS *Galatea*, 5 for 293. Proceeds were donated to the Aborigines but small crowds meant poor pay. The players did not receive any tour bonus but neither did they travel steerage on the voyage home or fall victim to disease, as opponents of the tour had predicted.

They were reported back in Hamilton in March, 17 months after they had left. Most of them died prematurely and in obscurity. Only Johnny Mullagh achieved any fame and he remains a legendary figure in the region where the team was recruited. A quiet, peaceful man of some tenderness, he never married because he could not bring himself to marry one of the black women of the district and no white woman would have him.

Mullagh never appeared in intercolonial cricket but he did play for the Victorian team against Lord Harris's touring England party in

Tour Averages

All overs were four-ball

Batting						
Name	Matches Played	Completed Innings	Times Not Out	Total	Highest Score	Average
Mullagh	45	71	4	1,698	94	23.65
Lawrence	40	57	12	1,156	63	20.16
Cuzens	46	72	8	1,358	87	19.9
Bullocky	39	61	3	579	64	9.33
Red Cap	47	73	3	630	56	8.46
Twopenny	46	70	6	589	35	8.29
King Cole	7	10	2	75	18	7.5
Tiger	47	69	5	431	32	6.17
Shepherd	7	11	0	66	11	6.0
Dick-a-Dick	45	66	5	356	42	5.26
Peter	42	59	7	284	30	4.48
Charley	44	53	13	218	17	4.6
Mosquito	34	20	26	77	8	3.17
Jim Crow	13	15	4	37	12	2.7
Sundown	2	3	0	1	1	—

Bowling					
Name	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets	Average
Twopenny	176	78	242	35	6.9
Mullagh*	1,877	831	2,489	245	10.0
Red Cap	366	141	576	54	10.7
Cuzens	868	361	1,296	114	11.3
Bullocky	22	7	46	4	11.5
Lawrence*	1,579	451	3,022	250	12.1
Dick-a-Dick	35	6	96	5	19.2
Shepherd	56	14	124	6	20.7
King Cole	14	4	34	1	—

* This analysis does not include figures for the first innings against Rochdale, and the second innings against Tynemouth (North Shields), when Lawrence apparently took 7 wickets and Mullagh 12. Both bowlers would have taken 257 wickets in this case.

Source: Adapted from *Sporting Life*, 28 October 1868



Johnny Mullagh, the outstanding player on the Aborigines' tour of England, was a sensitive, proud man who preferred to sleep in the open than endure insults from white men in hotels

1879. He bowled 12 overs without success, scored 4 in Victoria's first innings, and topscored with 36 in the second innings. He lived in Melbourne for a time as a professional at the Melbourne Cricket Club but preferred life alone as a rabbit on James Edgar's Pine Hills property. He was a superb horseman and enjoyed breaking in horses and riding round the sheds at shearing time. He remained a member of the Harrow Club team,

which took part in the Murray Cup competition until the 1890 season. He sometimes played against old tour mates like Tarpot.

Johnny Mullagh remained sensitive to racial indignities all his life. Johnnie Moyes recorded that Mullagh once travelled with the Harrow team to Apsley, where the local captain suggested that Mullagh could eat in the hotel kitchen instead of joining the players in the dining room. Mullagh left the premises and spent the night in the open. Moyes also recounted the story of a match in which Mullagh deliberately hit a catch rather than continue batting against Apsley after their captain called him "a nigger". When asked why he deliberately sacrificed his wicket, Mullagh replied: "Oh, anything is good enough for a nigger".

Mullagh went to Sydney one year with the Victorian team but a poisoned hand prevented him playing. On the first night some Victorian players complained of a gas leak in their hotel. The players traced it to the ground floor where Mullagh had a small room. They had to break the lock to get into a room which they found full of gas. The players threw open the window and roused Mullagh with difficulty. He told them he had blown the gas out hours ago. For the rest of the stay, Mullagh's room was lit by a candle.

In August 1891, James Edgar discovered Mullagh's body at his camp in the scrub. His bat and stumps were buried with him in Harrow cemetery and each Harrovian cricketer present threw a sprig of blackberries and yellow flowers on to his grave, a symbol of the club's colours. A memorial was erected on the local sports ground, later named Mullagh Oval. The *Hamilton Spectator* collected money for the memorial. His headstone was inscribed on one side with his England tour average, 23.65, and on the other side with his Murray Cup average, 45.70.

Of the other English tourists, probably only Red Cap and Tarpot survived Mullagh. Twopenny returned to Sydney and played for New South Wales against Victoria in an 1870 inter-colonial match, the only other member of the team

to appear again in big cricket. Twopenny could not reproduce the form which gave him nine wickets for nine runs against Hampshire from 10.2 overs. Eight of his victims that day were bowled and he caught the tenth batsman. But he was dropped after only one match for New South Wales and later appeared in court on alcohol-related charges.

The first systematic count of full-blooded Aborigines in Victoria in 1877 disclosed that this group had dwindled to 774. Several of the cricketers who had made the first abortive tour to Sydney in 1867 or the full tour of England a year later were among those who could not be counted, although Dick-a-Dick was reported at a race meeting at Mount Elgin station in 1884. There are no records of what happened to Jim Crow and Sundown, sent home ill from England, but a Jim Crow was reported to have been murdered some years later at Euston in the Murray River region.

At the local school on the foreshores of Lake

Wallace, where the Aborigines practised with Wills and Lawrence, there is a monument to the team, erected largely through the efforts of school-teacher H. G. Martindale, who raised the money and had former Test captain Vic Richardson unveil it in 1951. It consists of two plaques. One carries the names of the team; the other reads simply, "In this vicinity, the first Aboriginal cricket team to tour England trained prior to departure in 1868. Matches won 14, matches lost 14, matches drawn 19".

The Aboriginal tour had little lasting impact on Australian cricket but it undoubtedly influenced English ideas about Australian cricketers. When the great fast bowler Fred Spofforth sat at Lord's with the England player A. G. Steel during the first white Australian tour under Dave Gregory in 1878, Steel was approached by the Reverend Arthur Ward, who commented, "I hear you're going to play against the niggers on Monday". Steel thereupon introduced Spofforth as the "demon nigger bowler".