

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

GOVERNMENT RESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE NORTHERN
TERRITORY, 1902.

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GOVERNMENT RESIDENT'S REPORT on the NORTHERN TERRITORY
for the YEAR 1902.

Northern Territory of South Australia: Office of the Government Resident,
Palmerston, May 20th, 1903.

Sir—I have the honor to forward my report on the condition of affairs in the Northern Territory for the year ending 1902.

PASTORAL.

The following table sets forth the transactions which have taken place and the revenue received under this heading during the years 1901 and 1902:—

	1901.	1902.	Increase.	Decrease.
	Square Miles.	Square Miles.	Square Miles.	Square Miles.
Area held under lease	168,549½	172,579½	4,030	—
Area held under permit	—	4,337	4,337	—
Area declared stocked	23,820	91,144	62,324	—
Area forfeited and surrendered	133,344	584	—	132,760
Area applied for	14,603½	7,902	—	6,701½
Rents received	£7,999 17s. 4d.	£7,474 4s. 4d.	—	£525 13s.

After the passing of the Transcontinental Railway Act last session of Parliament, all Crown lands in the Northern Territory were withdrawn from application for pastoral lease, and pastoral permits are now granted at an annual rental of 1s. per mile, terminable on a three months' notice without compensation, but may be renewed annually if the land be not required.

It will be noticed that there is a large increase for last year in the figures representing the area declared stocked, as compared with the previous year.

In previous reports I have referred to the great discrepancy between the figures showing the area held under lease and that stocked. It seems that, as regards the latter, the figures furnished to me by the Land Office at Palmerston were altogether inaccurate. For years past the Adelaide Office, without my knowledge, discontinued forwarding to the Land Office here the stock declarations, which had previously been the practice adopted. The consequence was that the stocked area shown in my reports was compiled simply from the data obtainable from the Palmerston Land Office.

I observe that a return, made to the order of the Legislative Council on the motion of the Hon. J. L. Parsons, shows (*inter alia*) that the area declared stocked on the 30th June, 1902, was 53,194 square miles; whereas, as will be seen above, six months afterwards 91,144 miles were declared.

I believe the explanation is that the regulation requiring the declaration of stocking the country to be made before the third year of the term of the lease is ignored by the pastoralists, and a compliance not rigidly insisted on by the Department responsible. However, it is satisfactory to be assured that there is a much larger area of the Northern Territory stocked than purported to be according to Land Office returns here. Notwithstanding

GAOL AND LABOR PRISON.

Palmerston Gaol and Labor Prison, Fannie Bay, January 30th, 1903.

Sir—I have the honor most respectfully to forward my report for the year ended December 31st, 1902 : a return of prisoners brought to gaol and discharged ; also a list of the prisoners' earnings.

Seventy prisoners were brought to gaol and sixty-six discharged, the average number per day being thirty-two. Forty-nine was the largest number, and twenty-one the smallest, imprisoned at one time during the twelve months. The health of the prisoners has been good.

The two underground tanks commenced leaking badly in May last, but fortunately I had just sufficient water to last, although the season was exceptionally dry. One tank has been repaired. I find firewood very difficult to procure now, as all the timber near the prison has been lessened each year, consequently it has to be drawn from a considerable distance, which prevents my being able to supply more labor to other work.

The prisoners were well behaved, and the prison has undergone the usual whitewashing and painting, and is in very good repair.

I have, &c.,

J. A. G. Little, Esq., Deputy Sheriff, Palmerston.

GEORGE W. H. NORCOCK, Gaoler.

Return of Prisoners in the Palmerston Gaol and Labor Prison for the Year ended December 31st, 1902.

Offences.	Number in Gaol, December 31st, 1901.	Number in Gaol, December 31st, 1902.	Brought to Gaol during the Year.	Discharged during the Year.
Murder	1	1	2	2
Manslaughter	2	2	—	—
Attempt to murder	1	1	—	—
Inflicting grievous bodily harm	1	—	—	1
Maliciously wounding	—	1	1	—
Burglary and wounding with intent	1	1	—	—
Common assault	3	—	1	4
Supplying liquor to aborigines	—	—	4	4
Supplying opium to aborigines	10	19	22	13
Aiding and abetting to procure opium	—	—	2	2
Larceny	3	1	10	12
Local Court debtors	—	—	3	3
Unlawfully killing cattle	—	3	3	—
Drunkenness	—	—	4	4
Assaulting an aboriginal half-caste	1	—	—	1
Housebreaking and larceny	1	—	—	1
Unlawfully removing ore from Crown lands	—	—	4	4
Unlawfully mining without a miner's right	—	—	8	8
Unlawfully receiving stolen goods	1	—	—	1
Pauper and deemed a lunatic	—	—	2	2
Being in possession of stolen goods	—	—	1	1
Assault and robbery	—	—	3	3
	25	29	70	66

Value of Work done by the Prisoners for other Government Departments and Public for the Year ended the 31st December, 1902.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cash earnings	—	—	—	15	6	3
Items for which no credit has been allowed—						
Prisoners working in the Botanical Gardens, reckoning their earnings at 1s. 6d. per day per prisoner	72	1	6			
Guard in charge, at 9s. 6d. per day	38	0	0			
				110	1	6
Prisoners working at rifle range, reckoning their earnings at 1s. 6d. per day per prisoner	40	8	6			
Guard in charge, at 9s. 6d. per day	16	12	6			
				57	1	0
Supplying bamboos to other Government departments	—	—	—	12	9	3
Supplying firewood to other Government departments	—	—	—	90	11	9
				£285	9	9

The above earnings are irrespective of cutting and carting timber for firewood and the usual work done in improving and keeping in order the gaol premises, &c.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.—MEDICAL OFFICER AND PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINES.

Palmerston, January 30th, 1903.

Sir—I have the honor to respectfully submit to you the annual report for 1902 on the various departments under my charge.

HOSPITAL.

On May 26th, Nurse Burkett resigned her position on the staff, and Nurse Richardson, formerly of the Burra Hospital, was appointed to the vacancy on the 28th of October. During the interval the duties of nurse were satisfactorily discharged by Miss Pickford, who had on a former emergent occasion temporarily filled the position with credit.

TURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS ADMITTED, DISCHARGED, AND DIED.

	Europeans.	Aborigines.	Asiatics.	Total.
Cases remaining, December 31st, 1901	4	—	2	6
“ Admitted during 1902	36	16	14	66
				72
“ Discharged cured	22	8	7	37
“ Relieved	8	2	6	16
“ Unrelieved	—	2	—	2
“ Died	3	3	2	8
“ Remaining, December 31st, 1902	7	1	1	9
				72
Causes of Death—				
Dysentery	1	—	1	2
Abdominal abscess	1	—	—	1
Etravasation of urine	1	—	—	1
Pneumonia	—	1	—	1
Phthisis	—	1	—	1
Spinal caries	—	1	—	1
Tuberculosis	—	1	—	1
				8

GAOL.

During the past year there have been no deaths nor sickness of a serious nature at the Gaol—once only was the infirmary used, then only for a mild case of dysentery, a European, who had the complaint on him previous to his admission to the institution. The general healthy condition of the prisoners during the past year I attribute chiefly to the splendid site of the gaol; the continual sanitary condition of the internal domestic arrangements, and the well ventilated and cleanly state of the cells; also to the use of tank water for drinking and cooking food. The tank water is far preferable to the well water for such purposes; the latter is not good enough for drinking by an incarcerated community, especially in this sub-tropical climate. The tanks have been somewhat out of repair lately, and leakage has taken place. Should the supply of tank water at any time fail, zymotic diseases would be a probable result.

QUARANTINE.

There has been no occasion to use the Quarantine Station during the past year, 1902. Four cases of leprosy came under my observation during the year. Two were transferred to their native country, and two suicided—one by hanging a few days after isolation at the lazarette, the other by drowning whilst being transported to the lazarette island at the other side of the harbor, five miles off.

DESTITUTE.

Only a few cases of destitution presented themselves for medical treatment during the year.

ABORIGINES.

There has not been much sickness come under observation during the year. Occasionally a case presented itself for treatment at the office in addition to those cases admitted to the hospital. The annual distribution of blankets and tobacco took place a month earlier than usual, in order to be prepared for the winter season.

The ill effects of a long imprisonment upon the aborigine are not generally known—sometimes fatal to life, certainly a frequent cause of phthisis induced by the unusual confinement, the daily routine of prison life, the daily and nightly surroundings for years, so different to his normal life and nature, and, added to these his continual brooding desire and hankering to be with his tribe, his native soil, and environments: all these, known as “nostalgia,” affect his physical system deleteriously much more than they do the white man.

T. E. F. SEABROOK, M.D.,

Acting Government Medical Officer and Protector of Aborigines.

His Honor Mr. Justice Dashwood, Government Resident, Palmerston.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

Harbormaster's Office, Port Darwin, January 14th, 1903.

Sir—I have the honor most respectfully to forward my report for the year ended December 31st, 1902.

In presenting my report, I am very pleased to say that, in a revenue point of view, the year shows an all-round increase; but which is due, not so much to this year being particularly good, as to the fact that last year was very bad.

Item light dues shows an increase of £69 7s. 4d., and that on rents on powder magazine £97 8s. 3d.; Mercantile Marine office fees shows an increase of £28 2s. 9d. A large quantity of dynamite was imported during the year, which accounts for the increased revenue in magazine fees.

The pearling industry has been well maintained during the year, and fifty boats were engaged, against forty-four for last year. Mr. Taylor removed his fleet of four boats during the latter part of the year to the Western Australian pearling grounds. I am advised by the sub-collector of Customs that, although the quantity exported during the year was 2½ tons less than 1901, the price realised was £3,329 more. This, no doubt, is accounted for in the Sub-Collector's report. Several valuable pearls have been found and secretly sent away, and unless power is given to the Postal Department to demand the particulars of contents of parcels and their value, a record of the value of the products of the Northern Territory will never be known