

Teutoburg, now Witta.

Teutoburg, sometimes spelt Teutoburg, was the name given to the area we now know as Witta by the early German settlers, probably because it reminded them of the Teutoburger Wald – the Teutoburg Forest – a range of mountains in northern Germany. Teutoburg Forest had been the scene of a mighty battle between the Romans and the Cherusci, a tribe of German Celts in 9 A.D. Legend has it that the Germans were greatly outnumbered by the Roman legions, but their wily leader, Hermann, ordered his people to shout and bang their shields. The echoes this made among the hills caused the Romans to think that it was they who were vastly outnumbered and in the following battle the three Roman legions were destroyed and their commander, Varus, killed himself in shame by falling on his sword. Memories of the fierceness of the Teutons stopped the Romans from attempting to invade Germany again. The Hermannsdenkmal, a colossal metal statue built in the 19th century to commemorate the battle, stands outside the city of Detmold on the northeastern slope and there are now many health and holiday resorts situated among forests of Beech and Spruce.

Times in Teutoburg in Queensland were hard, but the early settlers also had a great capacity for enjoying the simple pleasures of life and the comradeship of friends and neighbours as these two old newspaper extracts show.

May 15 1896.

On Friday, May 1, Arbor Day was held at the Provisional School at Teutoburg. The weather was all that could be desired. Shortly before twelve o'clock, the roll was called and the children dismissed to the play ground. Then they had lunch on the grass. The committee came early, and the afternoon was spent in sports, races etc. About 4 o'clock the children had tea, cakes and sandwiches and after that they all went home having thoroughly enjoyed themselves. At six o'clock supper was provided to which between 80 and 100 persons sat down. After supper, a concert was held, in which the ladies and gentlemen of the locality took part, the Misses Vandrieke's singing being particularly good. Mr Carl Nöthling was recalled several times for his comic songs; also Mr E. Tucker and Mr. Eugarde, Mr. L. Lesch and Mr. B. Nöthling received great applause for cornet solos. A farce entitled "Killed by Kindness", was next on the program and caused great merriment. The room was then cleared for dancing, which was entered with great spirit. The dresses worn by the ladies were particularly neat and pretty. It would be unfair to select any one for belle, as to judge from the dresses worn would be very hard indeed. At twelve o'clock refreshments were served. Dancing was kept up briskly till early morning. All thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

October 30 1896

On the 18th October, a few residents of Maleny and Teutoburg indulged in a picnic at Obi Creek Flats. At about 9 o'clock nearly a score of persons met at Mr Vandrieke's place, some riding, some walking, but all in high spirits and bearing plenty of food. Their aim was to visit the grand waterfalls at Messrs. Bobbermann's property. These falls are about 200 feet high, and are a really grand spectacle. The Bobbermann's selection is a fine property in good condition, a few acres of scrub have been felled and cleared and a capital garden, orchard, and grass paddock formed, in the midst of which is a nice, well furnished house, the doors of which are made of bean tree, and were very much admired by the visitors. While here the picnickers had to decide on whether they should first go to the furthest point of the intended ramble, and do the waterfalls afterwards, or whether the waterfalls should be dealt with first, and the furthest point afterwards – the former alternative was decided on, and off they started. The Obi Creek Flats with their splendid water holes several hundred yards in length and of good depth, were reached at about 11:30, and at once the company set about preparation of food. That there was in the company a hearty hunger, may be judged when it is stated that while there seemed to be enough food for a fortnight, the greater part was disposed of at one sitting, and the cargo to be carried back reduced to a very small quantity. That important piece of business being disposed of, the travellers surprised Mr. Cook. A short time was spent here in hospitality, when accompanied by Mr. Cook the party all went off to Obi Creek, where they were met by Mr. and Mrs. Lickafoot and family. Here came games and chat and a further investigation of the food baskets. A scramble up a gentle knoll about 500 feet high followed, and was the cause of no little amusement, each in his turn laughing at the toils and troubles of others, and being himself or herself the object of laughter of the rest. When the top was reached the climbers were well repaid for their trouble, for from the summit they were able to look over a large area of splendid country. All this

took so much time, there was not enough left for a visit to the Falls, so a bee line was made for Vandreike's, the point of commencement of the day's rambles, from which, after a capital tea had been had, the happy, though tired, travellers, dispersed to their homes quite satisfied with the day's outing.

During the Great War the German names of many towns throughout Australia were changed. Teutoberg became Witta, a name based on the Gubbi Gubbi word for the Dingo. The German settlers are reported to have not been too unhappy about this as they thought the name still sounded German. Bobbermann's [sometimes spelt Bobbermein's] became Ansell's and was later broken up into smaller lots which are located around Ansell Road at Witta. The falls became known as "Hell's Gate" and remained a favourite picnicking spot for local farmers. They are still located on private property.

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Provisional School, Teutoberg. Not dated