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REPORT OF THE ABORIGINES' PROTECTION BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1945.

Ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed, 6th December, 1945.

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Aborigines Protection Board, Adelaide,
1st September, 1945.

To his Excellency, Lieutenant-General, SIR CHARLES WILLOUGHBY MOKE NORRIE, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., M.C.,
Governor in and over the State of South Australia, and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency :—

We do ourselves the honour to submit the annual report of the Aborigines' Protection Board for the year ended the 30th June, 1945.

During the year 18 meetings of the Board were held and, in addition to the usual routine business, many important matters affecting the welfare of the aborigines were dealt with.

Unconditional declarations of exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Act were made in respect of seven persons, and seven others were exempted on probation. Four persons who had completed satisfactorily a period of probation were granted unconditional exemption. Eight applications for exemption were not entertained, and the declarations of exemption previously made in respect of ten aborigines were revoked, nine at the request of the persons concerned, and one because of misconduct.

Additional food supplies were provided for aborigines living in areas affected by the drought, particularly in the northern parts of the State where game and other native foods were practically unobtainable.

An additional ration depot was established at Everard Park to provide more effectively for the needs of the old and infirm aborigines living in the areas north and west of Oodnadatta.

The Secretary of the Board attended the Court proceedings when aborigines charged with serious offences were brought to trial, and in several cases the Board provided legal assistance.

An amendment of the Aborigines Act has been recommended to provide for the establishment of a Special Court presided over by a Magistrate with a knowledge of tribal law to hear charges that may be made against aborigines living under tribal conditions.

It is also intended to seek the powers necessary to enable the Board to control working conditions, wages, etc., of aborigines employed on farms and stations in various parts of the State.

Considerable dissatisfaction prevails amongst the aborigines because many of them are not eligible to participate in the benefits available to members of the general community under Commonwealth social legislation. Although required to pay income tax, the following persons are not eligible for pension benefits :—

- (a) Natives not exempted from the provisions of the State Aborigines Act in whom aboriginal blood predominates in the slightest degree.
- (b) Natives who, irrespective of the degree of aboriginal blood, reside on aboriginal reserves, settlements or institutions.

It is evident, therefore, that aborigines who have lived and worked on an aboriginal reserve or station all their lives are unable to obtain a pension unless exempted from the State Aborigines' Act and removed from the place where their interests lie.

With regard to maternity allowances, mothers in whom aboriginal blood predominates, unless exempted, are not eligible to receive benefits, regardless of the conditions under which they live.

During the year under review the Board forwarded a communication to the Commonwealth Government through the Honourable the Premier of South Australia requesting that social benefits be made available to all aborigines certified by the Aborigines' Protection Board to be living under conditions comparable to the European way of life.

The Board has continued to exercise supervision over a large number of aborigines evacuated from Central Australia on account of the War, who reside in the Welfare Camp at Balaklava, or are employed in other parts of the State.

The issue of ration books for aborigines has been arranged in co-operation with the Rationing Commission, thus enabling all aborigines dependent upon the Board to obtain sufficient quantities of rationed goods.

Aborigines occupying small reserves in various parts of the State have experienced great difficulty in providing feed for their sheep and cattle, and also in controlling sand drift, because of serious drought conditions. All possible assistance has been rendered by the Board to the persons concerned by providing hay, chaff, cereal rye, and superphosphates, etc.

The demand for building materials required for the prosecution of the War, and the difficulty in securing skilled labour has resulted in an acute shortage of houses for families on aboriginal stations and in other parts of the State.

In order to ensure the physical and moral health of the people, particularly the young children, it is imperative that a comprehensive programme of house construction be undertaken at the earliest possible moment. There are a number of families living on aboriginal stations, particularly young married people, who are quite capable of living in the general community. There is little doubt that, if they were provided with cottages in or near suitable country towns, they would be successfully absorbed and become an asset to the State. The Board is of opinion that provision should be made for such families in the general housing plan.

The usual medical services have been maintained, blankets and clothing distributed, and every effort made to safeguard the welfare of the people.

The training scheme under which a number of girls are continuously in residence at the Salvation Army Girls' Home at Fullarton for the purpose of receiving instruction in domestic arts was in operation throughout the year. Two girls, whose training was completed on the 31st December, 1944, were placed in suitable homes and are rendering good service. It is pleasing to record that the dux of this large school is a native girl named Patricia Rigney, formerly of Point McLeay. All the trainees obtained good results in the annual examinations.

A number of children were placed in the Colebrook Home at Eden Hills and the Umeewarra Mission Home at Port Augusta by their parents with the consent of the Board.

The Board has administered child endowment, military allotments and a number of other trust accounts when, in the interests of the persons concerned, it has been considered necessary to take such action.

The Board again records its sincere appreciation of the services rendered by medical practitioners, missionaries, police officers, pastoralists, and also by the various hospitals and institutions working in co-operation with the Board for the welfare of the aborigines.

REPORTS FROM THE WELFARE OFFICER, MISSIONARIES AND STATION MANAGERS.

Welfare Department.—The Welfare Officer, Sister McKenzie, reports that, during the year, employment was secured for 30 girls in institutions and private homes. Some of the girls are rendering good service, but others have proved less satisfactory and require constant supervision. Thirty-four visits were paid to aboriginal institutions and camping places, in addition to regular calls at hospitals, schools, private homes and other places of employment. The lack of co-operation by some of the women and girls makes welfare work exceedingly difficult, and greatly impedes the development of a satisfactory standard of home life and the profitable use of leisure hours.

Umeewarra Mission, Port Augusta.—The Sisters in charge of the Mission report a very busy and successful year. Accommodation at the Children's Home is utterly inadequate to meet the increasing demand by native parents for the admission of their children. The Committee responsible for the work of the Mission has raised £1,000 toward the cost of a new Home, and are seeking financial assistance from the Government to permit the erection of a suitable building. The special school for aborigines is associated with the Home, and Miss Simmons conducts classes daily.

The Umeewarra Mission is the centre of interest and activity for all aborigines living and working in the pastoral areas surrounding Port Augusta. The Sisters act as liaison officers for the Aborigines Department in all matters affecting the welfare of the local aborigines.

Ernabella Mission.—The Superintendent, the Rev. J. R. B. Love, reports steady progress in the development of this important Mission which ministers to the needs of the last remaining tribal natives of South Australia.

During the period of severe drought when native foods were unprocurable, the natives gathered at Ernabella and food provided by the Aborigines' Protection Board was distributed by the officers of the Mission. When the rains came and game and other foods were again available, the natives returned to the practice of hunting for a living, and this service was discontinued.

A grant of £200 by the Government enabled the Mission to erect a new store building, and to establish a permanent water supply for the natives.

During the year under review a new woolshed, three additional windmills, and two tanks, one of 5,000 gallons capacity, were erected. A landing ground for aeroplanes is also in course of construction.

The responsibilities of the Mission for the educational, medical and spiritual welfare of the natives have been faithfully discharged throughout the year.

Lutheran Mission, Koomibba.—The Superintendent, the Rev. R. H. Traeger, reports a number of staff changes. Sister Hitchcox has retired after six years of self-sacrificing work in nursing native patients in the local hospital, and the vacancy has been filled by the recent appointment of Sister Menzel.

Except for an epidemic of measles the general health of the community was satisfactory.

There has been sufficient work available to absorb all able bodied aborigines.

The shortage of water consequent upon the dry season greatly hampered the work of the Mission, as water had to be carted for all purposes for quite a long period.

The usual high standard of work in the local school has been maintained, and the Children's Home, now under the care of Miss Hoffrichter, has provided a home for the children whose parents are employed elsewhere.

Dr. Gibson, of Ceduna, who is responsible for the medical work of the Mission, in addition to the care of a large number of natives living in the western districts, is rendering fine service.

Rations, medical supplies, blankets, etc., for old and infirm aborigines and dependent children were provided by the Aborigines' Protection Board.

UNITED ABORIGINES' MISSION.

Ooldea.—The Superintendent, Mr. H. E. Green, reports that there are now fifty children in the Mission dormitory, and it is expected that this number will be considerably increased in the near future, as the parents now seem to realize the advantages enjoyed by the children living in the dormitory. With a view to providing adequate accommodation for the children, plans have been made for the erection of new dormitory buildings.

A hospital building will also be erected as the result of a generous gift of £650 by friends of the Mission.

The Aborigines' Protection Board has provided materials for a new ration store, and also a new windmill, to facilitate the development of the vegetable and fruit gardens.

The school for aborigines conducted by Mrs. Matthews re-opened after being closed for a considerable time due to the shortage of teachers.

Medical supplies, rations, blankets, etc., were provided as required by the Aborigines Protection Board.

Nepabunna Mission.—The superintendent, Mr. F. Eaton, reports that considerable progress has been made with the dormitory building being erected for the accommodation of children whose parents are working away from the Mission. It is expected that the work will be completed during the current year.

Splendid rains have fallen following the worst drought in the history of the Mission.

During the year the Aborigines' Protection Board supplied an engine for the purpose of pumping water from the new well for gardening and domestic use.

All available able bodied men in the district were provided with work on adjacent pastoral stations.

A licence has been granted to the Mission for the installation of a transceiver, which will greatly facilitate the work, particularly when medical assistance is urgently required. The transceiver cost over £100, the whole of which was subscribed by the natives residing at Nepabunna.

Miss Loone, teacher at the special school for aborigines, reports a successful year with a steadily increasing number of scholars.

Finniss Springs.—Mr. Andrew J. Pearce, superintendent, reports that the welcome rain which fell in December, 1944, followed by seasonal rains this year, has replenished water supplies and transformed the Mission lands.

A tank of 25,000gall. capacity was constructed during the year, and two 1,000gall. tanks were attached to the Mission buildings, thus ensuring ample water supplies.

A new medical hut was erected and furnished. This building is in daily use, medical treatment being given by direction of Dr. Woods, of the Flying Doctor Service.

The school building was also enlarged, and 37 children now attend daily for instruction.

The conduct of aborigines residing at the Mission has been very satisfactory. All able bodied men are employed on adjacent pastoral stations, their families remaining at Finniss Springs and enjoying the protection of the Mission.

The Mission serves a large area, and is a well-conducted institution.

Swan Reach.—The superintendent, Mr. H. E. Southwell, reports that a considerable number of former residents of the Mission are now working and living in the upper river districts. Those remaining at Swan Reach have been provided with rations, medical attention, etc., as required. It is expected that the whole of the natives in this district will eventually be transferred to the new Mission which the United Aborigines' Mission proposes to establish in the Cobdogla area, where suitable land has been acquired for the purpose. The reserve for aborigines at Swan Reach is subject to periodic flooding with dire results to the homes of the native residents. There is no danger of flood damage on the land secured for the new Mission. It is expected that there will be work available in this district for all persons able and willing to work.

Colebrook Home, Eden Hills.—The matron, Miss Hyde, reports that eight children were admitted to the home during the year. There are 37 inmates at present, some of whom attend school, while others are working in the city. Three children attend suburban junior technical schools, and two older girls receive instruction in dressmaking at the School of Mines. Six young men from the home are on active service, four in the R.A.A.F., and two in the A.I.F. A fully qualified teacher, Mrs. Friebe, is in charge of the special school for aborigines connected with the home.

The Mission installed deep drainage plant during the year at a cost of £1,700. Fowlhouses were also erected and poultry purchased with a view to encouraging the children to employ their leisure profitably.

Rations, medical attention, etc., for the children are provided by the Aborigines' Protection Board.

Point McLeay Station.—The manager's report indicates that there were 26 births and 12 deaths during the year, the population on the 30th June, 1945, being 312, including seven full-bloods.

The health of the people under the care of Dr. Lloyd and Sister Rowlands was very good, no serious epidemics being experienced. Several patients brought to Adelaide in the new ambulance for special treatment were able to travel in comparative comfort.

All public buildings were painted and renovated during the year but the scarcity of building materials and the shortage of skilled labour prevented the building of new cottages.

Because of serious overcrowding the housing question is now receiving the earnest consideration of the Board. A number of houses of improved type are very urgently needed.

The widespread drought affected the work of the station very seriously, necessitating the disposal of all livestock that could be sold. Grazing paddocks and water available at Primrose Farm prevented the loss of a large number of sheep and cattle.

The harvest returns were below expectations, only 100 tons of hay being cut, averaging approximately one ton per acre. Additional hay had to be purchased to feed the working horses and dairy herd.

The highest price obtained for wool sold during the year was 15d. per lb., the average price being 11d. per lb., a very good result in view of the poor season.

The garden again yielded large and varied vegetable crops, which were sold to the natives as cheaply as possible. The area under cultivation is being increased as plant becomes available for sprinkling and irrigation.

The educational, religious and social activities of the Station were maintained as usual.

Social functions were arranged, at which a sum of £250 was raised for patriotic funds, school funds, soldiers' hampers, sporting equipment, etc.

Point Pearce Station.—The manager reports that there were 18 births and seven deaths during the year, the population on the 30th June, 1945, being 339.

The health of the inmates has been fairly good, but minor ailments have kept Sister Brasher very busy, 2,860 patients being dealt with at the local dispensary, while 3,260 visits were paid to patients in their homes.

The religious, educational and social activities of the Station were maintained as usual.

The proceeds of football matches played on the station were devoted to Red Cross funds.

The prevailing drought has had disastrous results at Point Pearce, no hay being cut for the second year in succession. Only 404 bags of wheat were reaped from 250 acres sown, and the barley crop was a complete failure. All reserves of hay have been used in feeding working horses and the dairy herd. Arrangements are now being made to purchase hay to feed horses required to maintain essential services, and cows needed to maintain the local milk supply.

With a view to building up reserves of fodder, agreements have been made under which white sharefarmers have sown crops for hay on the station during the current season.

A large number of livestock, particularly cattle and pigs, was sold, but very heavy losses of sheep and cattle have been sustained.

It is feared that very few lambs will be marked this year.

To avoid long journeys for the stock, two soakage dams were constructed and good water secured in each instance. Owing to the exhaustion of local supplies, it has been necessary to purchase firewood for domestic use.

Considerable improvements were effected at the Wool Shed, and all public buildings and cottages were kept in good repair.

Several young men who have recently left school have been appointed to work with the more skilled native workmen, with a view to overcoming the acute shortage of skilled labour.

Arrangements are in hand for the construction of a children's playground at the local school.

A statement of receipts and expenditure of the department and income and expenditure statements of the Point McLeay and Point Pearce Stations are appended.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

M. McINTOSH,	} Aborigines' Protection Board.
J. B. CLELAND,	
CONSTANCE M. COOKE,	
A. M. JOHNSTON,	
S. T. C. BEST,	
CHARLES DUGUID, LEN. J. COOK,	

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE—ABORIGINES' DEPARTMENT, YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1945.

RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Point Pearce Station—							Head Office—						
From sales of produce, etc.....	4,571	13	7				Salaries	1,912	15	11			
From store sales	3,974	0	4				Medical, dental and nursing allow- ance, etc.	430	9	1			
				8,545	13	11	Provisions—blankets, clothing, med- ical, dental and optical expenses, transport, etc.	5,871	5	6			
Point McLeay Station—							Aborigines' Home, North Adelaide .	87	16	7			
From sales of produce, etc.....	2,672	14	11				Training half-caste girls for dom- estic service	290	10	0			
From store sales	3,844	1	3	6,526	16	2	Development of reserves for abori- gines	93	18	8			
Refund of Flour Tax, advances for fares, etc.				196	2	0	Pay roll tax for child endowment ..	404	6	6			
Cost of aborigines to the South Australian Govern- ment for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1945 ..				25,047	7	11	Grant towards cost of water supply at Ernabella Station	100	0	0			
							Grant towards cost of new Ration Store at Ernabella Station	100	0	0	9,291	2	3
							Point Pearce Station—						
							Salaries and wages	6,385	7	8			
							Medical, dental and nursing allow- ance, etc.	85	16	6			
							Implements, stores, etc.....	4,184	15	5			
							New cottages	95	10	9			
							Purchases and expenses of store....	4,536	10	1	15,288	0	5
							Point McLeay Station—						
							Salaries and wages	6,084	12	11			
							Medical, dental and nursing allow- ance, etc.	212	10	0			
							Implements, stores, etc.	4,419	19	3			
							Rent, hundred of Baker.....	41	15	9			
							New cottages.....	42	6	2			
							Erection of House for Manager	515	2	9			
							Purchases and expenses of store....	4,420	10	6	15,736	17	4
											£40,316	0	0
				£40,316	0	0					£40,316	0	0

1st September, 1945.

W. R. PENHALL, Secretary, Aborigines' Protection Board.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT OF THE POINT McLEAY STATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1945.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance—Excess of income over expenditure, account trading store	—			230	0	5				230	0	5
Station Accounts.												
To Farm expenses.....	—			798	19	0						
Horses	—			50	10	3						
Salaries	1,435	18	10									
Wages	2,360	7	7									
				3,796	6	5						
Head office salaries and expenses..	—			110	2	7						
Rent—Hundred of Baker	—			41	15	9						
Accident insurance	—			29	6	5						
Depreciation— Implements, Vehicles, etc.	—			388	17	0						
Institution Accounts.												
To Salaries	502	13	11									
Wages	1,762	17	7									
				2,265	11	6						
Head office salaries and expenses..	—			110	2	7						
Accident insurance	—			14	13	2						
Medical, dental, and optical expenses	—			359	15	6						
Rations	—			680	17	6						
Institutional expenses	—			627	1	8						
School books and materials	—			18	11	1						
Firewood	—			778	0	0						
Depreciation— Hospital equipment	—			5	5	5						
				£10,305	16	3				£10,305	16	3

1st September, 1945.

W. R. PENHALL, Secretary, Aborigines' Protection Board.

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE POINT McLEAY STATION AS AT 30TH JUNE, 1945.

LIABILITIES.	£	s.	d.	ASSETS.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
H.M. Government Account	170,552	19	6	Station buildings at cost	14,291	1	11			
H.M. Government Deposit Account.....	639	11	10	Cottages and hospital transferred from Pompoota at cost	2,080	10	7			
Capital Account	5,612	8	5	New cottages at cost	2,034	15	6			
Sundry creditors	1,097	12	3					18,406	8	0
				Land purchased at cost	—			3,630	0	0
				Improvements	—			5,490	19	2
				Implements, vehicles, etc.	—			1,697	8	3
				Harness.....	—			76	7	9
				Furniture	—			128	3	6
				Hospital furniture	—			30	16	7
				Hospital equipment	—			26	1	9
				Cash on hand	—			503	3	7
				Sundry debtors	—			256	12	3
				Stocks on hand—						
				Store	824	2	0			
				Sheep	1,028	1	0			
				Cattle	933	12	0			
				Pigs	117	5	0			
				Horses	241	0	0			
				Farm stores, seed, super, fencing material, etc.	480	7	2			
				Institution stores	329	13	9			
								3,954	0	11
				Excess of expenditure for the year—						
				Station accounts.....	3,566	12	6			
				Institution accounts	4,859	18	5			
								8,426	10	11
				Less excess of income over ex- penditure account Trading Store	230	0	5			
								8,196	10	6
				Excess of expenditure over income brought forward, 1915-44	135,505	19	9			
								143,702	10	3
								£177,902	12	0
								£177,902	12	0

The value of 4,145 acres of Crown Lands reserved for Aborigines residing at Point Mcleay is not taken into account on this Balance Sheet.

1st September, 1945.

W. R. PENHALL, Secretary, Aborigines' Protection Board

