

South



Australia.

REPORT

OF THE

PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINES

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1904.



Adelaide:

C. E. BRISTOW, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, NORTH TERRACE.

1904.

REPORT.

Aborigines Office, Adelaide, September 7th, 1904.

I have the honor respectfully to submit for the information of the Hon. Minister of Education, &c., the following report with reference to the aborigines for the year ended June 30th, 1904:—

The aboriginal population of South Australia, exclusive of the Northern Territory, was, as per census of 1901—

Blacks	3,386
Half-castes	502
Total	3,888

During the three years 1901-4 there have been recorded—

	Black.	Half-castes.	Total.
Births	64	76	139
Deaths	242	22	264
Excess of deaths			125

The returns to hand for past year show that the births (51) and deaths (65) have been more equal than usual, probably due to the good season causing healthier conditions of life among the natives than existed two years ago, when an epidemic of measles and influenza proved fatal to numbers.

It may be noted here that the rate of decrease has been more rapid among the Victorian aborigines than in this State.

	Estimated Number in 1836.	In 1903.
South Australia	12,000	3,763
Victoria	7,000	382

The number of aborigines at the mission stations is shown as follows:—

Name of Station.	Total Number of Aborigines.	Number of Children.	Births.	Deaths.
Point McLeay	309	135	18	13
Point Pierce	116	47	3	4
Kopperamanna	142	15	2	6
Totals	567	197	23	23

The financial returns from these stations for 1903 show—

	£	s.	d.
Voluntary contributions received	1,167	19	5
Proceeds of produce raised	3,433	5	10
Wages paid to aborigines	1,344	3	6

Of these voluntary receipts the German Lutheran mission raised £959.

The native schools at Point McLeay and Point Pierce are now under the Education Department, and fair progress is being made, as the latter school report shows an examination pass list of 94 per cent., probably a record as far as natives are concerned.

The reserve of land set aside for the Point McLeay mission is so limited in extent as to seriously hinder the efforts to provide remunerative employment for its large number of natives. As the leases of Crown lands in the vicinity of this mission will shortly expire, it will be most desirable to retain some additional reserves for the increasing needs of the aborigines in this district.

The neglected condition of half-caste children about the Far North deserves some attention. It is difficult to deal with them. Their fathers are mostly unknown, and in the absence of legal proof of paternity cannot be prosecuted. These children usually go about with their mothers, who are unwilling to send them to a mission, and the State Children Act has been held not applicable to aborigines.

At the Point McLeay and Point Pierce missions a number of young people, largely composed of half-castes and quadroons, are now showing intelligent progress generally, and deserve encouragement to become more useful members of the community, or the greater number will lapse into a state of idleness and loafing about the stations.

An intelligent native of the missions put their position now in the following words:—" You have done a great deal for us, but it would have been better if you had let us alone. We are receiving an education which unfits us to live under the manners and customs of our forefathers, but they were in a better position, because they had hunting grounds which we have not."

CRIMINAL RECORDS.

Aborigines were convicted of the following offences during the year:—

Drunkenness	24
Common assaults	2
Criminal assault	1
Petty larceny	9
Unlawful possession	2
Murder of an aboriginal	2
Total	40

Eight convictions were obtained for supplying intoxicating liquors to natives.

The following comparative statement shows the number of aborigines and the cost of the departments in the States named :—

	South Australia.	Victoria.	N.S. Wales.
Number of aborigines ..	3,763	382	6,891
Annual vote	£4,262	£4,179	£17,652
Cost per head.....	£1 2s. 7d.	£10 18s. 9d.	£2 11s. 2d.

The correspondence of this office during the year has been—
inwards, 965; outwards, 1,451.

Forty-one cases of illness have been under treatment in the hospitals at Adelaide, Port Augusta, and Wallaroo, and received every care and attention at the hands of the hospital staff. The deaths were four; cured, eight; relieved, 26; and three still under treatment.

The amount voted by Parliament last year for this department was £4,262, and the expenditure has been as under :—

	£	s.	d.
Provisions—flour, sugar, tea, tobacco	1,480	9	6
Clothing, blankets, &c.	609	6	3
Medical attendance and medicines	137	17	7
Transport charges (forty-four depôts).....	515	8	4
Burial charges.....	39	1	0
Fishing tackle, axes, &c.	67	7	2
Petty and sundry expenses	29	2	8
Firewood for old, infirm, and sick	4	19	1
Meals aboriginal prisoners and travellers	43	5	11
Printing and stationery	11	16	7
O.S. postage stamps	21	5	10
O.S. telegrams.....	6	16	0
Defending prisoner (charged with murder).....	5	5	0
Telephone exchange	10	0	0
Adelaide Hospital—Annual contribution	10	10	0
Clerical services in office of Sub-Protector, Far North	12	0	0
Receiving, storing, and issuing stores at G.P.O. stores	20	0	0
Salaries Protector and Sub-Protector, Far North	235	0	0
Grant-in-aid Aborigines' Friends' Association, Point McLeay.....	1,000	0	0
	<u>£4,260</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>

The usual reports are appended from—The Sub-Protector, Far North, Point McLeay, Point Pierce, and Kopperamanna Mission Stations.

E. L. HAMILTON, P.A.

FAR NORTH DISTRICT.

The Sub-Protector (Mr. T. Clode, Port Augusta) says—

In submitting the usual annual report on the condition and conduct of the aborigines in this district for the year ended June 30th, 1904, I have the honor to report that their conduct has been

good. Owing to the district being a very large one, and only being appointed here since January last, and the depôts being so scattered, I have not been able to visit many of them, but I have interviewed several natives at Farina, Hergott, Oodnadatta, Murnpeowie, Innamincka, and other places. All these natives seemed contented, and made no complaints, so that I have reason to believe that the Government supplies are properly and judiciously issued. Memos. were sent to each of the issuers to exercise the greatest economy in issuing rations, and I think this has been complied with.

The general health of the aborigines has been good, and very few deaths have occurred. The drought having broken up in the North most of the able-bodied can get work on the stations, reducing the strain on the Government to provide for them. As no rations have been issued at the Wilmington depôt since November last, I recommend closing of this depôt. Several aborigines have been treated and attended to by Dr. Chenery, at the Port Augusta Hospital, and I cannot speak too highly of the attention and kindness given to them by the hospital staff.

POINT McLEAY MISSION STATION.

Mr. F. Garnett, superintendent, reports:—

The average number of aborigines on this station during the year has been 259—an increase of 24 on the previous year. There are about 309 natives in all belonging to Point McLeay, not including occasional visitors or those holding land permits. Of this number 122 are full blacks, 39 three-quarter blacks, 126 half-castes, and 22 quadroons. Births, 18; deaths, 13; marriages, 5, during the year. We have been free from epidemic disease, but the severe winter last year carried off several of our old people, thus increasing the usual death rate.

Owing to the continued increase in our population the mission financially is in an unsatisfactory position, notwithstanding every economy, and unless we receive substantial help in this respect it will be impossible to develop the resources of our land or keep the natives in the necessities of life.

Our stock consists of 19 horses, 79 horned cattle, 666 sheep, and 300 lambs. Owing to lack of money we are not able to stock our land to its full carrying capacity. We ought to have double our present number of sheep.

The mission land consists of about 653 acres in home block, 1,700 acres near Loveday Bay, and 1,900 acres at the Needles. Both latter reserves are very inferior quality.

The leases of Crown lands in the hundred of Baker will expire in a few months. These lands have been for many years dedicated for the aborigines on expiry of present leases, and the natives

hold written promises to that effect from the Government. Attempts are being made to induce the Government to break these promises, but this course surely will not be thought of, especially in view of the increased needs of the aborigines in this district.

The mission property generally is in good repair. We have church, schoolhouse, officers' houses, orphans' houses, 32 cottages for natives, and the usual farm buildings and implements.

The men have been employed fencing, road-making, forestry, building, carpenter and blacksmith work, boot-making, painting, rabbiting, and general farm work. The roads of the mission have been greatly improved by metalling. The season last year was good; we had 50 tons of hay from as many acres. This season we have under cultivation here and at the Needles 5 acres vines, 3 acres garden, 27 acres peas, 27 acres lucern, 110 acres barley, 10 acres each oats and wheat. At the Needles we have now cleared 200 acres of mallee scrub; we have also stopped all sand drifts with rye and marram grass. Rabbits are well under control. Foxes are sometimes killed. So far they have done very little mischief to lambs.

We washed a little wool last year for ourselves and neighbors.

Our school is now under the Education Department, although the entire expense of the same is defrayed by the mission. These expenses have increased, two monitors and more school material being now necessary. The school roll now numbers 78, and Inspector Smyth reports good progress.

Social, temperance meetings, entertainments, and young men's mutual improvement classes are held with success.

We have had no trouble with intoxicants on or about the mission, and the discipline is good.

Religious services are regularly held and well attended. The church will seat 140 people, and is well filled each Sunday.

The stores, blankets, &c., supplied by the department have been a great help and of good quality. The second-hand railway uniforms (which for the first time for many years you were unable to send this winter) have been much missed by the old men. Canoes are also badly needed to enable them to eke out a living by fishing, and also more netting twine.

POINT PIERCE MISSION, YORKE'S PENINSULA.

Mr. B. Lathern, the superintendent, states—

During the past year steady progress has been made in the general work of the mission, which at present supports 116 natives, comprising 69 adults and 47 children. Their general health has been excellent—free from any epidemics. There have been three births and four deaths.

The usual religious services have been held, the attendance and interest being fairly well maintained.

The day school, under control of the Education Department, is well conducted. There are 21 children on the roll, and last year's examination pass list of 94 per cent. is probably a record as far as natives are concerned. Too much praise cannot be given to the teacher, who has to deal with children mostly dull in subjects requiring intelligence.

There are no serious offences to report, the only trouble we have to deal with being caused by intoxicating liquor, which is easily obtained from the neighboring towns.

During the year many of our natives have obtained employment shearing, wheat harvesting, and general farmwork with surrounding settlers. These men show in many instances that, should circumstances require it, they are quite capable of earning their living independent of the mission.

The shearing and harvest results have been very satisfactory. We cut 100 tons of hay from 100 acres, 16bush. of wheat per acre was reaped from 350 acres, and our wool yielded 99 bales. Altogether the season was quite exceptional, and in consequence the Committee of Management have been able to provide more accommodation for the natives and procure more horses and implements for the more efficient working of the mission property, which outlay and expense has necessarily been incurred in maintenance and stores and in keeping everything in good order and repair.

Rabbits are very numerous and a continued source of trouble, notwithstanding the efforts made to exterminate them.

Our stock consists of 5,600 sheep, 24 horses, 50 head of cattle, including working bullocks, and 48 pigs. About 1,000 sheep are killed annually for rations.

We are indebted to the Aborigines Department for some assistance for the old, infirm blacks, and the blankets, &c., given were very acceptable.

KOPPERAMANNA MISSION STATION, KILLALPANINA.

The Rev. L. Kaibel, chairman of the Lutheran mission, says—

In the year 1864 the Lutheran Church Society began mission work among the blacks, and we can truthfully say we have now entered on the fortieth year of our Christianising labors. Although our efforts may have been at times faulty, and we may have shown sometimes more zeal than discretion, no one can dispute the fact that we have honestly and manfully grappled with the difficulties that beset our path, and that we have not worked quite in vain. If we cannot point, in view of the large financial outlay, to great numbers, we grant that the nomadic life of the Australian native and their being split up

in so many tribes have hampered us greatly in extending our labors. Death has removed many of the earlier converts, and it is evident we labor among a decaying people, whose days of existence as a people are numbered. Nevertheless, we are thankful to have been the means of conveying some light and love into the miserable life of an Australian black, and do not repent of the anxieties and untold worries this work has sometimes laid on our hearts; and this fact alone, that the New Testament was translated by our missionaries into an Australian native tongue, the only Australian language so honored, proves that we have gone into our task in a very systematic manner. If any should feel interested to possess this book I will gladly forward it to any address.

I am sorry to say this station has not partaken of any of the copious rains that have so gladdened the hearts of the pastoralists throughout the North. It seems as if the eastern shores of Lake Eyre were outside the range of monsoonal disturbances which brought such a change over the interior. Still, with the reduced stock (3,000 sheep, 300 cattle, 150 horses, 350 goats) we experienced no great hardships, and were able to hold our own. It seems certain that the Cooper will come down in flood this year, and this will mean a great deal to the people on this station. If stock were not such a dear commodity here at present, this would be the time to risk a couple of thousand pounds, but, like most stockholders, we have to be content with breeding up the remnants of our stock.

We were able to realise to some extent on our stock, receiving at the same time valuable assistance from our friends in America. We reduced our debt considerably, and have closed the year with a credit balance.

Few of our blacks are still heathen. If anyone will take the trouble of visiting our mission station he will find a congregation of black Christians, with some of the faults and many of the good points of a congregation of whites. What more need be said?

Our church—built some 20 years ago from native timber and clay—has become rather shaky, and must be renewed, and we would gladly welcome any help towards this expense.

All the *personnel* on the station have worked harmoniously together for the common good, and deserve the greatest praise for the self-denying work done in that arid country under a blazing sun, showing often 120° in the shade.

There have been six deaths, all infants born in 1903. Chest and throat troubles seem the most prevalent diseases among them.

We trust God will continue to bless our small efforts to do good as in the past; and we commend our work again to all whose hearts are going out in sympathy to the black man.

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