Some images of Indigenous people have been removed from this docu
for sensitivity reasons. If you wish to see copies of the photographs,
please contact the AIATSIS Library at <u>library@aiatsis.gov.au</u>

South



Australia.

## REPORT

#### OF THE

# **PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINES**

#### FOR THE

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1909.



Adelaide: c. e. pristow, government printer, north terrace. ----1909.

A2

Digitised by AIATSIS Library 2007, RS 25.5/1 - www.aiatsis.gov.au/library

### REPORT.

----

Aborigines Office, Adelaide, September 15th, 1909.

Sir—I have the honor to submit for the information of the Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works, &c., the following report on the working of the Aborigines Department for the financial year ended June 30th, 1909, together with reports from the Sub-Protector for the Far North and the superintendents of mission stations.

I trust the Bill for an Act for the better protection and control of the aborigines, now ready, will meet with Parliamentary sanction, as it will be of great benefit and is much needed.

The half-caste problem is still a difficult one, but as the State Children's Department is now willing to take charge of the children, I hope to be able to place under its control all those found wandering and camping with the aborigines. Unfortunately some country justices of the peace consider the State Children's Act of 1895 does not apply to half-castes, but the Act does not discriminate. It applies to all children under the age of 18 years who are, in the opinion of the justices, "destitute or neglected," the word "child" being defined as "Any boy or girl under the age or apparent age of 18 years."

The Adelaide justices evidently recognise this, as two cases I have had placed before them have been dealt with. In the first case the children were remanded for a week to enable the mother to return with them to her husband, who owns a block of land, which she did. In the other case the child (a girl) was committed to the care of the State Children's Council. This will, I hope, convince justices that the Act does apply to half-castes and aborigines as well as other children irrespective of nationality.

This being the case, I purpose, subject to Ministerial approval, bringing all wandering half-caste children before justices with a view to their committal to the care of the State Children's Council, where they will be educated and trained to useful trades and occupations, and prevented from acquiring the habits and customs of the aborigines, and I feel sure they will, as a rule, grow up useful; self-supporting members of the community, instead of (if left in the camps) developing into worse than useless dependents.

I recognise the good done in the past by the missions, which are still necessary as homes for the grown-up aborigines and half-castes; but if anything good is to be made of the children something more is necessary, and, in my opinion, they should be treated as State children.

In dealing with these children it should not be forgotten that each succeeding generation will undoubtedly become whiter, as the children of half-castes are as a rule much whiter than their parents, and no doubt the process will continue until the black will altogether disappear. There are now but comparatively few full-blooded natives left in the settled districts, most of whom are old people; and in the Far North a similar state of affairs is increasingly evident. The white blood being the stronger must in the end prevail, especially as some of the women are legitimately and illegitimately mating with white men. From this it is evident that the ultimate end of the Australian aboriginal is to be merged in the general population, consequently the sooner they are physically and morally improved the better for the white race. I think that all half-caste children at least should be gathered in, instead of being left in the camps, where they are often subjected to the brutalising customs and ceremonial operations still prevalent in outlying districts.

There are still a few of the old natives in and around the city and towns who are a source of trouble, being responsible for most of the offences shown in the appended list of convictions.

They are not fit to be sent to any of the missions to mix with the younger ones, whom they would naturally corrupt. They hang about the city begging, and spend the money thus obtained in drink, and even sell the blankets and clothing, &c., provided by the department. They should all be placed and kept on a reserve by themselves, separate from the well-behaved natives, but at present there is no power to deal with them. This is provided for in the new Act should it become law.

According to the census of 1901 the aboriginal population of South Australia, exclusive of the Northern Territory, was :---

		3,386 502
Total	 	

During the year there have been reported :---

Births-Blacks, 18; halfcastes, 29; total, 47.

Deaths-Blacks, 50; half-castes, 6; total, 56.

The eight years 1901 to 1909 show a decrease record of 545 blacks and an increase of 148 half-castes.

Name of Station.	Total Number of Aborigines on June 30th, 1909.	Number of Children June 30th, 1909.	Births during Year.	Deaths during Year.
Point McLeay	264	118	8	12
Point Pierce	163	35	10	5
Killalpaninna	139	23	4	5
Koonibba, Denial Bay	80	41	6	2
Manunka	47	21	2	-
Totals	693	238	30	24

MISSION STATIONS.

#### 5

The financial returns from these stations for the year show :---

	£	<i>s</i> .	d.
Voluntary subscriptions	1,115	18	2
Proceeds of produce sold	8,091	15	1
Wages paid to aborigines	2,459	12	4

#### CRIME RECORD.

Number of convictions during the year amongst the aborigines was :---

Drunkenness	30
Disorderly behaviour	10
Vagrancy	<b>5</b>
Larceny	1
Assault, criminal	1
Total	47

and the number of persons convicted for supplying liquor to aborigines during the year was 14.

The amount voted by Parliament for the year was  $\pounds 4,210$ , and the amount expended was—

•	£	<i>s</i> .	đ.
o Public Stores for rations, blankets, and clothing, &c.	1.980	17	11
-	1,330		6
Public Stores for commission	104	10	0
Medical attendance, medicines, and medical comforts	102	8	1
Burial charges	16	10	0
Transport and agency charges	614	1	8
Firewood for old, infirm, and sick	6	10	9
Printing and stationery	14	12	7
Telephone account	10	0	0
Postage stamps and telegrams	22	<b>5</b>	0
Donation to Adelaide Hospital	10	10	0
Clerical services for Sub-Protector, Far North	12	0	0
Salary	210	0	0
Grant-in-aid to Point McLeay mission	1,000	0	0
Loan to aboriginal on bill of sale	25	0	0
Petty accounts and travelling expenses	<b>25</b>	10	0
Boats, guns, repairs, &c.	20	0	0
Balance to revenue	<b>3</b> 5	3	6
	£4,210	0	0

The stores issued to depôts during the year for supplying the aborigines are as follows :—Eighty-three tons of flour, 22,728lbs. sugar, 5,015lbs. tea, 3,046lbs. rice, 337lbs. tobacco, 2,140lbs. soap, 420lbs. sago, 1,627 blankets, 431 shirts, 1,199yds. serge and galatea, 206 tomahawks, 18

**B**2

American axes, 123lbs. netting twine, 1,150 fish hooks, 175 fishing lines, 1,150 needles, 10lbs. thread, 100 spoons, 145 quart pots, 90 billycans, and 170 pannicans, exclusive of the stores issued by the Northern Territory Department.

The general health of the natives throughout the State has been fairly good and their conduct creditable.

I have &c.,

#### WILLIAM GARNET SOUTH,

Protector of Aborigines.

#### FAR NORTHERN DISTRICT.

Sub-Protector's Office, Port Augusta, July 29th, 1909.

Sir-In submitting my annual report on the condition and general conduct of the aborigines in the Far North for the past year I have the honor to state that the general health and conduct of the aborigines have been good, especially in the interior, where the police report having visited their camps very frequently and found the natives lawabiding and contented. This may be attributed to the action of the police officers stationed in the interior, who now make it a practice when patrolling to carry a liberal supply of aborigines' rations and issue a supply to all the natives (old and young) met with on the patrol. By this means it has been found that the natives are far more satisfied and their behaviour is better, as in most cases it is chiefly "hunger" that prompts them to evil practices, such as cattle-killing, &c. There is nothing of importance to report during the past year. The various depôts have been conducted in a satisfactory manner, and no complaints received as to the conduct of the issuers, who have carried out their duties well, and in most cases the greatest economy has been exercised in issuing rations, &c.

I have, &c.,

THOS. CLODE, Sub-Protector of Aborigines for Far North.

W. G. South, Esq., Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.

#### POINT MCLEAY.

\_\_\_\_\_

Sir—I have the honor to report a successful year among the natives of this mission station.

Much has been done to raise them morally, and a greater desire for employment is among them than I think has ever existed.

During the winter, apart from the ordinary work of the mission, 43 natives have been found employment with the settlers in the district, one alone giving work to 16 men at one time. In most cases they do their work cheerfully and well, but odd ones, as in all communities (whether white or black), are indifferent workmen.

The conduct has been exceptionally good. The deaths for the year ending June 30th was 12, against 30 for the previous year. The deaths from consumption this year numbered five, the same number also for the previous year. The births for year ending June 30th, 1909, eight; marriages for year ending June 30th, 1909, two. The general health is good at present.

The usual work, such as fencing, building, carpentering, blacksmithing, shearing, farm work has been satisfactorily done by the natives.

During the year a special effort was made to find artesian water supply, and six bores were put down, the deepest 110ft. below the lake level, but only salt water was obtained at that depth.

However, we were successful in striking a good supply of water in two of the bores at a depth of 28ft. and 34ft. respectively; this means much to us, but not the success we hoped for.

The cereal crops were light. This also refers to the fruit, except the grapes, of which we had a heavy yield, probably 15 tons.

The supply of firewood is giving us much serious thought, as the supply is fast diminishing, and in a few years will be quite exhausted. We have now to rely upon the kindness of our neighbors for our needs.

Abundant rains have fallen, and a successful year with the stock is hoped for. All stock is now in good condition. We now have—sheep and lambs, 1,900; horned cattle, 125; horses, 18.

We are thankful to the Aborigines Department for assistance in blankets, stores, and medicines, without which it would be impossible to carry on the work.

We are more than convinced that the mission has met the needs of a fast-dying race, and has uplifted them to a marked degree, both morally and spiritually, and has accomplished the aim it was intended to do at its foundation.

I have, &c.,

AMBROSE REDMAN, Superintendent.

To the Protector.

#### POINT PIERCE.

August 17th, 1909.

Sir—The Yorke's Peninsula Aboriginal Mission Station is situated on the western side of the peninsula, and about 35 miles south of the seaport of Wallaroo.

The institution is under the management of a committee of local gentlemen, who give their services free, regarding it as a mere act of justice that the aborigines, who have been deprived of their hunting grounds, should be provided for, especially the old men, women, and children. Comfortable homes are provided for 24 families, and a number of the able-bodied natives are found constant work on the land.

The number of aborigines and half-castes during the year averaged 154, of whom about one-fifth are full-blooded aborigines.

For the year ending June 30th, 1909, the births were 10, deaths 5, and marriages 3.

The staff consists of a superintendent, overseer, and school teacher, the last named being under the control of the Education Department.

The attendance at the school has averaged for the year 28.4. The children are quick and intelligent, and are particularly apt in learning subjects which appeal to the eye, such as drawing. The passes obtained at the last examination were equivalent to 55 per cent.

A church is provided, and regular services are held on Sundays, conducted by the Methodist and Anglican ministers or laymen alternately. The attendance of the natives, which is not compulsory, is fairly good.

The station consists of about 20,000 acres, including Wardang Island, the area of which is nearly one-third of the whole. The land is leased from the Government by the committee at a nominal rental.

Wardang Island is two and a quarter miles distant from the mainland, and the stock have to be conveyed to and from it in a sailing boat. The boat is handled by the natives, who like the work, and make smart and useful boatmen.

Originally, owing to lack of water, the island was only available for stock in the rainy season, but during recent years provision for water storage has been made by constructing tanks, with a total capacity of about 200,000galls., and it is now possible to keep it fully stocked most of the year in an ordinary season, the whole year in a good season.

On the mainland there are some rather large areas of swamp, which are only fit for running sheep on. The remainder of the mainland was originally chiefly spinifex and black-grass country, but by cultivation has been materially improved for grazing. About 700 acres is regularly cultivated by native labor. In addition to that cultivated by native labor about 1,300 acres has been cultivated by adjoining farmers on the share system, with a view of improving the grazing qualities of a bigger area. The principal crop was wheat, but some barley and oats were also grown. The average yield was—wheat, 16bush. per acre; barley, 16bush. per acre; and oats, 12bush. per acre. To provide feed a part of the crop was cut for hay and yielded about 1 ton per acre. The return from the crops, together with that from the sheep kept on the grazing land, furnished the revenue for carrying on the mission. The sheep shorn in 1908 were 7,550, including 1,500 lambs, which produced 145 bales of wool. The horses kept on the station number 30. About 45 head of cattle are kept, including 15 dairy cows for supplying the natives with milk and butter. Pigs were sold during the year which realised about £88, in addition to those killed for the use of the station. The natives are liberally supplied with mutton produced on the property. The number of sheep killed during the year amounted to 1,150.

The natives are all supplied with free rations, consisting of 7lbs. flour, 2lbs. sugar, 10lbs. meat, tea, pepper, salt, and tobacco. In order to give the able-bodied natives an opportunity of purchasing further necessary goods, clothing, boots, &c., are stocked, and the store opened at stated times during the week and goods retailed, which they pay for out of their wages.

The mission station, in common with the rest of the country, has benefited by the good seasons during recent years, and this has given a substantial surplus for improvements, all of which tend to increase the value of the Government estate. A large and convenient stable, with all necessary sheds, built of stone and roofed with iron, and an additional tank, with a storage capacity of 150,000galls., have just been completed.

The wells have been equipped with windmills, which raise the water into distributing tanks, from which the water gravitates through pipes to troughing in the different paddocks, yards, and stable.

In order to encourage the natives to take pride in their homes, as well as for their comfort, the mission has, when making additions, provided a much improved class of stone dwelling-house. The older cottages have also been done up, and in most cases extensions made to them to bring them into line with the newer buildings. The residential part of the property has also been beautified by enclosing and planting the vacant plots of land. This part of the work of the committee contributes greatly to the appearance of the station, and has been favorably commented on by numerous visitors. The general health has been good, and great care has been taken to keep the houses and surroundings clean.

The natives are well-behaved and fairly well-informed on general subjects. The moral tone is generally good.

The younger men are splendid athletes, and compete successfully with the neighboring white teams at football and cricket.

The fences on the station and the whole of the working plant are in good order, the stock all in good condition, feed is abundant, the crops are well forward, and everything looks most promising for another successful year.

I have, &c.,

The Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.



#### KILLALPANINNA.

Sir—The number of blacks on the station varied in 1908 very much, as a good many blacks who had left the station when the Rev. Reuther went away returned again in 1908, when, in the person of Rev. W. Riedel, we had secured another missionary. The number reached again 150, of whom about half were baptised believers. Death took away five of them, while only four were born, and some five or seven left the station because of stricter rules having been enforced. Α Commission went up early in 1909, and found that more stringent measures were necessary to make the work more successful. Mr. Riedel acquired the black's language in nine months' time so far that he could begin his spiritual work amongst the blacks, and he set to work with a hearty goodwill to recover the ground that was lost while no missionary was at the station. The blacks showed mostly a keen appreciation of his work among them, and have given him their trust.

We tried to improve the run by putting up three windmills in different parts of the run. We were very much pushed for want of feed, and in the early months of this year the outlook was indeed gloomy. The stock suffered all round until June brought us some relief through sufficient rains. The rabbit is our great enemy, because it takes the feed our stock so badly wants. The stock route is another nuisance, taking at least 100 square miles of our best grass country from us.

Seeing that it was necessary to erect a new church on the station, and our treasury being empty, we made an extra appeal to our Christian friends for donations for the above purpose. It was a huge success, as over £260 was raised voluntarily, which will be sufficient to erect the new building, the material of which is now on the road to the station. This shows at least that our friends with us still have confidence in the work of Christianising our blacks.

I have, &c.,

L. KAIBEL, Chairman.

The Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.

#### KOONIBBA.

August 2nd, 1909.

I have the honor to submit the following report for the year ended June 30th, 1909.

Good progress has been made in every respect during the past year.

The 21st of February was a day of great rejoicing, for 28 natives, grown up and children, were received as members into the church through the sacrament of holy baptism. Up to the present 45 natives and half-castes have been baptised. The grown up, although having the same faults and weaknesses as white congregation members, strive diligently to lead a Christian life. Some are even very sincere, and reduce to practice their Saviour's precepts.

Our usual services were well attended by the congregation members, and fairly well by other natives.

The desire of the half-castes and natives to be more thoroughly instructed in things necessary to know for their temporal and spiritual welfare increases continually; we therefore still continue during the winter months to teach and instruct a number of the grown up in the evening school. The day school was attended by 26 children fairly regularly, and the progress made gives, considering the difficulties which we have to overcome, full satisfaction.

The average number of natives has been about 76. There have been five births and no deaths. The health of the natives has been good. Their behaviour was satisfactory.

Having had a good season—we reaped from about 500 acres a little over 17bush. per acre, and anticipating another one, present prospects are very favorable—we were enabled to execute several much-needed works, and more to be put in hand. The manager's house has been thoroughly repaired by substituting stone walls for iron, and adding a large dining-room to the building. One carpenter's shop and three other rooms have been built. Our committee has also decided to erect a new and up-to-date church, with a seating capacity of about 250 to 300.

To carry on the farm work more effectively we have bought a motor winnower, and a few other farm implements and some horses.

Our committee is also in favor of more extensive cultivation, and has therefore decided to appoint a second manager, who shall commence another farm on the mission property about one and a half miles west from the centre of our mission.

The native men have had constant employment. We pay them weekly wages from 3s. 6d. to 14s., and rations for themselves and their families. For special work we pay them from 20s. to 25s. per week; still some of the men are not satisfied with their condition. If they would only prove more faithful and work with greater exertion we could give them still higher wages.

We sank another bore, but with no satisfactory results; the water found at a depth of 54ft. and 72ft. is only a little better than that in other wells on the place.

We are very grateful to the Aborigines Department for blankets and the regular supply of rations.

C. A. WIEBUSCH, Superintendent.

PLATES.