

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

QUARTERLY REPORT ON NORTHERN TERRITORY.

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Government Resident's Office, Palmerston, October 1st, 1884.

Sir—I have the honor to lay before you my report on the affairs of the Northern Territory for the quarter ending September 30th, 1884.

PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

In my last report I directed attention to the full account given by the Acting Government Resident (G. R. McMinn, Esq., S.M.), in his report dated June 30th, 1883, of the stations from the north coast southward through the centre of the continent, and I gave, from information supplied by Mr. J. S. Little, a list of the stations on the Herbert river, and statistics of the stock upon them. It will, I think, be interesting in itself, and also convenient for reference, if I now place upon record, in tabular form, the statistics of pastoral settlement in the Northern Territory, as completely as the information in my possession enables me to do so.

I may premise that in the following table I have entered as arrived the cattle, horses, and sheep which were reported as *en route* for the Herbert River stations; and for the stations south of Newcastle Waters I have added 25 per cent. on the figures given by Mr. McMinn on June 30th, 1883. I am informed, on good authority, that this will furnish, as nearly as possible, the actual number of live stock at present depastured on the Crown lands of the Northern Territory.

| Name of Station. | Name of Owner. | Horned Cattle. | Horses. | Sheep. |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|---------|--------|
| <i>Northern Stations.</i> | | | | |
| Marrakai | Fisher & Lyons | 4,170 | 43 | |
| Glencoe | " | 8,000 | 336 | |
| Victoria | " | 4,000 | 200 | |
| Daly | " | 4,236 | 51 | |
| Beatrice | " | 700 | 65 | |
| Spring Vale | Dr. Brown | 200 | 30 | |
| Delamere | " | 1,500 | 100 | |
| Elsay Creek | A. Wallace | 3,000 | 120 | |
| Forrest River | Osmond & Panton | 4,000 | 160 | |
| Victoria River | Buchanan Bros. | 1,700 | 70 | |
| <i>Eastern Stations.</i> | | | | |
| Avon Downs | T. Guthrie | — | 30 | 4,000 |
| Alexandra | North Australian Pastoral Company | 3,500 | 72 | |
| Corella | McDonald, Smith, & McAush | 5,500 | 300 | |
| Alray Downs | E. W. Lamb | 1,300 | — | |
| Creswell Downs | Brodie & DeSalis | 2,300 | 70 | |
| McPherson's | McPherson | 2,000 | 20 | |
| Austral Downs | Richardson, Little, & Carr | 1,400 | 140 | 19,000 |
| Lorne Downs | Kilgour & Co. | 700 | 30 | |
| Lake Nash | T. Costello | 6,000 | 150 | |
| *Rocklands | McCullach, Scarr, & Co. | 7,000 | 60 | |
| McArthur | Amos Bros. & Broad | 4,000 | 150 | |
| North of Roper | Acres & Suttor | 2,000 | 100 | |
| <i>Southern Stations.</i> | | | | |
| Newcastle Waters | Dr. Brown | 3,200 | 150 | |
| Crown Point | Willoby, Harding, & Co. | 375 | 250 | |
| Idracowa | Grant & Stokes | 7,500 | 180 | |
| Mount Burrell | Gilmour, Hendry, & Melrose | 1,000 | 70 | |
| Henbury | Parke & Walker | 2,500 | 120 | |
| Mission Station | Moravian Mission | 250 | 120 | 5,000 |
| Glen Helen | Grant & Stokes | 1,500 | 20 | |
| Owen Springs | J. Gilbert | 4,250 | 830 | |
| Undoolya | Tennant & Love | 5,000 | 250 | |
| Barrow creek | Wooldridge | 3,700 | 120 | |
| Total | | 96,481 | 4,407 | 26,000 |

* This station is partly in Queensland.

Many thousands of cattle in addition are now *en route* to stations, but it is impossible to give the number with accuracy. I have not entered any cattle for the Coburg Peninsula, as these, like the buffaloes and ponies, are unbranded and uncounted. The area of pastoral country declared to be stocked, according to the regulations, is 42,104 square miles. The area of pastoral country which has been forfeited, and is ready for sale, is 77,880 square miles.

OUTRAGES BY ABORIGINALS.

I have already referred to the treacherous and brutal assault upon the Copper Camp, as it is called, at the Daly river, and the murder of those old and highly-esteemed pioneers of the Northern Territory, Henry Houschildt and Johannes Noltenius. John Landers and Thomas Schollert, who were also killed, were less known and had never taken so prominent a position as Messrs. Houschildt and Noltenius. The escape of Mr. Roberts is entirely due to the cry of warning which Landers gave when he saw he was being attacked. On hearing it Mr. Roberts suddenly looked up, and the blow from a pick, which was even then descending, instead of coming crash upon the top of his skull grazed down on the bone above the eye. But for the change in the position of his head he, too, would now be dead.

I have been very careful in making inquiries into the cause of this attack, and, as I have had an opportunity of conversing with those who have gone to the Daly since and those who were visitors there during the time the copper mining was being carried on, I am confident I am in possession of the facts. It is therefore a melancholy satisfaction, as is it also a duty to the dead who are unable to defend themselves, to state that they, poor fellows, have fallen victims to overkindness, overconfidence, and the want of that wary distrust of the blacks by always carrying firearms which is the white man's only safety and protection of his life. At the Copper camp the mining party were so kind to the blacks, were so liberal in their gifts of food, tobacco, and other things—not liquor, as they had none—were so confident in the goodwill of the blacks they lent them guns to shoot game for them, that they were wholly off their guard. And all the time while they were becoming more and more sure of the friendliness of the blacks these savages were plotting to murder them. The blacks observed the Europeans went to work without their revolvers; they saw they worked apart in different parts of the claim, and they resolved to massacre them. It is probable that they thought it wise to get Houschildt, one of the wariest and most formidable of the party, away, and so they concocted a story of "big fellow heap of copper all a same as this fellow"—*i.e.*, the one where they were working, which they offered to show him. He, utterly without suspicion, went off with them alone, and the first night was killed asleep. They then watched their opportunity, and on the morning of September 3rd everything appeared favorable, and having concealed their spears, dragging them through the grass into the camp with their toes, at a given signal all four were simultaneously attacked. It is not necessary that I should recount the circumstances; it is enough to say that four are dead and one escaped by a miracle. It is, however, necessary to say, as against those who, far from the scene and with no knowledge of the men or the circumstances, have been indulging in "mealy-mouthed philanthropies" about what has been done and what ought not to have been done, that, while no doubt there have been many instances of outrages upon lubras and blackfellows both, in the case of these men there is no suspicion of either. It is due to their memory to place this upon record. There was no lubra wronged, there was no cruelty to blackfellows. They were murdered for loot, for plunder, for "tucker," the constant sight of which excited an irresistible passion to possess it and to eat it. Since then, partly no doubt as a consequence of the search parties disturbing them in their usual camps, another party was attacked at Argument Flat by blacks of the same tribe, Woolwogas, with the same object of obtaining plunder. Full accounts of the Daly River outrage have been published, and all the world now knows that the blacks were the aggressors. I think it expedient that the report which I obtained from Mr. J. A. G. Little, senior and superintending officer of the Post and Telegraph Department, should be printed, that it may be made equally clear that they were the aggressors also at Argument Flat.

Post Office and Telegraph Department, Southport Station, October 2nd, 1884.

Sir—Your memo. received at Rum Jungle, asking for information about late outrage, was at the time misunderstood by me. It was thought that full particulars of the outrage had already reached you, and that your memo. requested information about proceedings of the search parties, consequently, my reply said "no further information at present."

The following is a brief account of the outrage as far as yet ascertained:—

On Friday evening, September 26th, two teams were camped at Argument flat, Rum Jungle. One team was in charge of Charles Bridson, accompanied by another man named John Maliff. Bridson's team was loaded with rations and stores for up country. The other team, returning empty to Southport, was in charge of a man named George Stanley. Argument Flat is about two miles from Rum Jungle hotel.

Mrs. Lawler, wife of landlord of Rum Jungle hotel, was at home, but her husband was absent in Palmerston. Two natives, a man and a woman, belonging to Woolwonga tribe were employed at the hotel.

No other people were staying at the hotel on September 26th: but during the evening Mr. W. H. Smith, telegraph station-master, Southport, who had been doing some repairs on telegraph line, arrived at the hotel in order to remain for night.

Towards sundown natives came into Bridson and Stanley's camp, at Argument Flat, and asked for flour, which was given to them.

About 9 p.m., the native man at Rum Jungle hotel told Mr. Smith and Mrs. Lawler that Louis and Neddy Lewis, two Woolwonga natives, had come into the hotel.

The native Louis had been employed for several years at Powell's creek telegraph station. Mr. Smith had been in charge of Powell's creek telegraph station at the time, and consequently knew Louis thoroughly.

The other native, Neddy Lewis, was several years ago in employment of Mr. John Lewis, now of Kooringa, and went overland to Mount Essington with Mr. Lewis.

Both natives could speak English fluently, having been for many years in contact with Europeans.

Mr. Smith sent for Louis and asked him how it was he was mixed up in the murders of Messrs. Noltenius, Lander, and Schollert, at Daly river copper mine—Louis having been reported as implicated in the murders.

Louis denied being implicated in the murders, and said that he was in Palmerston at the time, having been taken from Cox's Peninsula to Palmerston in a boat in charge of a man named George.

Louis then asked Mr. Smith several shrewd questions, evidently for the purpose of ascertaining how many people were at Rum Jungle and in neighborhood, also how long Mr. Smith was likely to remain at Rum Jungle. Louis also said that a large body of natives were together on river Finniss, three or four miles away; also, that food was scarce in the bush.

Mr. Smith at the time did not pay particular attention to the questions of Louis, but subsequent events led Mr. Smith to infer that Louis and Neddy Louis had come in to the public-house to ascertain number of white people there, also to mature plans for an outrage, either at the hotel or at Argument Flat, for purpose of obtaining rations.

The two natives left Rum Jungle Hotel about eleven p.m.

During night, Bridson, at Argument Flat, heard natives round the camp; but as night was dark and jungle thick, Bridson did not interfere with natives.

It afterwards appeared that the natives came round camp in night-time for purpose of concealing large number of spears.

At daylight, on morning of Saturday, September 27th, Bridson, Stanley, and Maliff went out to look for team horses, and left camp unprotected.

Mr. Smith, on his way back to Southport, rode past the camp, and noticed that no person was there. Mr. Smith also noticed billly of water on the fire, and was almost inclined to stop at camp until return of men in order to obtain some tea.

The men found team horses safely. They did not see any natives, but noticed the concealed spears, and consequently were on the alert, and had firearms in readiness in case of being attacked by natives.

While men were engaged at breakfast, about thirty natives suddenly appeared running towards the camp.

The natives took the concealed spears which they fixed in throwing sticks, and were just about to throw the spears when the white men—who had in meantime ran behind loaded wagon for cover—commenced firing from corners of wagon, and dispersed natives.

The

The natives left behind large number of spears, also rug and match box, supposed to have been property of late H. Houschildt, also some knives and forks, supposed to have been stolen from Daly river copper mine.

Bridson admitted to me, at river Adelaide on Sunday, that Louis, Neddy Lewis, another native named Boco Jackey, also three other natives, names unknown, had been shot.

After natives were dispersed, Bridson and Maliff proceeded on their journey up country; Stanley went to Southport and gave information to the police.

Messrs. Saunders and Baines, with search party, found two dead bodies at Argument Flat on Monday, September 29th, and burnt them.

The police and Mr. Gratwick have since discovered more dead bodies.

Foregoing is a brief description of the outrage, hurriedly obtained while travelling down country.

Further inquiries, made by the police in regular manner, will probably elicit more information and more perfect details.

I have, &c.,

J. A. G. LITTLE, Senior and Inspecting Officer.

The Hon. J. L. Parsons, Government Resident.

Immediately on receiving information of the first outrage, I dispatched all the available police by land from Yam Creek, and by water from here in the *Palmerston*; and, after communications with the Hon. the Minister of Justice and Education, authorised a volunteer party, under the leadership of Ex-mounted Constable Lucanus, to proceed in search of the remains of Houschildt. In this case the cost of necessary rations was borne by the Government, and the party agreed that they would not use firearms except when attacked. It is now known that Houschildt's remains were found by Corporal Montague and the constables with him.

On receipt of the intelligence of the attack on the teamsters at Argument Flat, I dispatched the only two troopers available, and asked Mr. A. P. Baines, J.P., to organise a volunteer party in Southport. This was done. Mr. Phil. Saunders, who had only returned to the Northern Territory two days before, was elected leader; they are still in search towards Marrakai station on the Adelaide river, which the same blacks had threatened to stick up. I have also sent out Corporal Montague and Mounted Constables Macdonald, Luck, Stott, and Cox in the same direction.

During the time this event occurred at Argument Flat, Inspector Foolsche had gone in the *Palmerston* to the Daly, in the expectation of meeting the police, search, and survey parties, who have gone thither. With the assistance of the survey parties under Messrs. J. P. Hingston and W. R. Cuthbertson, and Captain Carrington and officers of the *Palmerston*, Inspector Foelsche succeeded in capturing five blacks, two of whom are mentioned by Mr. Roberts as being present when the outrage took place, and one of them "Long-legged Charley" who has been connected, it is said, with every outrage by natives in the Northern Territory. Inspector Foolsche captured these by using their own craft. He refused to talk about the murder at the Copper claim. He represented himself as going into coffee and sugar planting. There would be plenty of work for blackfellows. They were entirely thrown off their guard. At last, in response to that universal demand of the natives for "tucker," "bacca" and, if possible, "grog," he told them he had none with him, but he had a big steamer down the river, and if Charley would go down to the steamer he would give him a letter to the captain, and it would be "all right." "Charley," "Tommy" and "Jacky" all of whom were "wanted," were only too glad to go on such a promising errand. Mr. Cuthbertson undertook to take them down in the survey boat. They went, and carried a letter from the inspector to Captain Carrington, who put them in irons. Subsequently Inspector Folsche arrested another "Tommy" and "Daly." These five were brought to Port Darwin in the *Palmerston*, and are now in the gaol at Fannie Bay on remand.

It appears to me that the best way to deal with these five is to bring them to a speedy trial, and, if found guilty, let them be executed as near to the scene of the murders as possible. An instance of slow but certain judicial punishment such as that would be would fasten upon the native mind, and would deter many a savage from crime. To try them in the ordinary way, and to execute them, if guilty, within the precincts of the gaol, would only lead their tribe to conclude that they had escaped altogether, and that "white fellow" could not catchee."

In connection with these outrages, which may, I think, be regarded as expressive, first, of the irresistible love of plunder, and second, of the perception which is dawning on the native mind that their hunting grounds are going to be taken from them, and their old free nomadic life rendered impossible, it is pleasant to be able to state that deep and strong as were the feelings of sorrow which were expressed, the community never "lost its head." It was unanimously felt that all that could be done must be done; and when what could be done was being done, there was no clamor for wholesale slaughter and reprisals. On this point it is very satisfactory to be able to quote the words of the Duke of Manchester, who was himself within twenty miles of the scene of the outrage on the day after it occurred. Speaking at a dinner at the Residence before he left, his Grace, after he had returned thanks for the toast of his own health, rose again and said—"He had made one omission when responding, for he had forgotten to refer to the melancholy events which had taken place during the past few weeks. He thought that, if it was possible, his words should go out to the world; but at any rate England should hear how her sons in this distant portion of Her Majesty's dominions received calmly—but at the same time with deep feeling—the news of the deaths of well-known men, who had perished while endeavoring to establish a new industry. No rage of revenge had been shown, but simply the desire to teach the natives that they cannot perpetrate outrages of that kind on the whites with impunity."

REVENUE, &c.

The customs revenue for the quarter has reached the satisfactory figures of £6,922 17s. 5d., notwithstanding the increased trade with Adelaide, which, according to the existing method of keeping accounts, proportionately lowers the amount of customs duties collected at our ports. Having called attention to the unfairness which results, it is gratifying to know that the revenue of the Northern Territory will be duly credited with the amount which represents the duty on all goods on which the duties were paid in South Australia.

| | | <i>Imports.</i> | | £ s. d. | |
|--|-------------|-----------------|---|---------|--|
| Total value for quarter ended September 30th, 1884 | | 46,321 | 0 | 0 | |
| | | <i>Exports.</i> | | £ s. d. | |
| Gold, 5,171ozs. | value | 18,551 | 0 | 0 | |
| Pearl shell, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ tons | " | 1,604 | 0 | 0 | |
| Tin ore, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ tons | " | 680 | 0 | 0 | |
| Sundries | | 1,768 | 0 | 0 | |
| Total | | £22,603 | 0 | 0 | |

Total