

South



Australia.

REPORT

OF THE

CHIEF PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1920.



Adelaide:

R. E. E. ROGERS, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, NORTH TERRACE.

1920.

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R E P O R T .

Aboriginals Department,

Adelaide, September 30th, 1920.

Sir—I have the honor to submit this my annual report on the working of the Aboriginals Department for the year ended June 30th, 1920.

POINT PEARCE STATION.

This station was brought under departmental control on September 1st, 1915. The operations for the year show a loss of £2,106 19s., but after deducting this from the accumulated profits there still remains a profit of £6,736 11s. 2d. to the credit of the station. The past two years have been exceptionally dry ones, and both crops and livestock suffered; this, together with high prices ruling for all commodities and the increase of aborigines depending on the station, accounts for the year's loss.

The total expenditure for wages and stores amounted to £11,865 1s., and the amount received from sales of produce, etc., to £9,876 12s. 5d.; difference, £1,988 8s. 7d.

In the year 1915 there were 22 full-bloods and 151 half-castes on the station, but they have now increased to 28 full-bloods and 232 half-castes; of these 119 are children.

During the year many improvements have been made on the station, including an up-to-date school and a teacher's residence.

POINT MCLEAY STATION.

This station was brought under the control of the department on January 1st, 1916, and has naturally shown a yearly loss, owing to the limited area and poor quality of land available for the support of such a large number of aborigines depending on it for a living, viz. :- Seventy-eight full-bloods and 312 half-castes; of these 183 are children of all ages, viz. :- Nineteen full-bloods and 164 half-castes.

During the year we have resumed some five-chain roads which ran through the reserve, paying the Meningie District Council by constructing metal roads to the value of the land resumed. We also built a jetty 800ft. long at the

station, which will be the means of a considerable saving in carting stores, &c., over three miles of sandhills.

The past two years at the station have been the driest on record, making it imperative to sell a lot of livestock and causing the death of many more. There are about 200 acres of sanddrift on the station, and this has been sown with grasses every year since the station was taken over, but without success. We have now planted a grass called *Erherdta gigantea*, which is making wonderful headway; it is an evergreen perennial fodder, and a good sand-binder, and spreads rapidly. A small quantity is being tried at Point Pearce Station in the sandhills.

The prospects for the coming harvest are bright at both stations; at Point Pearce we have 3,000 acres under crop, and at Point McLeay 300 acres.

The livestock at Point Pearce consists of 81 cattle, 4,785 sheep, 76 horses, and 53 pigs; at Point McLeay of 238 cattle, 214 sheep, 56 pigs, and 35 horses.

I consider it necessary to call attention to the ever-increasing number of half-castes at these stations, which is becoming a serious problem; it will be seen that there are at Point Pearce 232 and at Point McLeay 312, or a total of 544 half-castes; many of these, especially the younger ones, depend on the earnings of natives who are employed on the stations; they will not seek outside employment, and it is impossible to find work for all of them, and if it were found for them they would not take it. The only solution of this, I think, is to compel the children to enter into employment under indenture with reputable employers, and be kept so employed from the age of 14 to 21 years, and their earnings placed in a savings bank until they reach that age, when they should be prevented from living on the stations, as most of them are nearly white; they should not be treated as aborigines after they are able to earn their living. After they have been educated and trained at the stations up to the age of 14 years I consider they should come under the control of the State Children's Department, which is so well equipped for the work. This would be much more economical than to start another department.

The expenditure at Point McLeay Station for the year amounted to the sum of £9,566 16s. 4d., and the amount received from sales of produce, &c., £5,935 0s. 10d.; difference, £3,631 15s. 6d.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION OF THE STATE

The estimated population on June 30th, 1919, was—

Full-bloods	3,787	half-castes, 957	total, 4,744
Births—Full-bloods	28	half-castes, 43	total, 71
	<u>3,815</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>4,815</u>
Deaths—Full-bloods	135	half-castes, 25	total, 160
Total at June 30th, 1920.	<u>3,680</u>	<u>975</u>	<u>4,655</u>

CRIME REPORT FOR YEAR.

Drunkenness	15
Vagrancy	1
Disorderly behaviour	2
Breach State Children Act	1
Unlawful possession of liquor	2
Mental defectives	2
Larceny	1
Unlawfully supplying liquor to aborigines ...	4
	<u>28</u>

REVENUE FOR YEAR.

	£	s.	d.
Sales of produce, &c., Point Pearce Station....	9,876	12	5
Sales of produce, &c., Point McLeay Station ...	5,935	0	10
Sales of Government property.....	6	6	8
Refunds of advances to aborigines for rail fares, etc.	68	5	6
Repayments	18	4	7
	<u>£15,904</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>

EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Head Office, Adelaide—</i>						
Salaries	730	14	2			
Provisions, &c.	3,735	2	9			
Advisory Council	50	0	0			
				<u>4,515</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>11</u>
Medical examination of aborigines, Far North and North-West ...	—			500	0	0
<i>Point Pearce Station—</i>						
Salaries	380	0	0			
Wages to aborigines and laborers.	5,328	18	2			
Implements, stores, stock, &c. ...	6,156	2	10			
				<u>11,865</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
<i>Point McLeay Station—</i>						
Salaries	443	3	6			
Wages to aborigines and laborers.	3,231	9	1			
Implements, stores, stock, &c. ...	5,848	7	6			
Rent.....	43	16	3			
				<u>9,566</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	<u>£26,447</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>3</u>			

During the month of August last Doctor Herbert Basedow left Adelaide in charge of a medical expedition amongst the aborigines in the Far North and North-West, but only completed his examination and treatment a few days ago; it will probably be some weeks before he can hand in his report; his journey covered several thousands of miles.

Since the East-West railway line was completed many aborigines have come in along the line from the out-lying country, and some steps will be necessary to prevent this, as they infest the sidings and beg from the train passengers and the railway employees.

There is no necessity for them to do so, as their natural food is plentiful in their own country, and several ration depots exist in the district where the old and infirm may obtain supplies.

The able-bodied natives can find plenty of employment amongst the settlers, but as long as they are encouraged by sympathetic people to beg they will naturally refuse to work. In other parts of the north country, away from the railway line, all the aborigines find employment and earn good wages.

I have, &c.,

W. G. SOUTH, Chief Protector of Aborigines.

The Hon. Commissioner of Public Works, Adelaide.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT OF THE POINT PEARCE STATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 1920.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Salaries of superintendent and storekeeper	380	0	0			
Wages of aborigines and white laborers	5,328	18	2			
	<hr/>			5,708	18	2
Horses	—			40	0	0
Meat	—			6	5	1
Rations for aborigines	719	14	5			
School books, &c., for aboriginal children	6	3	6			
	<hr/>			725	17	11
Interest	—			341	4	0
Head office salaries and expenses .	—			83	17	0
Depreciation—						
Furniture	6	11	6			
Harness	15	13	4			
Implements, tools, &c.	163	3	11			
	<hr/>			184	18	9
Net profit brought forward	—			8,843	10	2
				<hr/>		
				£15,934	11	1
				<hr/>		

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Store	—			259	17	4
Rent of cottages, &c.	—			147	4	10
Farm account—Wheat and other produce	—			4,153	10	5
Stock accounts—						
Pigs	164	7	6			
Cattle	67	19	0			
Sheep	178	10	0			
				410	16	6
Sundry debtors, amount collected in excess of anticipation	—			12	12	10
Net profit brought forward	—			8,843	10	2
Balance net loss for year	—			2,106	19	0
				£15,934	11	1

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE POINT PEARCE STATION AS
AT JUNE 30TH, 1920.

LIABILITIES.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
H.M. Government		—			8,966	4	8
Capital account		—			11,362	9	5
Net profit brought forward	8,843	10	2				
Less net loss for year	2,106	19	0				
					6,736	11	2
					£27,065	5	3
ASSETS.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Station buildings	8,230	0	0				
Improvements, fencing, &c.	3,995	0	0				
					12,225	0	0
Implements, vehicles, boats, &c.	1,468	15	7				
Furniture	124	18	8				
Harness	136	10	1				
					1,730	4	4
Stocks on hand—							
Store	893	13	6				
Wheat	55	10	0				
Oats	17	10	0				
Hay	875	0	0				
Corn sacks	122	10	0				
Share farmers' seed and super. ...	454	11	10				
Pig food, wheat and barley	35	0	0				
Binder twine	37	7	6				
Wool packs	14	12	0				
Super.	34	10	0				
Stone raised and carted	20	0	0				
Bricks	1	0	0				
Lime	1	4	0				
Livestock—							
Horses	1,120	0	0				
Cattle	891	0	0				
Sheep	6,817	10	0				
Pigs	106	0	0				
					11,496	18	10

Wheat certificates—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1915-16, expected to realise	18	19	8			
1916-17, expected to realise	606	4	10			
1917-18, expected to realise	156	11	9			
1918-19, expected to realise	171	11	11			
1919-20, expected to realise	467	12	0			
	<hr/>			1,421	0	2
Retention money, 1919-20 wool clip . .	—			192	1	11
				<hr/>		
				£27,065	5	3
				<hr/>		

W. G. SOUTH, Chief Protector of Aborigines.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT OF THE POINT McLEAY
STATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 1920.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Stock accounts—						
Cattle	440	17	8			
Horses	20	10	0			
Sheep	5	7	4			
	<hr/>			466	15	0
Meat	—			239	13	6
Rations for aborigines	421	12	3			
School books for aboriginal children	3	7	7			
	<hr/>			424	19	10
Salaries, superintendent and store-keeper	443	3	6			
Wages of aborigines and white assistants	3,231	9	1			
	<hr/>			3,674	12	7
To Depreciation—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Furniture	4	7	6			
Implements, &c.	52	16	7			
Harness	9	6	11			
	<hr/>			66	11	0
Freight and carriage	—			322	5	5
Rent	—			43	16	3
Head office salaries and expenses	—			83	17	0
Interest	—			598	13	6
Net loss brought forward	—			6,491	7	2
				<hr/>		
				£12,412	11	3
				<hr/>		
By Store	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Farm	—			589	13	7
Mats and baskets	—			33	15	10
Stock accounts—				9	17	3
Pigs	358	2	4			
Fowls	1	5	0			
	<hr/>			359	7	4
Net loss for year	4,928	10	1			
Add net loss brought forward	6,491	7	2			
	<hr/>			11,419	17	3
				<hr/>		
				£12,412	11	3
				<hr/>		

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE POINT McLEAY STATION AS
AT JUNE 30TH, 1920.

		LIABILITIES.		£	s.	d.
H.M. Government	.....			16,054	18	1
Capital account	.....			5,550	6	4
				<u>£21,605</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
		ASSETS.		£	s.	d.
Buildings	.....	4,119	1 3			
Improvements	.....	1,552	15 6			
					5,671	16 9
Furniture	.....	83	2 7			
Implements, vehicles, &c.	.....	475	9 1			
Harness	.....	84	1 11			
					642	13 7
Stocks on hand—						
Storo	.....	1,110	19 7			
Mats and baskets	.....	0	13 9			
Boot shop, boots and material	...	10	0 0			
Farm account—						
Barley	.....	2	14 0			
Hay	.....	15	0 0			
Chaff	.....	12	10 0			
Pollard	.....	4	10 0			
Bran	.....	4	10 0			
					1,160	17 4
Livestock on hand—						
Cattle	.....	1,817	0 0			
Sheep	.....	271	5 0			
Pigs	.....	242	2 0			
Horses	.....	330	0 0			
Fowls	.....	2	0 0			
					2,662	7 0
Retention money, 1919-20 wool clip	..	—			28	10 10
Sundry debtors	.....	—			19	1 8
Net loss for year	.....	4,928	10 1			
Add net loss brought forward	.....	6,491	7 2			
					<u>11,419</u>	<u>17 3</u>
					<u>£21,605</u>	<u>4 5</u>

W. G. SOUTH, Chief Protector of Aborigines.

POINT PEARCE ABORIGINAL STATION.

Port Victoria, July 1st, 1920.

Sir—I have the honor to forward you the following report for the year ending June 30th, 1920 :—

For the past year we have again had a very light rainfall. Our records showing 10·78in. Our crops suffered owing to failure of later rains, reducing our average for wheat to 9bush. per acre. Our returns are—wheat, 7,747bush. ;

barley, 1,954bush. ; oats, 1,328bush. ; total grain grown, 11,029bush. Hay, 74 tons—making total hay now on hand 250 tons. Barley did not stand the dry weather so well as wheat, especially as it was grown on stubble ground ; the average was $7\frac{1}{2}$ bush. per acre. Oats, also on stubble, averaged 6bush.

The wool clip totalled 145 bales and 8 bags, from 4,123 sheep and 900 lambs shorn. As no rain of any value for feed fell this year before June, our lambing has been a poor one, not more than 40 per cent., *i.e.*, 550 lambs. The total number of sheep and lambs now is 4,875 ; horses, 76 ; cattle, 81 ; pigs, 53.

This year we have in crop 3,217 acres. Last year we had only 2,088 acres. The outlook for agriculture is very bright, especially as good prices for all produce may be considered a certainty. During the month of June, when most of our seeding was done, we had a rainfall of 3.33in. This will give the seed a good start.

In the past all agricultural work done by natives has been on contract at rates per acre. This season, for the first time, we are commencing to pay for same on third shares. It is hoped that the new method of payment will increase the interest in agriculture and result in better work and more acreage being cultivated by our own men. Presuming the new arrangement proves a success, it will be necessary to buy more horses and implements for native sharefarmers' use. This expenses, however, would be reproductive and profitable.

The 100 acres of lucerne sown during past two years have been very helpful to our stock in the trying times we have passed through.

We have greatly improved our water supply for stock. Two new soakage wells giving a permanent supply of water have been found, excavated, and timbered in portions of the run previously very short of water. Another soakage dam has also been excavated and timbered. The excavation of dam in Port Paddock has been completed, and a dam in Point Paddock has been deepened from 5ft. to 13ft. Both these dams are now well filled with water, as a result of rains during past month. A tank, with a capacity of 60,000galls. has been excavated and built in South Paddock, on Wardang Island. All dams and tanks have been cleaned out when dry.

A new school has been built for the children by our native workmen, according to plans approved by the Director of Education. We have employed a white carpenter, to be assisted by native workmen, for roofing, &c. The old school building is in a good state of repair, but too

small. We purpose converting it into a cottage. Owing to the steady increase of our population on this station, cottage homes are as badly needed here as elsewhere, and it will be necessary to build at least one or two cottages each year for some years, to overtake the demand.

In addition to work, as shown above, men have been employed rabbiting, fencing, clearing scrub, stone-raising, post-cutting, cutting sheoak branches for stock (owing to drought), wood cutting and carting for firewood, carting of stores from Port Victoria, carting of grain, super., &c., milking, boundary riding, butchering, care of pigs, sanitary work, crossing sheep to and from Wardang Island, breeching and dagging sheep.

In addition, several of our men have worked as wheat lumpers at Port Balgowan, others at fishing and for farmers in neighborhood. In addition to shearing on this station, many of our men are away for some weeks shearing, also some away salt-scraping, &c.

Influenza was epidemic here during past year, but apart from this the health of the people has been good.

With reference to the young people, I recommend that some system be adopted for dealing with them, on similar lines to the State Children's Department. As they leave school situations away from the station should be found for them, and they should be kept at constant employment until they are, say, 21 years of age. At present situations are continually being found for them, especially for the girls, on neighboring farms, but authority is needed for keeping them in these places. The liberty to return to the station whenever they wish is harmful to their best interests. It is very necessary that this condition of things should be remedied.

Religious services have been conducted on the station weekly, as usual, by visiting ministers and laymen from the churches in our neighborhood. We again gratefully acknowledge the unselfish work of these Christian preachers. Sunday evening services are also regularly conducted by Mr. Roper and myself. Sunday school is regularly held by Mr. and Miss Roper.

All the officers of the station continue to prove efficient workers in their several departments.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS GARNETT, Superintendent.

The Chief Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.

POINT McLEAY ABORIGINAL STATION.

August 4th, 1920.

Sir—I have the honor to submit the following report for the year ending June 30th, 1920 :—

Dairy.—We had a fairly successful year with our dairy, the cows milking well under the very dry conditions, both at Glenora and the head station. The cream has brought a good price right throughout the year, which, on the whole, has been one of the driest on record for the Narrung district.

Cattle.—We have lost through death 95 head of cattle, owing to the scarcity of feed, the high winds at New Year's time and the following fortnight having blown most of the grass away.

Pigs.—We had a good year with our pigs, the fats selling at consistently high prices right through. We now have eight breeding sows and one very fine Poland-China boar pig.

Hay and Lucerne crops last year were very nearly a failure, and we had to buy a large quantity of hay to keep working stock and milking cows alive. This year, however, the lucerne was sown early and shows great promise, as it caught the winter rains.

Hay and Barley are doing well, and should give a very heavy cut of hay. The big sand-drift was again sown, and this crop was doing well until the 7th June, when fierce winds blew the crop to pieces. We have now planted all the drift with a very fine species of grass purchased by the Chief Protector from the Minda Home, at Brighton. This grass should solve the problem of sand-drifts on this station.

Sheep have not been doing well. The season was so dry that no breeding was attempted.

Livestock on hand is as follows :—Sheep, 214 ; horses, 35 ; cattle, 238 ; pigs, 56.

Employment of Natives.—Employment on the station has been found for a large number of natives, who seem indisposed to leave the station to find work. Could this be overcome there would be little or no unemployment of natives, as the settlers are badly in need of labor.

Works.—Since last year we have erected a very fine jetty, 800ft. long. Most of this work has been done by natives under a white overseer. We are at present laying down 34 chains of metal road by native labor, which is proving a costly venture. Had the contract been let to white men it would have saved the station about £100.

Conduct of Natives has been good. The drink trouble each year becomes less.

Health of Natives has been fair only. Last year we had a mild epidemic of influenza, and with the aid of a trained nurse combated it successfully, only two deaths resulting. Later we had an epidemic of measles, which was more severe than the influenza. Five children died from the after effects. There have been several deaths among our old people, and the full-blooded aboriginals are fast dying out. Many of our natives have been admitted to the Adelaide Hospital for treatment through the efforts of the Chief Protector, and have all received the best attention. The services of a doctor stationed at Tailem Bend have been secured for the natives of this station, and this should help considerably in dealing with future sickness.

Religious Needs of the natives have been well attended to by the A.F.A., who send a minister from Adelaide. They have had the services of Mr. Johnstone, of Meningie, and Mr. Sanders, of Milang, who both take a deep interest in them. Thanks are due to the Committee and the two gentlemen mentioned for the good work they are doing.

Assistants.—Since my last report we have lost the services of the acting store and book keeper (Mr. J. A. S. Miller), a very capable officer, who was acting temporarily for Mr. H. E. Read, who returned from active service. Mr. Wyatt continues to carry out his duties as dairyman and farm overseer efficiently.

I have, &c.,

J. B. STEER, Superintendent.

The Chief Protector of Aboriginals, Adelaide.

Police Inspector's Office, Port Augusta,

July 27th, 1920.

Sir - I have the honor respectfully to submit my annual report on the condition and general conduct of the natives in the Far Northern Division for the year ended June 30th, 1920.

From reports received from the various stations in the division I find that influenza has been responsible for a great many of the deaths recorded, especially among the older natives, who appear very susceptible to colds. Rheumatism has been prevalent among the aboriginals in the Blinman district, but their sufferings have been

relieved to a great extent by the use of eucalyptus, a supply of which was forwarded to Blinman by your department.

Exclusive of three old female aboriginals at Port Augusta, who receive rations, there are about eight others in the surrounding districts who pay periodical visits to the town, and are supplied with blankets. Early in the year a supply of blankets was forwarded to Kingoonya for distribution amongst the natives on Bon Bon Station; similar demands from other stations were also supplied from here.

The report furnished by the constable at Marree shows that there is plenty of employment in that district for young and able-bodied aboriginals, they earn splendid wages working for drovers and carriers; the old and infirm aboriginals, who are unable to work and supplied with rations, and in cases of sickness (not serious) the blacks are attended by the nurses of the District Nursing Society, at Marree.

There are about 200 natives in the Mungeranie district, and owing to the droughty conditions which prevailed in the district until recently, the blacks were unable to obtain even a limited supply of their native food. The closing of the mission station at Killapaninna, and the drying up of the Cooper floodwaters has brought a number of the Cooper blacks to the Mungeranie depot for rations.

The general condition of the natives at Innaminecka is good, and the same remarks apply to those on Cordilla and Haddon Downs Stations.

There are about 25 old natives at Oodnadatta at present receiving rations, and in many cases clothing is also supplied. The aborigines in the Indulkinna district have suffered severely owing to the outbreak of influenza. During the latter part of last year about 20 natives died from this complaint. There are about 300 aboriginals at present in the district, and the old and infirm ones are being supplied with rations, &c., from the depot.

From reports received from the police at Fowler's Bay it appears that there are about 100 aboriginals in that district, the majority of whom are employed by the farmers; a few old female aboriginals are occasionally supplied with rations from the depot. Generally speaking, the natives in the Murat Bay district appear healthy, and their wants are amply provided for at the depot, where the aged, weak, and sick aboriginals receive rations, tobacco, medicine, &c.

There are about 80 blacks of all castes in the Iron Knob district, inclusive of 12 half-bloods (six of these being of each sex), and inclusive in the 80 about 30 are children of

both sexes and all ages. No rations whatever were issued last year, the natives in this district have practically no requirements, as they are nearly all fit to earn their own living, and do so, upon the stations.

The constable at Ooldea (East-West railway) reports that on account of the permanent water supply the aboriginals for hundreds of miles east and west make Ooldea their meeting place, and at various times there has been as many as 300 camped near Ooldea, a large number coming from the Kalgoorlie district, and as far as Laverton and Carnarvon in the Western State.

The natives on the whole are a strong healthy lot, and all appear capable of getting their own living, and, in my opinion, it is not wise to provide them with rations unless in extreme cases. There have been a considerable number of children in the tribes, mostly from about 3 years to 10 years, and for some time the constable stationed at Ooldea has not seen more than one half-caste with the tribes. There have been a number of natives coming to Ooldea at intervals, from about 50 to 100 miles direct north. They are in all cases naked and in their wild state, but are of a friendly nature, and eventually join forces with the local tribe; in all cases they are remarkable for their fine physiques. Their first appearance caused much consternation among the local aboriginals, who thought they were from the Musgrave Ranges, and of whom they live in constant fear.

During the year 18 aboriginals have been treated at the Port Augusta Hospital; 16 of those were discharged as cured, or partly so, and two died at the institution. In cases where the patients were unable to pay, orders for rail fares were issued on your department to enable the natives to return to their respective localities. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to bring under your notice the care and attention given the natives by Dr. Gorrie while inmates of the hospital. The secretary, and the nursing staff, too, are deserving of praise for their untiring care and treatment of the natives while under their charge.

I am also pleased to state that your department has always favorably considered any requests made by the police in this division on behalf of the natives.

Offences against the aboriginals during the year have been as follows:—Drunkenness, 9; indecent language, 2; unlawfully in possession of liquor, 2; vagrancy, 1.

Two natives were committed to the Mental Hospital at Parkside, and one child was put under the control of the State Children's Department.

Births.—Full-bloods—Males, 13 ; females, 11. Half-bloods—Males, 5 ; females, 11.

Deaths.—Full-bloods—Males, 70 ; females, 42. Half-bloods—Males, 4 ; females, 6.

I have, &c.,

JOHN OPIE, Sub-Inspector.

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.

KOONIBBA MISSION STATION.

September 29th, 1920.

Sir—I have the honor to submit the following report for the 12 months ended June 30th, 1920 : -

It is again possible to record good progress on this mission station for the period under review. An increase can be recorded in the number of natives who have made Koonibba their permanent home, but there were not as many natives as usual paying the station casual visits. One reason for this is that quite a number of the old people died during the year, and another reason is that Government rations are now also being distributed at Murat Bay. The influenza epidemic was responsible for about 24 deaths among the aboriginals of the district, nine of these occurred on the station. It is noteworthy that though some of the half-castes were for a time in a critical condition none of them succumbed, all the deaths occurring among the full blacks. There were no losses in the Children's Home, though all of the 67 children living there at the time, as well as the head matron, were laid up with the disease at one and the same time. The number of native children in the home is now 72, 15 having entered during the past nine months. That so many of the parents voluntarily give up their children, to whom they are sincerely attached, speaks volumes for the tact and efficiency of the matron and her assistants. The natives seem to have confidence in them, and the children are obedient and respectful, and seem to be well satisfied to remain under her care.

Farming operations were, unfortunately, carried on at a loss during the 12 months, the total wheat yield being only a little over 2,000 bags. That means that only 850 bags were available for sale. The average was under

3bush. to the acre. Water and feed were very scarce, so that it was not advisable to keep any old horses. All of that class were shot and replaced by young stock, which we were able to purchase very cheaply. The water shortage was very serious. Twice we were left with only a week's supply on hand, and there was no water to be procured in the whole district, all the Government tanks being empty ; but opportune rains saved the situation at the last moment.

The area under crop at present is less than in previous years, namely, 2,300 acres. There was a good deal of sickness among the horses, and they were in poor condition. All the wheat is thriving splendidly.

Owing to the influx of children into the Children's Home, it has been found necessary to enlarge the building. An additional big room, measuring 27ft. x 29ft., is about to be erected. A new six-roomed house for the farm manager is nearing completion, and three-two-roomed cottages for native married couples have also been erected.

At the end of June an epidemic of measles broke out on the station. All except three of the children were affected. Fortunately, there were no deaths. We are indebted to your department for a big supply of blankets to meet the crisis. Thanking you for these and other assistance during the year.

I have, &c.,

W. JUERS, Acting Superintendent.

Pro REV. E. APPELT.

To the Chief Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.