
ABORIGINES.

(REPORT OF BOARD FOR PROTECTION OF, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1924.)

Printed under No. 20 Report from Printing Committee, 4 December, 1924.

The Chairman and Members of the Board for Protection of Aborigines to
The Under-Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department.

Office of Board for Protection of Aborigines,
No. 5 Richmond Terrace, Domain,
Sydney, 10 October, 1924.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the established practice, we, the undersigned members of the Board for Protection of Aborigines, duly appointed under the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, have the honor to submit, for the Chief Secretary's information, the following Report of the operations of the Board during the period 1st July, 1923, to 30th June, 1924, together with the usual particulars of the numbers, location, and present condition of the Aborigines throughout the State, and the means adopted for their relief as far as the funds at our disposal would permit.

GENERAL.

The usual regular inspection of Reserves was carried out by the Board's Inspector, practically every Reserve being visited once, and the larger Stations several times.

Additional huts were erected at Brungle, Cowra, Purfleet, and Carowra Tank.

As a result of complaints by the townspeople of Cowra regarding the necessity for resident supervision of the Aborigines residing on and visiting the local Reserve, the Board decided to establish a regular Station at that place, and a substantial residence was, as a consequence, erected, and a Teacher-Manager appointed. Six new huts are now in course of construction, and the Reserve generally is being placed upon a proper basis.

Schools have been established at Bassendean, near Tingha, and Condobolin, while school buildings are being erected at Carowra Tank, near Mossiel, and at Woodenbong, near Kyogle, which will shortly be opened for pupils.

Improvements have been effected at several places to the sanitary arrangements to bring conditions up to the requirements of the Department of Public Health.

Assistance was rendered to the Hookworm Campaign Committee by the collection of data and the distribution of necessary medicines, and steps are now being taken to administer a second treatment to all Aborigines residing within the Northern Rivers District.

The issue of rations, blankets, and clothing, and medical comforts to Aborigines throughout the State was continued, a close supervision being exercised to ensure that only deserving and needy cases secured assistance.

A general census of the Aborigines of the State was taken by the police, and particulars of the numbers will be found at the conclusion of this report. At the same time a census was taken for the Commonwealth authorities who expressed appreciation of the manner in which the work had been performed.

COOTAMUNDRA HOME.

This Institution continues to render satisfactory service and may be regarded as one of the most pleasing features of the Board's work. The average number of inmates was 45. During the year 12 girls were sent to service and 12 younger children were admitted for training.

Unfortunately an epidemic of gastro-enteritis occurred during the year which necessitated a trained nurse being sent from Sydney. As a result of her untiring efforts, and the attention given the children by the Matron and Officers of the Home, all the patients recovered, and the general health at the latter part of the year was good.

The children participated in several local functions, such as the opening of the new wing of the District School, the unveiling of the Soldiers' Memorial, and the Empire Celebrations. The townspeople of Cootamundra take a keen interest in the Home, and the Board desire to express their appreciation of the help and co-operation received.

The usual annual concert and bazaar was held and was such a financial success that it enabled the Officers of the Home to complete the final payment for a fine new piano and to pay a deposit on a gramophone which should also be cleared this year.

Since the reorganisation of the water supply there has been no shortage. The present storage capacity is about 30,000 gallons.

Alterations and additions to the School have been completed and have proved a great comfort to concerned.

The hose and sulky purchased for the Home has also given complete satisfaction.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

Operations on the various Aboriginal Stations during the year have, generally speaking, been satisfactory. At those places where farming, etc., is carried on, small profits were made, employment at the same time being found for numbers of men who had families to support.

As already stated, a new Station has been established at Cowra, while the Aboriginal Station at Kinchela, on the Macleay River, has had dormitories provided, to which have been transferred the inmates of the Boys' Home at Singleton, which the Board closed and disposed of in 1923. A considerable saving in administration expenses was thus affected.

A system of sale stores on the various Stations was continued for the convenience of the residents and to discourage their visits to neighbouring towns where they might secure liquor.

EDUCATION.

Aborigines Schools are located at various centres throughout the State where the children receive an education, based on a special syllabus, which provides for an elementary training in the three R's and in manual work. These Schools are reported upon by Inspectors attached to the Department of Education, and generally a satisfactory tone is maintained.

Particular care is taken that upon reaching fourteen years of age each child goes either to a training Home or to suitable employment. No one is allowed to remain in idleness on a Reserve, there to get into trouble and raise another generation of illegitimate children who would also become a burden on the State. The problem is thus gradually solving itself as the younger Aborigines are being educated to something higher and have no wish to return to the level of camp life, thus ensuring that in time the necessity for Aborigines Reserves will be a thing of the past.

CLOTHING AND BLANKETS.

The usual distribution of Summer and Winter clothing and blankets was made to all deserving cases who were unable to provide for themselves.

A complete new set of samples of female clothing was submitted by the Superintendent of Labour, Prisons Department, and approved, as being a great improvement on the old style of dress and much more economical.

CONCLUSION.

The Board again expresses its appreciation of the assistance received from the New South Wales Police, without whose aid it would be practically impossible for the Board to carry on.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES MITCHELL, Chairman.

E. B. HARKNESS,

A. W. GREEN,

B. J. DOE,

THEO. H. HILL,

H. D. McLELLAND,

W. A. ARMSTRONG.

Members of Board for
Protection of Aborigines.

CENSUS OF ABORIGINES TAKEN AT NOON ON 30TH JUNE, 1924.

		Full-Bloods.						
Living on reserves	419	
Not living on reserves	666	
Receiving aid	469	
Not receiving aid	616	
		Half-Castes.						
Living on reserves	2,037	
Not living on reserves	3,148	
Receiving aid	1,297	
Not receiving aid	3,888	
		Quadroons.						
Living on reserves	168	
Not living on reserves	717	
Receiving aid	77	
Not receiving aid	808	
		Octoroons.						
Living on reserves	27	
Not living on reserves	328	
Receiving aid	12	
Not receiving aid	343	
Total number of all castes, 7,510.								

FIGURES FOR PREVIOUS YEARS.

		Full-bloods.		Half-Castes.		Total.
1917	...	1,236	...	4,921	...	6,247
1918	...	1,451	...	5,041	...	6,492
1919-20	...	1,238	...	5,990	...	7,228
1920-21	...	1,281	...	6,270	...	7,551
1921-22	...	1,231	...	4,740	...	5,971
1922-23	...	1,214	...	4,783	...	5,997
1923-24	...	1,085	...	5,185	...	6,270