

1906-1908

In this time period there was some controversy, firstly involving allegations being made that young white men in Ipswich were meeting with Aboriginal women from the reserve, supplying them with money and alcohol and using the women for immoral purposes. It was said that Deebing Creek was a hot bed of immorality. The meetings were allegedly taking place outside the boundaries of the reserve. These allegations would have been enough to horrify the committee members, all having close church affiliations. The allegations were promptly investigated by the police and eventually dismissed as malicious rumour.

In March 1906 there was controversy about professional foot races known as Sheffield Handicaps that occurred at the Brisbane Cricket Ground. Members of the public laid bets on participants as in modern day horse racing. The organisers sought to employ 6 Aborigines and 2 half- castes (note the distinctions drawn) in connection with the 7th Queensland Hundred. The Superintendent and committee members took great exception to participation in the races because it caused the residents to become restless. Some of the others who were not to be participants wanted to go along and see the lads run. The forbidding of participation caused certain sectors of the residents at Deebing Creek to become somewhat more restless than they otherwise might have been if they had been allowed to participate.

One young person in particular was very resentful. An article appeared in 'The Truth' newspaper that Superintendent Ivins had kicked Paddy, one of the participants, in the face causing an injury to his nose and had also hit Paddy across the shoulders with his cane. This incident is alleged to have occurred at the dairy.

Mr Ivins was duly summoned to appear before the committee who conducted an inquiry. Attempts were made to discredit Paddy and also his brother whose name was Morgan. It was said that they had been the cause of great anxiety and trouble to all of the committee since they were prevented from running at the Sheffield sports. Both Paddy and Morgan were duly cross-examined by the Reverend Robertson. Their stories changed and the committee was convinced that most if not all of their story was false.

It was one of Mr Ivins functions in the dairy to teach young people, both boys and girls, how to milk after having taken the appropriate precautions for hygiene. Paddy was supposed to have rubbed the soil and loose hairs off the udder and was then supposed to wash it with water. This was standard procedure. Paddy had been told to do this again and again but neglected to do so unless under very close supervision. On the morning in question instead of doing this and not aware that he was under observation he simply spat on his hands and milked away.

Mr Ivins saw this and ordered Paddy to undertake the standard procedure but Paddy responded with bad language at which Mr Ivins struck him across the shoulders with a stick he was carrying. Young Paddy made a run for it, had an unfortunate collision with the fence, struck his face, fell back, got up again and ran off to the cottages at a very fast rate, suggesting perhaps that he might have done alright at the Sheffield Handicap.

The committee found that Paddy had probably damaged his nose when he was getting through the fence and it was found that it could not have been a kick from Superintendent Ivins boot because it was a clean cut with no marks on the face that were consistent with having been caused by a boot.

Mr Ivins declared that the stroke of the rod in his hand was slight and only to enforce discipline after all. Needless to say Mr Ivins was exonerated and Paddy's nose healed without complications.



The Vegie Patch

This incident may provide some insight into what disciplinary measures were available to persons whose behaviour was considered to be insubordinate.

Paddy and his brother Morgan subsequently left the reserve without obtaining a pass and an order was made for their removal back to the home. If they breached the direction given and left again without first obtaining prior approval, they could be sentenced to a three month imprisonment.