



Figure 2 Artefacts obtained during the first excavation retained in the B.L. Hornshaw Collection (Photographs: Raymond C. Nelson).

undertaken there. Towle organised a second, more thorough, field investigation in which he initially involved Bunyan only (Bunyan and Towle were related). McCarthy was invited to join them but refused because he would not accept Towle as being in charge (McCarthy 1978:53). McCarthy eventually agreed to join the investigation on the fourth day on the basis that he and Towle would be equal collaborators.

Towle and Bunyan spent three days during December 1935 at the rockshelter and McCarthy joined them during January 1936. The excavation activity by these three is captured in Figure 3. The name of the photographer is not on record but it was possibly Miss Elsie Bramell, a colleague of McCarthy, who is known to have visited the site. The results of this second excavation were not published until 1948 (McCarthy 1948), a delay of 12 years.

It is important to note that Bunyan was involved in both excavation endeavours.

Errors and Anomalies

McCarthy (1948:1, 1978:49) displays some confusion with regard to the years in which the two field investigations took place. In his primary and most important paper of 1948, McCarthy states that it was 1936 and 1937. However, in his so called ‘semi-popular’ article of 1978, McCarthy states that the activity took place in 1935 and early 1936. He does not acknowledge in any way that a discrepancy exists. Hornshaw’s field diaries, documented photographs and artefact labelling clearly show that the dates in the primary paper of 1948 are in error and that dates of 1935 and early 1936 are the correct dates.

An anomaly also exists with respect to the delay in the publication of McCarthy (1948). All activity at the rockshelter associated with the second excavation had ceased by early February 1936 (involving a total of eight days), except for one return visit made by McCarthy in May 1936. It is therefore surprising that the evaluation, analysis and publication of the work did not occur until 1948, an elapsed time of 12 years. No explanation is forthcoming in McCarthy (1948). However, in

his ‘semi-popular’ article, McCarthy (1978:50, 55) does offer an explanation, namely that there was a falling out between McCarthy and Towle. He states that Towle severed their friendship, resigned from the Society and requested that officers and members of the Council not seek to contact him. Towle was the primary motivator behind the second field investigation and it seems he held a significant proportion of the field documentation. Without the cooperation of Towle, McCarthy would have been able to publish only limited results. On Towle’s death in 1946, McCarthy (1978:50) says he was able to obtain the material that had been in Towle’s possession.

This explanation does not completely account for the delay in publication. Their falling out, and Towle’s resignation as secretary and member of the society, did not occur until mid-1940 (Anthropological Society of New South Wales 1941:31). More than four years had elapsed since the completion of the fieldwork. Under normal circumstances this would be enough time to prepare a manuscript for publication. During these four years, Towle and McCarthy are on record as sustaining a good working relationship. In 1936, Towle chaired a committee, of which McCarthy was a member, to draft a new constitution for the Society (Anthropological Society of New South Wales 1937:66). In 1938, Towle gave McCarthy a collection of artefacts to display at a congress in Singapore (McCarthy 1978:57). In 1939, Towle and McCarthy represented the society at a conference held in Canberra (Anthropological Society of New South Wales 1940:276). Why this working relationship did not extend to completing the Lapstone Creek Rockshelter work is simply not known. The possibility exists that during this period, McCarthy put a higher priority on other pursuits such as his nine months in Indonesia and Malaya (June 1937–March 1938) to receive training in archaeological techniques and the completion in 1938 of a course in physical anthropology at the University of Sydney. There were also his normal museum duties to be attended to. However, his falling out with Towle in 1940 closed the window of opportunity to undertake the rockshelter work and the situation could not be retrieved until the death of Towle in 1946.