Culture contact and conflict after the Rufus River massacre

An analysis of documentary evidence regarding

European/Aboriginal relations on the central Murray River 1842–1890

'Ruins at Moorundie' c. 1910, first Aboriginal depot on the Murray
Source: Artist unknown, State Library of South Australia

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Megan Tutty
9th December 2019

Abstract

Studies of cross-cultural contact in colonial Australia and, more particularly, the violent nature of much of that contact, are now legion. Yet despite growing attention to this field of enquiry, there are still significant temporal and spatial gaps in our analyses of Indigenous/settler relations on the Australian frontier. The situation in South Australian remains one that is perhaps least understood, particularly those circumstances on the central/upper Murray following the Rufus River massacre in 1841. This research is a contribution towards addressing that gap.

Using methodological classification and analysis of primary documents, this thesis seeks to characterise the nature of cultural interactions during a transformative period which saw a considerable decline in the Indigenous population. Careful scrutiny of historic texts and maps, and subsequent comparison with present day sources, reveals the likely locales of contact, particularly the ration depots that operated between Moorunde and Lake Littra. It provides a summary of quantitative ration distribution data and other population records made by government officials. Additionally, it identifies instances of violent conflict that were reported in press accounts and the public record.

In concluding, this research finds that Aboriginal people on the central/upper Murray responded to European colonisation in a variety of ways. Much of the cross-cultural contact that took place revolved around exchange and labour. It was not typified by the violence that was integral to the period of initial contact prior to 1842, and continuing overt violence is therefore unlikely to have been a significant cause of population decline. Depot sites most likely to yield further information include Moorunde, Overland Corner and Lake Littra; Blanchetown and Morgan sites have undergone considerable change and disturbance. Future investigation of pastoral stations, particularly outstations, as areas of potentially heightened contact, is recommended.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview and rationale

Prior to 1788, the River Murray supported much larger numbers of Aboriginal people than the surrounding semi-arid plains and, due to its resource rich environment, was likely home to one of the highest density Aboriginal populations in Australia (Pardoe 1990:61, after Radcliffe-Brown 1918:231 and Birdsell 1953). Despite this, anthropological observations made at the time of the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Region Native Title Claim reveal that the current River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (RMMAC) membership traces its descent from only c.30 individuals (the apical ancestors) (Burke et al. 2016:148). The nature of Indigenous/settler relations in the period commencing with the European exploration of the Murray region and official settlement of the colony of South Australia has been well researched, and it is clear that a considerable loss of Aboriginal life can be ascribed to the extensive violence that occurred during the establishment of the Overland Stock Route between 1838 and 1841, particularly the Rufus River massacre at the end of that period (Hemming 1982; Foster et al. 2001; Foster and Nettelbeck 2012). What is less apparent, however, is whether the long-term monumental decline in population is solely attributable to the conflict that took place during this initial period. Furthermore, existing investigations of evolving race relations during the subsequent period of colonial expansion has not fully explored the possibility of continued violent conflict and the nature of cultural interaction remains largely unknown.

Between 1841 and 1844, following his appointment as Resident Magistrate and Sub-Protector of Aborigines at Moorunde, Edward Eyre made several journeys along the Murray to Lake Victoria. Eyre was confident that he had established harmonious relations with the Aboriginal people not only in his own district, but also extending to the junction of the Darling (Colonial Office Great Britain 1844:355). However, on his departure he recommended that a military outpost be established at the Rufus (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:38) and in the years that followed police were eventually stationed at Overland Corner (1855), Morgan (1879) and Renmark (1889). Although this was probably a logical consequence of colonial expansion, and irrespective of Eyre's apparently peaceful exploration and settlement in the area, early European views of the region characterised it as remote, dangerous and home to large numbers of hostile Aboriginal people. In 1849, the Commissioner of Police, George Dashwood claimed that a station near Chowilla was warranted due

to the "ferocious disposition of the Aborigines in the district, and of the marauding habits they have acquired from a long series of successful attacks upon overland parties" (*South Australian Government Gazette* (*SAGG*) 16/1/1849:370), suggesting that relations between Aboriginal people and European settlers remained fraught with tension. Further east, explorer and pastoralist John McKinlay, who occupied runs[1] at Rufus River and Lake Victoria from 1851, believed that the Aboriginal people there "threatened to utterly exterminate the white man, and establish a perfect reign of terror" (cited in Lockwood 1995:xxiii).

Such comments also give rise to the suggestion that conflict may have occurred only in certain areas within the region. As Burke et al. (2016:162) explain, the area east of Lake Bonney was regarded by government officials in the 1840s as less dangerous than the more remote locales around Chowilla, Rufus River and Lake Victoria. Initial requests to establish 'defensive' outposts all nominated locations closer to the state border, although, ultimately, the first police station was situated at Overland Corner. Likewise, recollections of early settlers like Elizabeth Napper, whose family claimed to have enjoyed harmonious relations with Aboriginal people at Lake Bonney but were fearful of those Aboriginal groups that inhabited the Darling region, demonstrate the variable nature of attitudes and relationships across the spatial extent of the region.

Race relations[2] on the River Murray in the decades that followed the violence on the Rufus were probably neither as peaceful as Eyre might have believed, nor as turbulent as they were during the initial period of contact. Existing literature on frontier conflict in South Australia has focussed on the events surrounding the Rufus River massacre and then traced the evolution of violence on the frontier as it shifted west to Eyre Peninsula, northward to the Flinders Ranges, and finally into central Australia and the Northern Territory. Other examination of contact in the region during the nineteenth century has provided targeted analyses of singular aspects of Indigenous/European relations, such as the distribution of rations (Levi 2016) or the prevalence of disease (Dowling 1990), but is topically and temporally limited. Consequently, existing research has provided insufficient examination of the possibility of continued frontier conflict in the area and has not attempted to advance a holistic overview of the changing nature of the relationship between Aboriginal people and settlers on the Murray for the remainder of the nineteenth century. This

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[1] A 'run' was a term used to describe early pastoral properties, particularly those which were unfenced.
[2] The term 'race relations' is used interchangeably with the term 'cultural relations' throughout this thesis; the author acknowledges that the term 'race' is an artificial construct with no scientific basis and has used it solely to improve fluency.

subsequent gap in our understanding prompted Burke et al. (2016:171) to challenge the assumption that early contact violence was the immediate cause of the drastic reduction in the Indigenous population on the River Murray and suggest that violent encounters may have continued after 1841.

1.2. Research aims

This research seeks to contribute to a greater understanding of the nature of cultural relations between Aboriginal people and European settlers in the central/upper Murray region of South Australia between 1842 and 1900 through an analysis of primary texts that are predominantly represented by government correspondence and reports, but also include personal records and accounts of pastoralists and their families. In examining this body of data, the prevalence of particular themes is drawn out through qualitative analysis in an effort to characterise the nature of Indigenous/settler interaction. Ultimately, this study hopes to offer answers to the following broad questions:

> To what extent did the nature of relations between Aboriginal people and European settlers continue to be typified by violent conflict after the Rufus River massacre?

> Was any such conflict confined to certain locales within the study area?

> In what ways did Aboriginal people interact with Europeans on the Murray, who and what influenced the nature of these interactions, and were other more obscure forms of violence apparent?

> If fatalities resulting from violence were not solely responsible for considerable population decline, what other contributing factors were influential?

The functional aims of this research are to:

> Document and characterise the variety of interactions between Aboriginal people and European colonists that is apparent in primary documentary sources,

> Broadly identify the occurrence and locales of possible conflict between Europeans and Aboriginal people within the study region that occurred after 1841,

Collate any available estimates of Aboriginal population for the study period and region, and

Provide a logical assessment of the range of factors contributing to population decline on the Murray.

1.3.   Scope, study area and limitations

This study examines documentary evidence relating to race relations during the nineteenth century *after* the arrival of Edward Eyre as Resident Magistrate and Sub-Protector at Moorunde on the River Murray in late 1841. The spatial extent of the study has been defined largely in accordance with the early administrative vision of the region and is bounded by the area around Blanchetown (and Moorunde) in the south, following the course of the River Murray and terminating around the state border in the north east (figure 1). While there has been some inclusion of documents that refer to locations beyond the state border in New South Wales and Victoria, analysis of the government record was limited to those documents held by State Records of South Australia. It is therefore important to note that this work does not provide comprehensive analysis of race relations in areas such as the Rufus River, Lake Victoria, Moorna or Mount Dispersion, but references certain relevant events or texts pertaining to these locales. There is a distinct focus on the river corridor simply because this constitutes the area of most intensive inhabitation on the part of both colonists and Aboriginal people and was undoubtedly the territory that was most heavily contested. Furthermore, very few documents contain information for areas outside of European population centres.

Thematically, the study concentrates on interaction between Aboriginal people and Europeans that was bureaucratically mediated. In reality, most race relations played out between private individuals beyond the gaze of officialdom. Whilst this fact is problematic in any historical analyses, it is acutely relevant in the context of this research. For a start, many of the texts were written by Protectors who were located some distance from the Murray frontier. Even correspondence and reports prepared by police and Sub-Protectors, who were stationed at the various outposts on the river, can only reveal the nature of cultural relations at pre-determined times and places when Aboriginal people elected to come into contact with European settlement. Although this analysis has included accounts and correspondence of settlers where possible, this type of data is limited,

and in many cases was written retrospectively. Unfortunately, these factors further complicate what can only ever be an imbalanced and Eurocentric perspective on the subject.

The final limitation that should be acknowledged is the degree of completeness of the data, particularly the government record. That some records were not included because they could not be identified, located or accessed, necessarily influences the outcomes of this work. While much of the data for the period between 1842 and 1855 has been well preserved and indexed, records after this time suffer from poor indexing, access restrictions, and in some cases appear to have been destroyed.
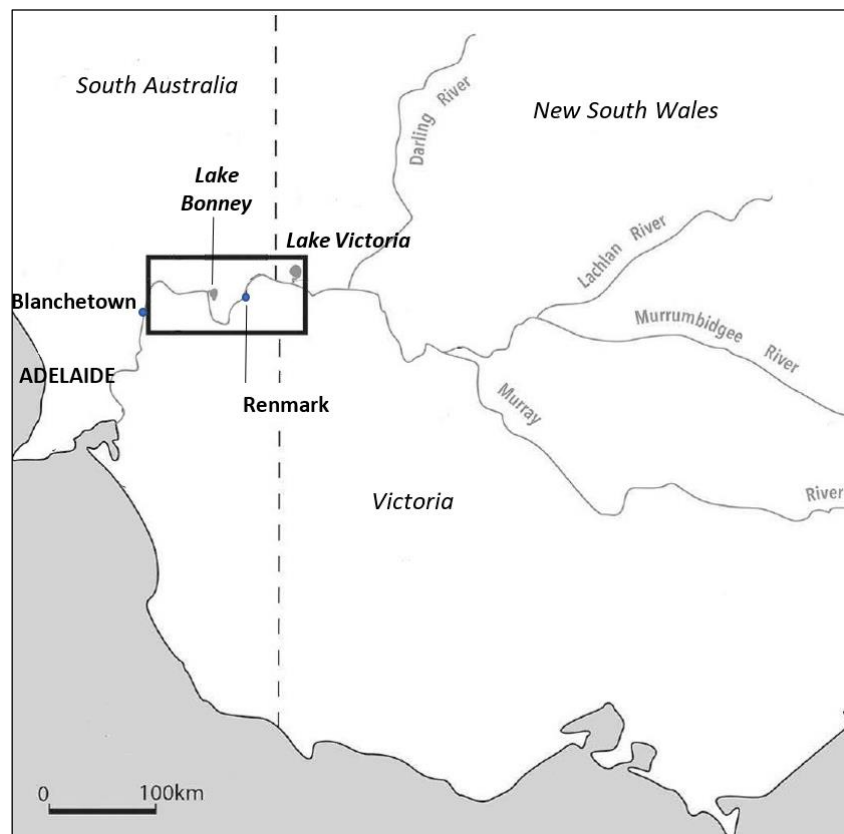
Figure 1: General study area—central/upper Murray

1.4. Significance

The central contribution of this research is to examine the nature of cultural interaction on the Murray after 1842 at a time when the Aboriginal population seemingly experienced a considerable decline. It seeks to provide greater clarity around our existing understanding of the relationship

between Aboriginal people and Europeans during this period, in light of the violent events that preceded permanent European settlement along the river corridor. Through an analysis of primary documents, which have not previously been examined collectively as a body of evidence for the evolution of race relations in the region, it hopes to determine the extent to which violent conflict continued after the Rufus River massacre, and discern a clearer explanation for the apparent decline in the Aboriginal population that occurred during the 19th century.

This research, therefore, will contribute to the field of frontier conflict enquiry that has been developing over the past several decades. Furthermore, it's intended that it will extend recent work by Burke et al. (2016) and Sullivan (2014) in determining, on a broad scale, the locations of contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans, thus providing a basis for future targeted investigations of specific locales in the central/upper Murray area.

2. Historical context

2.1. Pre-colonial occupation of the central Murray region

The River Murray has been acknowledged as a region that was heavily populated by Aboriginal people prior to European settlement (Birdsell 1953; Butlin 1983; Pardoe 1990; Radcliffe-Brown 1918), supporting higher population densities than many other areas of the continent (Radcliffe-Brown 1918:231), and considerably higher densities than would be expected in areas of comparable rainfall (Birdsell 1953:187). The resource-rich environment that resulted from the inexhaustible supply of water that flowed down the Murray year-round not only provided for the needs of a number of groups who occupied territory fronting the river, but also served to create a corridor for seasonal movement of outlying groups who periodically congregated along the river for economic, ceremonial and social purposes (Clarke 2009; Pardoe 1990).

One version of the distribution of Aboriginal groups who occupied the region prior to colonisation was developed by Tindale (1974:192-216)[3]. He defines five 'tribes' within the study area, each comprising around three to ten 'hordes':

> - the Ngaiawang, at the western extent of the study area, occupying both sides of the river encompassing the Morgan (Nor West Bend) area and extending to where the river starts to take a more southerly course north of Waikerie. These people are often referred to as the Moorunde in European primary sources.

> - the Ngawait, a smaller group inhabiting country on both sides of the river, upstream from the Ngaiawang, and bounded by Lake Bonney in the east.

> - the Erawirung, another smaller group extending east from Overland Corner, encompassing the Great South Bend of the Murray on both sides of the river and reaching above Paringa on the east bank and the Rufus on the west bank. Primary sources also refer to the Yu Yu.

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[3] However, it should be noted that there are other renderings of group boundaries in this region and this summary does not provide a complete exegesis. It is especially worth noting that the observations on which these boundaries were based were made after colonisation by European settlers. Overlanding, pastoralism and the disruption caused by European intrusion undoubtedly influenced the patterns of Aboriginal occupation that existed prior to European settlement (Knight 2003:33).

- the Ngintait, principally on the south side of the river above Paringa extending east into Victoria beyond the eastern extent of the study area to Mildura.

- the Maraura, on the north side of the river from Chowilla, extending east beyond Lake Victoria and the Rufus River.

Whilst the Ngaiawang, Ngawait, Erawirung and Ngintait belonged to the Meru language group, the Maraura's affiliation was with the Barkindji. Today, the people who occupy the greatest part of this area (from Morgan to the state border) are collectively recognised as the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Region. Adjacent traditional owners include the First Peoples of the Millewa – Mallee in Victoria, and the Barkandji (Paakantyi) People in NSW.

2.2.   Initial contact, overlanding and conflict

It is probable that Aboriginal people on the central Murray experienced the influence of European settlers even before the river was first explored by Charles Sturt in 1829–1830. The prevalence of a disease resembling leprosy or syphilis was noted by Sturt (1834:226, 241, 254)[4], as was an awareness of Europeans, although only in the district around the Murrumbidgee (Sturt 1834:218). News of European settlers may well have emanated not just from the east, where Aboriginal people occupied country around settled districts expanding west from Sydney, but also from the lakes and coast downstream and to the south, where contact with sealing and whaling gangs had occurred in the very first decades of the 1800s (Dowling 1997:314)[5].

If the arrival of Europeans had managed to escape the attention of the Aboriginal people of the central Murray prior to 1830, it was little more than a decade before they became well acquainted with them. Sturt's discovery of the course of the Murray through the interior and its mouth on Australia's southern coast, occurred just as plans for a new settlement, founded on a systematic approach to invasion and colonisation, began to consolidate in Britain (Pike 1957:55). The arrival of new colonists in 1836 marked the beginning of the official European settlement of South Australia,

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[4] He later suggested it was smallpox; Joseph Hawdon similarly observed evidence of prior smallpox infection amongst Aboriginal people around Swan Hill (see Dowling 1997:76).
[5] Also providing a likely source for the introduction of venereal disease.

and although Adelaide was some distance from the Murray, it was not long before the river was established as a critical route to the east of the continent.

In 1838 the first overlanding expeditions commenced as enterprising pastoralists saw the opportunity for profit by bringing stock from NSW to the expanding South Australian colony (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:33). Joseph Hawdon and Charles Bonney were the first men to bring cattle along the Murray, followed closely by Edward Eyre, who first brought cattle and then sheep in 1839. Whilst these expeditions were not without incident, conflict between the overlanders and Aboriginal people during this initial stage of contact was relatively minor compared to that which was about to occur. In the three years following Hawdon and Bonney's first overlanding journey, at least 36 separate parties travelled the same route (Burke et al. 2016:151) and violence between Europeans and Aboriginal people escalated.

Specific confrontations were documented between Deadman's Flat (just east of Cadell), named by Police Commissioner O'Halloran in April 1841 for incidents involving previous overlanding parties, and Langhorne's Ferry on the Rufus River, where conflict took place as early as March 1839 (see Burke et al. 2016:154–159). These events culminated in what was later to become known as the Rufus River massacre, a bloody reprisal attack which took place in August 1841 where at least 30 Aboriginal people were killed in two consecutive confrontations involving overlanding parties, government deputations, and volunteer police.

This period of violent conflict has provided a compelling focus for much of the scholarship surrounding colonialism in South Australia, as the Rufus River massacre represents one of the earliest and most significant encounters in the state's colonial history. Various authors have examined the circumstances preceding the massacre and concluded that unsanctioned sexual relations between Europeans and Aboriginal women (Gibbs 1960:71; Pope 1989:19), the failure of Europeans to participate in reciprocal transactions resulting in the transgression of Indigenous cultural practices (Pope 1989:86), and what was perceived by overlanders as the theft of stock (Hemming 1982:47), aroused increasing hostility. It has also been argued that Aboriginal resistance to invasion and subsequent engagement in conflict was premeditated and strategic, requiring large scale cooperation between different Aboriginal groups and superior knowledge of local topography to optimise the potential for success in battle (Hemming 1982:59; Burke et al. 2016:165).

Conventional wisdom holds that violence on the Murray ceased after this point. In fact, this period of violence has been conceptualised as a predictable phase in a pattern of contact that was replicated throughout colonial South Australia whereby relatively peaceful initial contact was superseded by violent conflict and ultimately concluded in the domination of Aboriginal people, a condition that corresponded with a significant decline in their population (see Pope 1989:9[6]).This model of contact was well understood and even expected by early colonial administrators. In 1843 Protector Matthew Moorhouse first acknowledged what he saw as an inevitable trajectory of race relations where initial friendliness and curiosity were supplanted by distrust and conflict, before Aboriginal people finally became reconciled to "European skills and laws" (State Records of South Australia (SRSA GRG24/6/1843/495).

Faced with this resistance to dispossession but compromised by a political agenda, in which access to land was ultimately prioritised over and above Aboriginal protection, colonial administration was unable to prevent outbreaks of conflict with Aboriginal people but equally unable to condone the violence employed in doing so. What therefore emerged was a situation in which incidents of violence went largely unreported or were otherwise described in the vaguest of terms using euphemistic language which was used to conceal the true nature of events (Attwood 2017:27; Foster 2009:68.1). Although the immediate response of authorities following this 'phase' of conflict has been comparatively well documented, there is a possibility that violence in the area continued for some time after but is virtually impossible to detect in written records.

2.3.   Early colonial administration on the Murray

In early nineteenth century Britain there was considerable humanitarian concern for the effects of colonisation on Indigenous peoples (Gibbs 1960:62) and much of the rhetoric of South Australia's colonial planners suggested that the interests and land of Aboriginal peoples would be safeguarded by government policy (Pope 1989:7). These views, however, were not necessarily shared by the colonists themselves; the protection of Aboriginal land was, in most respects, incompatible with

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[6] Pope (1989) actually argues that this model is overly simplistic and suggests that intermediate phases where Aboriginal people formed relationships with settlers and demonstrated resistance through retaliation and revenge also need to be acknowledged.

commercial interests (Pope 1989:7). Even in the colony's embryonic state, two competing agendas were apparent.

The sentiment inherent in the earliest documents that defined the colonisation of the state epitomised the predicament of race relations that was to beset administration of the colony for years to come. The *South Australia Act 1834* declared the land which was to become South Australia as consisting of "waste and unoccupied lands which are supposed to be fit for the purposes of colonization". Two years later, the Letters Patent (1836), used to establish the Province in February of 1836, repeated this description, but added that nothing written therein should affect "the rights of any Aboriginal Natives of the said Province". By December, when Governor John Hindmarsh delivered the Proclamation (1836) of the state to the assembled colonists, he emphatically stated the government's intention to extend "the same protection to the Native Population as to the rest of His Majesty's Subjects".

In order to facilitate this 'protection', the position of Protector of Aborigines was created and the first appointment made in 1837 (Pope 1989:6; Raynes 2002:7). The Protector was obliged to act both as an advocate for Aboriginal people and as an agent of the colonial state (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:19). Not surprisingly, several men held the office in quick succession and the committee that had been established to assist the Protector was disbanded within a year (Raynes 2002:10). In 1839 Matthew Moorhouse was appointed to the role, and although he was able to finally provide some stability, he was not without his detractors (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:90; Steiner 2003:58). The public believed that the Kaurna people, who inhabited the settled Adelaide Plains, having been subject to the 'civilising' influences of European settlement, were cooperative and peaceful, but that Aboriginal people in the outlying regions were prone to violent behaviour and not to be trusted (Pope 1989:8). It was also a widely held view that Moorhouse could not achieve effective management of conflict on the frontier from the comfort of his office in Adelaide (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:90). In light of the events that had taken place on the Rufus, Governor George Grey despatched Edward Eyre to Moorunde to assume the role of Resident Magistrate and Protector[7] of Aborigines on the Murray in September 1841 and ensure the suppression of any future conflict.

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[7] Sometimes referred to as Sub-Protector, given that the office of Protector was still in existence; the Sub-Protectors in the regions reported to the Protector.

In some respects, the appointment was one of convenience; not only was it expedient for the government to establish an official presence in the vicinity of the Murray, but influential colonists were keen to see Eyre rewarded for his services to the colony in his recent expedition to King George Sound (Dutton 1967:151). Eyre had purchased land on the Murray at Moorunde two years earlier and expressed a desire to settle there on his return, but financial hardship arising from the cost of his expeditions, and the mismanagement of his finances in his absence, prevented him from doing so (Dutton 1967:149). Establishing a station there satisfied both the needs of the Governor and Eyre himself (White 2018:288).

Eyre arrived at Moorunde in October 1841, accompanied by three police officers and joined shortly after by a non-commissioned officer and 12 soldiers from the 96th Regiment, who had been despatched from Van Diemen's Land at the request of Governor George Grey. Eyre's term on the Murray lasted several years and during this time he implemented a scheme for the distribution of rations (principally flour and blankets), undertook three expeditions to the Rufus and consistently reported that amicable relations with Aboriginal people prevailed (see *SAGG* 9/2/1843:44). On his departure in 1844 it was widely agreed that peace on South Australia's first violent frontier had been achieved; in a glowing account of Eyre's influence amongst Aboriginal people on the Murray the press described the outcome of his work as "almost miraculous" (*South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register* 14/2/1846:2).

There is, however, some suggestion that relations between Grey and Eyre were strained (Blacket 1931; Dutton 1967:163). Having been anxious to depart the role since 1843 and disappointed that he had not been selected to lead the 1844 central Australian expedition that was instead headed by Charles Sturt, Eyre expressed his frustrations in a letter to his friend Edward Bate Scott[8], whom he hoped would succeed him in the role (Blacket 1931; Dutton 1967:163). When William Nation was instead appointed as Eyre's successor at the end of 1844, Governor Grey wrote to him:

> … notwithstanding all that has been accomplished by the activity and zeal of your
> predecessor, much yet remains to be done … it will behove you carefully to watch for the

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[8] And also written to Lord Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies in Britain, seeking an appointment elsewhere (Blacket 1931; Dutton 1967:163).

slightest indications of renewed misconduct on the part of the Natives (SRSA GRG24/4/00000/9).

Whether these statements were made because Grey did not approve of Eyre or his achievements on the Murray, or because he had specific evidence to suggest that conflict between Europeans and Aboriginal people was imminent, cannot be determined. However, in June of 1846, not long before his departure from the role of Protector, Nation reported that in "the last six months, many overland parties have arrived, and all bear testimony to the good conduct and usefulness of the natives generally" (SRSA GRG24/6/00000/22). It seemed that Grey had no grounds for concern.

Nation was finally replaced by Edward Bate Scott in early 1847[9]. Scott had resided on the Murray for some years and was apparently highly regarded by both Europeans and Aboriginal people (Sturt 1849). During his time at Moorunde he performed routine duties, continued to distribute rations, and rarely reported any conflict between Aboriginal people and settlers. In addition to his role as Protector, he was made Inspector of a newly established Native Police force at Moorunde in 1853 (SRSA GRG24/4/1852/1055; Nettelbeck and Ryan 2017:53; Williams 1999:1633), and in 1855 was responsible for overseeing the construction of the police station at Overland Corner. Primary documents contain several references to Scott's conduct in his years as Protector which imply impropriety with Aboriginal women (SRSA GRG52/7/1852/522) and suggest he was not, perhaps, as popular amongst the settlers as has been supposed (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/851; SRSA GRG24/6/1848/873; SRSA GRG24/6/1851/447). However, despite allegations, and a letter to Scott from Moorhouse in 1852 suggesting that he resign, Scott remained in the role until the position was terminated several years later.

In 1856 Matthew Moorhouse resigned from the public service, foreshadowing the collapse of the Protectorate[10]. An attempt to reign in expenditure was made in the following year when South Australia achieved self-government and the Office of Protector of Aborigines was abolished, with

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[9] Scott's appointment was gazetted in 1848 (*South Australian Government Gazette* 13/7/1848:240), but the earliest letter to Scott as Sub-Protector at Moorunde contained in the Protector's Letter book (SRSA GRG52/7/00000/1) is dated 20th March 1847. William Lang was appointed to the role by the Home Office in England on 31st December 1846 (*South Australian Register* 3/7/1847:1) but does not appear to ever have actively filled it.

[10] Moorhouse had been appointed Comptroller of the Destitute Poor Establishment and Superintendent of the Female Immigrant Depot in addition to Protector of Aborigines in January of 1855 (*SAGG* 18/1/1855:33 but resigned from the public service shortly after in March of 1856 (*SAGG* 3/4/1856:247).

responsibility for Aboriginal affairs being transferred to the Crown Lands and Immigration Department. Many ration stations were closed (Layton 1993:67), including that at Moorunde.

2.4. Rations distribution

The concept of distributing rations was considered as early as 1836 when the first report of the Colonization Commission suggested that 'asylums' be established throughout the colony where Aboriginal people could receive food and clothing in return for labour (South Australian Colonization Commission 1836:8) and periodic distribution commenced in Adelaide in the following year (Foster 1989:65). Several years later, when Grey appointed Eyre as Protector at Moorunde, he proposed that a conciliatory approach to managing race relations be adopted and that this was to be largely achieved through the systematic distribution of rations (Foster 1989:68). The scheme became Eyre's principal strategy for maintaining influence and achieving concord on the Murray, and one of the main functions of the role of the Sub-Protectors who succeeded him.

The term 'rations' usually referred to a monthly allowance of four pounds of flour per adult and two pounds per child (Foster 2000:11). Other foodstuffs such as oatmeal were sometimes used to replace flour, and in later years tea and sugar became staples. Rations rarely included meat, although it was sometimes issued when flour stores were depleted and supply from Adelaide had been interrupted (Levi 2016:41,133). Blankets tended to be issued on an annual basis (Foster 2000:11) and, in later years, other non-food items such as tobacco, clothing, cloth, tomahawks and fishing gear were provided to depots. Rations were issued from Moorunde on Eyre's arrival, and eventually from other depots at Overland Corner, Blanchetown, Chowilla, Morgan and Renmark after the end of the 1850s. Distribution was also recorded for other places on the river including Lake Bonney and Paringa (see Foster 1989:64,69). Although the depot at Moorunde ceased to operate in 1859 when police were relocated to Blanchetown (see below), distribution from other sites continued beyond the turn of the century, albeit to a much lesser extent than when the scheme was first implemented in 1842.

The colonial government utilised rations to achieve a number of specific and distinct objectives (Rowse 1998:4–5) that fundamentally contributed to their ultimate goal of land acquisition (Levi 2016:171). Whilst distribution was initially intended both as a form of compensation (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:91) and as a means of discouraging future outbreaks of frontier violence (Foster

1989:65), the potential for controlling Indigenous mobility became a principal focus of the scheme throughout the 1840s and 1850s. Levi (2016:114–115) suggests that there were three aspects to the government's approach in achieving control over the distribution of Aboriginal people in the landscape. In the first instance, rations were provided in order to prevent Aboriginal people killing stock for food or taking items from European stores, which was generally regarded by Europeans as theft. Secondly, distribution at depots was intended to lure Aboriginal people away from large towns and encourage sedentism, thus enabling surveillance of the population. Lastly, rations were used to encourage Aboriginal people to congregate where a ready and inexpensive supply of labour was needed to facilitate pastoral expansion. When Aboriginal people failed to comply with European expectations, rations could be withheld in punishment (Foster 1989:73; Levi 2016:43–44, 124). Equally, however, additional distribution was offered as reward or payment or to secure influence (Levi 2016:127).

Although the colonial government used rations to undermine Indigenous autonomy and draw Aboriginal people into a European economy, Levi (2016:6) challenges the "popular view of Indigenous peoples as helpless victims of colonial aggressors" and concludes that they perceived rations in their own way—both as a symbol of reciprocity and a form of payment for the resources they relinquished to settlers (2016:20, 48). They incorporated European items into their existing cultural framework, not only in terms of what those foods represented, but also in the way they adapted their seasonal pattern of movement to take advantage of this new resource (Foster 1989:75–76).

When first introduced, rations were used only as a supplement to the traditional diet and perceived as a novelty rather than a necessity (Foster 1989:65) but some authors argue that as European settlement intensified and the process of dispossession accelerated, Aboriginal people became more reliant on European foodstuffs which came to replace Indigenous foods to a significant extent (Foster 1989:72; Levi 2016:174). The inclusion of increasing amounts of ration foods in the Indigenous diet likely had tremendous long term consequences for communities. Levi (2016:141) argues that cultural roles were significantly disrupted; women's position as primary providers of food was transferred to men and the value of traditional knowledge was eroded, along with social standing and status. She further claims that whilst rations may have prevented starvation in the short term, they ultimately guaranteed malnutrition, resulting in considerable impact on the health of many individuals (Levi 2016:179). Deteriorating health and the incidence of disease have been

advanced as the principal causes of severe population decline (Dowling 1990, 1997; Pope 1989:40–41).

2.5.   Colonial governance post 1860

By the mid 1850s, rations were generally reserved only for the sick, elderly and infirm (Foster 1989:72). With the advent of the gold rush and the exodus of settlers from the colony, Europeans came to rely on Indigenous labour to sustain the pastoral industry. Rations were withdrawn for fear that they might encourage idleness and healthy individuals were instead expected to find employment on stations (Foster 1989:71). However, by the end of the decade, following the collapse of the protectorate in 1856, demand for labour subsided with the return of settlers from the goldfields (Foster 2000:2). Increasing concern about Indigenous welfare arising from reports of destitution prompted a government enquiry (Foster 1989:72–73; Raynes 2002:17) and in 1860 a Legislative Council Select Committee reported that the circumstances of the Indigenous population were dire, that they had "lost much, and gained little or nothing, by their contact with Europeans", and that their population was fast diminishing (Legislative Council of South Australia [LCSA] 1860:1). It recommended that the Office of Protector of Aborigines was re-established, and John Walker was subsequently appointed as Chief Protector in 1861 (Foster 2000:5; Raynes 2002:18). In the intervening period the attitude of the government had shifted and, for the most part, the approach taken in Indigenous affairs centred around the provision of welfare. The conclusion of the Select Committee was that the Aboriginal population was "doomed to become extinct" (LCSA 1860:5), and that the role of government should be to provide relief in the meantime. Believing that the government lacked the appropriate expertise to dispense such relief, colonial administrators instead felt that Aboriginal affairs would be best addressed by humanitarians and missionaries who could provide aid and education, particularly through the removal and institutionalisation of young Aboriginal people (Maciliwain 2006:41,43). The role of the government was reduced to periodic assessment of the condition of Aboriginal people, and the reintroduction of the ration distribution scheme.

Walker remained as Protector until 1867, although Edward Bate Scott briefly acted in the role in 1866 (Layton 1993:80). During this time, he increased the number of ration depots across the colony from 14 to 58, although there appears to have been never more than four operating in the

central/upper Murray region at the same time. Few authors have addressed the specific subject of cultural interaction on the central/upper Murray in these later years, although the ongoing role and faltering performance of the Protectorate has been examined on a broader level. Foster and Nettelbeck (2017:40) argue that the intermittent presence of Protectors in the decades that followed self-government resulted in administration that was both ineffectual in protecting Aboriginal people, or in alleviating the consequences of dispossession. Despite the rations distribution scheme—the cornerstone of government policy in the 1840s and 50s—being expanded after 1860, it was intended only to serve those in most urgent need (Foster and Nettelbeck 2017:34). The government expected that the majority of Aboriginal people should exist independently within the colonial economy or otherwise able to provide their own means of subsistence. By the 1870s the majority of 'rations' distributed on the Murray comprised items intended to assist Aboriginal people in exploiting traditional resources and included netting twine, fishing lines and hooks, and canoes (Foster 2000:20).

Walker was not replaced as Protector until 1881, at which time E.L. Hamilton, who had served as both the departmental clerk and then Sub-Protector, was finally appointed to the role (Foster and Nettelbeck 2017:37; Maciliwain 2006:50). Although resident Sub-Protectors had been instated in the state's Far North, and missions operated at Poonindie, Point McLeay (Raukkan) and Point Pearce (Burgiyana) (as well as at Yelta in Victoria just beyond the state border), the regional administration of Indigenous affairs on the Murray continued to be handled by police. Consequently, there were no institutions or officials specifically dedicated to Aboriginal protection, interests or welfare on the central Murray after the closure of Moorunde in 1856.

2.6.   Early pastoralism

After the mid 1840s the central Murray was perceived as a settled district (Pike 1957:300), and the frontier shifted to the west and to the north. By 1848 Protector E.B. Scott recorded:

> … fifteen cattle stations and seven sheep stations. The stations are generally from ten to twenty miles apart. (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/36)

The tenure history of the region is complex and given the geographic and temporal extent of this research it is impossible to present a fully comprehensive account. But a summary of several of the

more notable stations and longstanding lessees is presented here (figure 2 depicts features marked on pastoral lease maps of 1851).

With the exception of the settlement around Moorunde, possibly the earliest occupation of land along the river was associated with pastoralist John Chambers, who held a run south of the Marne River (between present-day Wongulla and Teal Flat), but frequently scouted for stray stock further up river with James Trussell, establishing outstations there perhaps as early as 1842 (Lamshed 1952:11; Woolmer 1986:15–16; see also GRS/11677). Eventually John and his brother, James Chambers, were to acquire much of the land around the Great South Bend, absorbing the lease held for a short period by John Walker in the south east part of the bend (Casson 1972:7). By approximately 1846 the head station, from which Trussell managed the run for Chambers, was located on the Cobdogla Swamp (after which the station was named) (Woolmer 1986:15), several kilometres south west of Lake Bonney[11]. Chambers' land also incorporated the Chowilla area prior to the leases being transferred to Richard Holland in the 1860s (see below).

Land to the west of Chambers' station was also taken up early. The first lessee of country between the North West Bend and Overland Corner was Thomas Wigley, who formed Thurk Station on the south side of the river, which was subsequently transferred to John Whyte in 1863 (Jackson 1978:2). It is believed that the first homestead was established around 1845, when the run may have been known as Teilbke (Glenie n.d.). Woolmer (1978:1) describes the location as "half a mile downstream from the [Overland] Corner", and Glenie states that some evidence of a later homestead built on the same site is still apparent on Banrock Station[12]. Wigley's Flat was an early and important crossing place on the river where Aboriginal people would help settlers cross stock and carts (Frederick Cutlack cited in Nicholls 2010:25–26; Ogilvy 1924:1); it was also one of the points at which the overland mail route crossed (Ogilvy 1924:1), and probably the location where two police were drowned whilst making a crossing in 1847. Aboriginal people were engaged in the recovery of the bodies of the men (*South Australian Register* 15/5/1847:3); interestingly, Woolmer (1986:20) states that Corporal William Wickham and Constable John Carter had been sent there to "quell disturbances among natives" although he provides no further detail.

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[11] The remaining chimney from the pug and pine building is listed as a State Heritage Place on the South Australian Heritage Register, Heritage Number 13764.

[12] Glenie's notes are undated, and possibly made some time ago.

Protector E.B. Scott's run was to the west of Wigley/Whyte's land, and although Scott had relocated to Moorna in NSW after 1856, he was still identified as the lessee of land 'inside' the North West Bend on 1865 pastoral maps (SRSA GRG35/402). Opposite Scott, on the northern side of the river, were Philip Levi and John Taylor. Levi was involved in overlanding stock from NSW and, according to his biography, was also involved in violent conflict with Aboriginal people at Lake Victoria (Cockburn 1925:29)[13]. Taylor's headstation was north east of North West Bend on the Burra Creek, on a route frequently used by travellers to move between the Murray and Burra once copper was discovered there in 1845. Various outstations extended east to Devlin's Pound, an area which became notorious in the late 1840s and 50s for cattle duffing (Woolmer 1978:10–12).

Another of the significant crossing sites was at Paringa, known in the earliest days of settlement as Chapman's Paringa Station and leased by Robert Chapman (Nicholls 2010:25). Like at Wigley's Flat, large numbers[14] of Aboriginal people would often assist Europeans in the crossing of stock and vehicles; one settler fondly remembered them as "a good lot, giving no trouble to the white man" (Ogilvy 1924:1). Paringa Station was later acquired by Daniel Cudmore in 1859 (State Library of South Australia [SLSA] PRG189). Cudmore, evidently accustomed to interaction with Aboriginal people, held the run at Yongala (near present day Peterborough) where he had had "problems with the wild blacks" but found the "tame ones useful" (Mary Cudmore cited in Ritchie 2000:95–97). Daniel's wife Mary, in a letter to her brother-in-law, described problems with theft and spearing of stock, but also stated that she had an Aboriginal woman do her washing for her, and that she would use them to run errands (Ritchie 2000:95). By 1861 Cudmore had sent his son James to manage the station at Paringa, by which time Daniel himself was taking up additional country around the Darling (Ritchie 2000:107).

The country adjacent and upstream from Paringa was settled by Edward Bagot in 1846 and known as Murthoo (Murtho). By 1847 Bagot had brought stock overland from NSW for his run on the Murray and an account of his journey was published in the *South Australian* (12/2/1847:6). Bagot commented on the distinction between NSW and SA with respect to the colonial approach to the 'management' of Aboriginal people, describing the "Adelaide government" as "humane and effectual" in contrast to NSW's "careless and inhumane disregard". The result, he claimed, was that

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[13] Levi was renowned as a successful and wealthy businessman, however his association with the Murray as a pastoralist appears to have been short lived.

[14] Sometimes as many as 100 (Ogilvy 1924:1)

"not a single aggression on either side has occurred" despite the violent and fatal confrontations in the region in and before 1841. By the early 1850s Bagot had acquired runs further upstream on the south side of the Murray opposite Lake Victoria, which became known as Ned's Corner, and extensive runs in NSW including Moorna (later leased by Scott), Kulnine and Wall. Police were briefly stationed in a hut on his property opposite Chowilla in 1851 awaiting the construction of permanent quarters that Bagot had offered to undertake (see below). Early occupation of the lease by Europeans is evident in a limestone cottage located just south of Murtho Creek which housed Bagot's employees and was constructed around 1859 (Wilkadene Pty Ltd 2019). The location, however, appears on pastoral lease maps of 1851 as Bagot's headstation (SRSA GRS/11677), suggesting that there was earlier settlement at the site.

On the northern side of the Murray, opposite Bagot's station and upstream from Chambers', land was probably first occupied by Frederick Handcock and Frederick Jones (see SRSA GRG24/6/22) but by 1851 only A.B. Cator's and Chambers' names appear as lessees (SRSA GRS/11677). An article published in the *South Australian Register* (3/6/1846:2) suggests that Handcock was 'gazumped' by Chambers in terms of obtaining a lease in the area whilst he was returning overland from NSW bringing sheep and cattle to stock it with. Later accounts of the journey of the *Lady Augusta* in 1853 (*South Australian Register* 16/9/1853:3) refer to Handcock's and Jones' abandoned house at Chowilla, and Handcock's death by drowning in the Murray in late 1847 was widely reported (*South Australian* 7/12/1847:3). By 1864 Richard Holland had obtained a lease for both Bookmark and Chowilla Stations which extended east of the country occupied by Chambers and included the land leased by Cator in the 1850s; these stations were subsequently transferred to Holland's stepsons, John and Robert Robertson (Australian Heritage Database n.d.).

George Melrose, like James Chambers, had originally established himself on the Murray near the Rhine, but in 1845 he took sheep to a station on Lake Victoria (Cockburn 1925:39). Melrose squatted on the land as it was unclear whether it lay within NSW or SA, but after occupying it for seven years the land was leased to John McKinlay (Cockburn 1925:39; Westbrooke 2012). While Melrose had been warned about potential trouble with Aboriginal people (likely due to events at Rufus River in 1841), his biography states that he "he never suffered from the blacks, nor was he ever much afraid of them" (Cockburn 1925:39). His wife was noted as being the first European woman in the region and somewhat of a curiosity as far as the Aboriginal people were concerned. (Cockburn 1925:39). John McKinlay settled at Lake Victoria for a short period during the 1850s

before the lease was transferred numerous times, often in quick succession (Westbrooke 2012:A55–57). By the 1870s the area around Lake Victoria contained numerous runs (Westbrook 2012:A57).
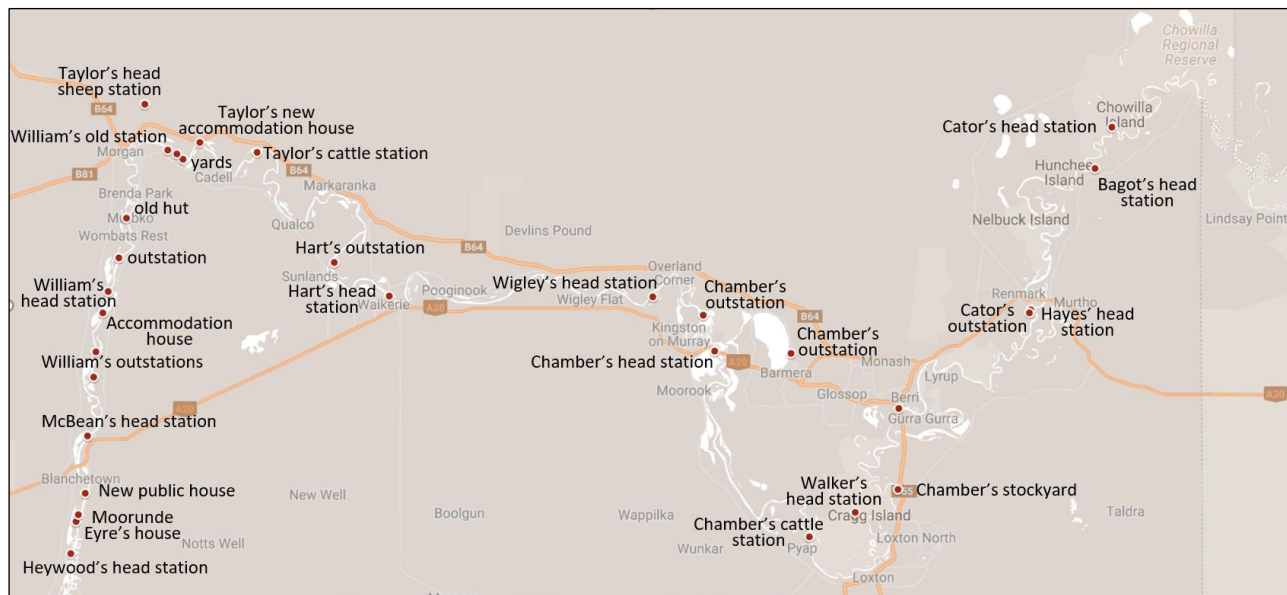
Figure 2: Features marked on pastoral lease maps, central/upper Murray 1851
Source: derived from State Records of South Australia GRS/11677.

2.7.   Police presence on the Murray

The first police station on the Murray was established at Moorunde when Eyre was accompanied there by two mounted constables and Sub-Inspector John Shaw of the Metropolitan Police in September of 1841. Court records suggest that crime in the area during Eyre's term as Resident Magistrate was limited to occasional cases of petty theft and minor assault committed by both Aboriginal people and settlers (SRSA GRG 4/133/00000/1), but police remained at Moorunde even after Eyre's departure. By 1849 quarterly reports of felonies issued for the colony by the Police Commissioner indicate that even fewer crimes were taking place in the region; indeed in the first quarter of the year the only incident recorded on the Murray was the theft of oats from the police themselves (*SAGG* 10/5/1849:216), and was committed by a European labourer (*Adelaide Times* 9/7/1849:3).

In 1853 the first Native Police constables were appointed to serve on the Murray. Influential Aboriginal people had been used as trackers since 1838 (Williams 1999:1632), but the first official

corps was not established until 1852, when Police Commissioner Alexander Tolmer announced the formation of the South Australian Native Police Force (Clyne 1987:120)[15]. Six Moorunde men were selected by Sub-Protector Scott, although the majority of this force appear to have been sent to the Port Lincoln district (Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:94; *SAGG* 2/6/1853:362)[16]. Failure of the corps to function as had been anticipated[17], combined with severe budget cuts, resulted in the force being disbanded just three years later (Clyne 1987:120,135; Nettelbeck and Ryan 2017:53; Williams 1999:1634). At this time, only a single mounted constable was stationed at Moorunde (White 2018:289). Continual flooding and deterioration of the barracks, as well as disputes with a neighbouring landholder, eventually forced the closure of the station in 1859. Police were subsequently relocated to Blanchetown (White 2018:289) which became, along with Overland Corner, one of the major ration depots on the Murray.

In the interim, the number of settlers along the Murray had increased and attempts were made to establish a police presence further up the river. Early calls by the press for an outstation near Lake Victoria (*South Australian* 11/7/1845:2), and requests for police protection at Chowilla (SRSA GRG24/4/1846/33; SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1003; SRSA GRG52/7/1846/271) were reiterated by Police Commissioner George Dashwood in his quarterly report of June 1849 (*SAGG* 16/8/1849:370). He cited "the ferocious disposition of the Aborigines" as reasonable grounds for a station at Ral Ral and the government approved £45 for the construction of a station building (White 2018:419). His views were in distinct contrast to those of Sub-Protector Scott, who continued to report amicable relations between Aboriginal people and settlers along the Murray, a fact which Dashwood later acknowledged (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/3:260). It is quite probable that concerns for the safety of settlers arose equally from the threat posed by convicts and European criminals who used the route to move in and out of the colony undetected. Indeed, in November of 1849 Scott advised the Colonial Secretary that construction of the station had been stalled as the men contracted to build it had been imprisoned for some type of misconduct (Scott cited in White 2018:419).

The proposed station at Ral Ral never came to fruition and the project was abandoned in 1851 (White 2018:419), by which time a plan to erect police quarters on Edward Bagot's sheep station at

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[15] Despite his own contrary recommendation, see Williams (1999:1634).
[16] Scott's first report for the first quarter of 1853 states that he had selected six constables, however this number dropped to 2 just three months later (*SAGG* 2/6/1853:362; *SAGG* 28/7/1853:498).
[17] The Native Police of the Port Lincoln district, who had been recruited from the Murray, were not useful as trackers and aides in the unfamiliar country (Clyne 1987:120; Foster and Nettelbeck 2012:94).

Chowilla had evolved (*SAGG* 23/10/1851:715; White 2018:108). This time Dashwood's motivation was clearly that of border surveillance; the situation of the station at Chowilla afforded police the opportunity to "keep an eye apon [sic] all persons passing backwards or forwards" on the overland route between the colonies and "act with rapidity and effect whenever they may be called apon [sic] to intercept fugitives, as well as to give information of the arrival of suspected persons from the other side of the border" (*SAGG* 23/10/1851:715). Whilst waiting for a station building to be constructed, two mounted constables were stationed in a hut at Chowilla Station from July 1851. They were withdrawn only a year later when considerable numbers of men were required to work on the gold escort from Victoria to Adelaide (White 2018:108,343). Although an attempt was made to rekindle plans for the station in 1854, these were again abandoned, this time in favour of establishing a station some distance to the west at Overland Corner (White 2018:108). It is unlikely that the outstation at Chowilla ever really constituted a depot for Aboriginal people during this period, although police from Overland Corner distributed rations from a store building there during the 1860s.

The development of the river boat trade after 1853 had resulted in the expansion of settlement at Overland Corner and the increased movement of people through the area, and concerns regarding horse theft prompted Police Commissioner Peter Warburton to establish a station there rather than at Chowilla (White 2018:343). It was opened in November of 1855 and was staffed by two mounted police and an Aboriginal constable whose duties principally involved patrolling the district and searching for people who became lost in the bush (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 28/2/1930). Rations were also distributed from this station, but not until the following decade. As the easternmost police outpost for many years, Corporal John Shanks and his wife remembered it as isolated and remote, even in the 1880s (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 12/12/1935:5). The economic depression of the 1890s and the retrenchment of a number of police forced the closure of Overland Corner as both a police station and ration depot in 1894.

In later decades police stations were established at Morgan, Renmark and Littra near the state border. Both the Morgan station (opened 1878) and the Renmark station (opened 1889) operated as rations depots until the end of the century (SRSA GRG52/2/00000/7). By the time these depots were in operation, rations were distributed rather infrequently and the role of the police, insofar as administration of Indigenous affairs was concerned, was to mediate between individuals and the Protector and dispense medical supplies. Police were also located near the border in NSW and

Victoria, but only from the early 1850s, when a station was established opposite the Darling Junction in Victoria in 1852, and at Euston and Moorna in NSW in 1854 (Hardy 1976:90). In NSW each of these detachments included two European troopers and five locally enlisted Aboriginal men (Hardy 1976:90).

2.8.   Education and institutions beyond the Murray

Many Murray Aboriginal people resided, either permanently or temporarily, in locations far from the river. Early government correspondence indicates that periodic seasonal migration of large numbers of Aboriginal people from the Murray to Adelaide took place at least as early as 1842 (for example see SRSA GRG24/6/1843/466), although whether this is a practice that evolved only after European settlement does not appear to have been fully established (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:2–3)[18]. What is clear is that colonists regarded this as a cause of significant conflict between Aboriginal groups, and the government went to some lengths to variously prohibit the arrival of Murray people in Adelaide, control their movement within the settlement and enforce their segregation from both the resident Kaurna and visiting Encounter Bay people. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

The motivation for the temporary relocation of Aboriginal people from the Murray has been attributed to seasonal weather patterns, the availability of European commodities, and simply because it may have been regarded as a curiosity amongst people from outlying areas (see Patton 2008:129). Yet probably one of the major factors that certainly influenced the movement of at least a small number of Murray people was the attendance of their children at school in Adelaide. The first school for Aboriginal children was established at the Native Location on the banks of the River Torrens opposite the Adelaide Gaol in 1839 (Foster 1990:22), although presence of the Murray children at that school is not indicated in government records until 1842. Children were both 'rounded up' from camps in the city (Eyre 1845:66) and escorted from Moorunde (SRSA GRG52/7/1850/424). Initially a day school, pupils were boarded from 1843 in an attempt to

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[18] See also Foster (1990:25) who describes the practice as commencing in the summer of 1842-43 once Eyre was established as a Protector at Moorunde.

separate them from the influence of their families (Foster 1990:24; Patton 2008:128)[19]. Conflict between Kaurna and Murray people permeated the school environment (SRSA GRG24/6/1843/495), and in 1844 a separate school was established at Walkerville for the education of the Murray children alone. Opening in April of that year, it catered for around 70 pupils, but was short-lived (Foster 1990:27). The building which housed the school was in a state of disrepair within a year and plans were subsequently made to combine the Native School and the Walkerville School in the same premises beside the Governor's residence, previously used as the Royal Sappers and Miners Barracks (Foster 1990:27). The new school, known as the Native School Establishment, commenced operation in January 1846 and could board 150 children, although usually accommodated fewer than half that number (Patton 2008:129). Attendance fluctuated greatly throughout the year as children left to accompany adults, continuing established seasonal movements. By 1852 attendance at the school had been reduced to seven (none of whom were from the Murray) and the school was temporarily closed and never reopened (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:4). Many pupils left as soon as they were old enough to marry (in their mid teens) and returned to the bush and 'traditional' ways of life (Patton 2008:129). There were also a number of pupils who were transferred to the Native Training Institution at Poonindie at Port Lincoln.

Poonindie was established largely on the premise that it was sufficiently remote from the Aboriginal communities from which its pupils came that children could be successfully isolated from the influences of their families and successfully 'civilised' (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:9). It also enabled authorities to isolate Aboriginal people from the more undesirable aspects of European settlement (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:9). Opened by Archdeacon Matthew Hale in 1850, Poonindie's first recruits were eleven pupils from the school in Adelaide, consistent with his initial policy to accept only children who had previously attended European schools (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:15). Many of the individuals who went to Poonindie, particularly in the early decades, were from the Murray district (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:16). However, the death rate at the institution was so high that few of the earliest residents survived beyond the first decade[20]. In 1869 Superintendent William Holden and Murray man, Daniel Limberry, undertook a recruitment drive

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[19] Seasonal variation in school attendance is described in Patton (2008:129), who argues that "Aboriginal adults still determined withdrawal or attendance, and so were important agents in their children's separation". Similarly, Brock and Kartinyeri's (1989) study of the removal of young people to Poonindie (including numerous Murray people) emphasises the agency of the Aboriginal people in question.
[20] In the five years to 1860, 50% of the residents at Poonindie had died (Brock 1987:120, citing Crown Lands and Immigration Office, Population and morbidity return for Poonindie 1860).

between Blanchetown and Wentworth, but it was largely unsuccessful (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:75). Poonindie operated until 1894, and on its closure the remaining residents were transferred to the mission stations at Point Pearce on Yorke Peninsula and Point McLeay (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:75).

3. Theoretical context

It is now more than fifty years since W.E.H. Stanner delivered his infamous *Boyer Lecture* in which he decried the erasure of Aboriginal people from Australian history and coined the phrase the "the Great Australian silence" (Stanner 1968). In the decades that followed, the legitimacy of the once orthodox view of the colonisation of Australia was ardently contested in both academic and public arenas. It is a field of enquiry that continues to generate considerable debate and one which archaeologists have made a significant contribution to. Whilst the precipitant for this thesis lies in the more recent preoccupation with locating the occurrence of colonial violence in the landscape, this research is situated, at a broader level, within the subfield of contact archaeology. Although it would be impractical to attempt a comprehensive assessment of the practice here, some of the main challenges are defined, and a summary of some of the more relevant and targeted enquiries is provided.

3.1. Contact archaeology and its challenges

The practice of contact archaeology is, essentially, the archaeology of the colonial encounter (Deetz 1988; Ligthfoot 1995). Its purpose is to not only determine the profound influence that European colonisation has had on Indigenous inhabitants, but to reinstate Aboriginal people as active participants in a process of cultural change (Williamson and Harrison 2002:5). In this vain, Silliman (2005:59) defines colonialism as a dual process involving both "attempted domination by a colonial/settler population" and the "resistance, acquiescence, and living through these by indigenous people". Importantly, he points out, it is a process that is ongoing and one in which Indigenous people "retain or remake identities and traditions in the face of often brutal conditions" (Silliman 2005:59). As such, the archaeological investigation of contact is underwritten by a central theme of power relations and necessarily involves the examination of objects and space that can demonstrate aspects of political and economic domination, cultural suppression and physical and structural violence.

Whilst the study of colonialism pervades many disciplines, the value of archaeology lies in its potential to reveal the experience of the colonised, those who were ignored in the written record or only included in a biased or minimal way (Deetz 1988:363; Lydon and Ash 2010:7; Silliman 2010:29). Put another way, archaeology provides an "alternative source of evidence that might

speak to Indigenous agency or at least question a documentary record that primarily reflected white perspectives" (Birmingham and Wilson 2010:18). Furthermore, the investigation of material evidence of the contact period enables an assessment of the 'everyday' aspects of the colonial encounter that are usually overlooked in the documentary record (Lydon and Ash 2010:7).

Despite the obvious benefits of applying an archaeological lens to enhance our understanding of the impact of colonisation on Indigenous lives, a number of challenges are inherent to the practice of contact archaeology. Perhaps foremost of these are the difficulties associated with the location and identification of sites (Barker 2007:9; Byrne 2003: 172; Godwin and L'Oste-Brown 2004:197; Litster and Wallis 2011:108-109,113). Contact sites encompass a range of places including missions and reserves, pastoral stations, conflict or massacre sites, travel routes, fringe camps and Native Police camps, which mostly have only a limited material dimension. Sometimes inhabited temporarily or seasonally[21], sites often lack permanent or semi-permanent architectural features which are comparatively easy to locate. Where there is an exception to this, for instance at mission stations, Aboriginal people often tended to withdraw from the constructed environment (defined in the first place by the colonisers), thus creating instructive but more obscure sites at the periphery (Birmingham 1992:185; Griffin 2010:165). Wolski (2000:119–123) describes a similar spatial phenomenon at a landscape scale whereby Aboriginal people sought refuge in remote or isolated areas that were inhospitable or undesirable in the eyes of European settlers. Likewise, his analysis of pastoral runs in western Victoria determined that the outstations at the boundaries of settlement were microcosms of contact and "may be the greatest resource available for the archaeologist attempting to access the early contact period" (Wolski 2000:117). A further difficulty presented by the investigation of contact sites is in distinguishing between the material remains of Indigenous and settler cultures (Byrne 2003:172; Harrison 2005:24–25). Typically, archaeologists have relied on flaked glass as a standard marker of contact sites, but this strategy is being increasingly challenged (e.g. Irish 2011:39) and Harrison (2002:48–49) suggests that archaeologists need to "develop more sophisticated ways of reading historic places to uncover the continued presence of Aboriginal people in the landscape".

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[21] For instance, people who were employed in the pastoral industry would return to regular campsites when work on the stations had finished for the season (Head and Fullagar 1997:421).

Aside from methodological difficulties involved in undertaking research into the contact period, archaeologists have struggled to find an appropriate theoretical framework within which to analyse patterns of material culture (Griffin 2010:156). There appears to have been a tendency to apply a binary approach that defines Indigenous responses to colonisation as demonstrating either resistance or accommodation (Birmingham 2001:370; Wolski 2000:373), or a tendency to assume that material culture simply reflects varying degrees of coloniser domination (Griffin 2010:156, after Paynter and McGuire 1991). As Lydon and Ash (2010:8) state "continuation of traditional practices was interpreted as resistance to European hegemony, and acceptance of elements of western behaviors and material culture was considered to be an accommodation to the daily reality of a disempowered ethnic group". This perspective places too much emphasis on resistance, particularly as a construct defined by one culture and imposed on another, and fails to allow room for alternate responses or behaviours (Birmingham 2001:370). As Schneider and Panich (2014:10) point out, albeit in the Native American context, power and politics are important interpretive frameworks but domination-resistance models risk portraying Indigenous agency as merely reactionary rather than creative. Furthermore, it also obstructs alternative representations of settler societies, whom Veracini (2010:77) describe as "traumatised societies *par excellence*" that experienced lingering anxieties of legitimacy and belonging.

Conceptual challenges also lie in the way in which we define the space of contact. Conflict, for example, took place in many locations and was not just confined to the frontier, which is frequently conceptualised as a finite boundary or zone at the edge of colonial expansion. As mentioned above, Aboriginal people frequently sought to remove themselves from colonised spaces, but as Byrne (2003:177–180) explains, this often involved finding room 'in between'. He uses the phrase 'gaps in the grid' to describe the more neutral places of the cadastral landscape where Indigenous occupation was tolerated; these comprised places set aside for forestry, town commons, future schools, churches, police stations, travelling stock routes, public recreation and linear strips along waterways to allow access to water. Interestingly, he notes that rivers were accessible places but also served as boundaries that could not be crossed (Byrne 2003:179). All these types of places were both within and beyond the frontier at the same time.

3.2.   Finding conflict in the archaeological record

As Weiner (2011:197) notes, sites of frontier conflict constitute an "important and impassioned category of contemporary 'sacred' place" for Indigenous communities across Australia, and are integral to both the commemoration of lives lost in brutal confrontation, and to the contemporary aims of social justice and the process of reconciliation. Attwood and Foster (2003) acknowledged the potential of a multidisciplinary approach almost twenty years ago, yet despite an expanding body of work, there is still only a limited number of published sources (Burke et al. 2016:146; Wiltshire et al. 2018:102). Determining the location of frontier conflict is perhaps even more acutely problematic than finding other types of contact sites. As Barker (2007:9) explains, archaeologists must rely on vague and sometimes incomplete documentary accounts which often purposely concealed the true nature of events (see also Attwood 2017:27; Foster 2009). Furthermore, the material remains of conflict sites, like many forms of contact site, are predictably subtle, dispersed, and overly susceptible to the diminishing force of cultural and taphonomic processes that other archaeological sites of longer term occupation can more readily endure (Barker 2007:12; Litster and Wallis 2011;111–112; Smith et al. 2017:258).

Emerging archaeological scholarship in this area has succeeded in providing insight into a number of aspects of frontier conflict in spite of these obstacles. As anticipated by Barker (2007), few archaeologists have been successful in unequivocally identifying the location of massacres (Litster and Wallis 2011:108; Smith et al. 2017:258[22]). Yet the notion that frontier conflict is only represented through instances of massacre or overt physical violence frustrates the aims of social justice and reconciliation to which Weiner (2011) refers. As a prelude to their analysis of violent conflict on the Murray prior to 1842, Burke et al. (2016:145) identify three different forms of violence: overt violence, clandestine violence and structural violence. Although their research is primarily concerned with those physically violent and overt encounters that frequently resulted in fatalities, the authors acknowledge that clandestine and structural violence were integral and routine aspects of the colonial process. They describe these latter forms as poisonings, forced

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[22] Litster and Wallis (2011:108; also Wallis 2019) have cited the work of Genever (1999) who located the archaeological remains of a massacre that took place at Irvinebank in Queensland in 1884 as the only published example of a site that was successfully located. Later research by Smith et al. (2017) also describes Wallis' work on the Woolgar site; the authors' own examination of a site at Sturt Creek in the Kimberley was inconclusive but provided strong supporting evidence to oral testimony of a massacre.

removals, sexual exploitation and disease (clandestine) and the consequences of introduced systems of governance and labour (structural).

'Elimination' of Aboriginal people from the landscape was the organising principal of colonial societies (Wolfe 2006:388) and the idea that this could be achieved through a range of strategies other than physical violence is not a new one. In challenging the notion that violence was limited to a physical or somatic experience, Galtung (1969:168,171) first coined the term 'structural violence' to describe the presence of unequal power and used it interchangeably with the expression 'social injustice'. Since then numerous authors have sought to conceptualise violence in a variety of ways and various terminology has been applied. Weigert (emphasis added, 2010:126) succinctly defines structural violence as "preventable harm or damage to persons … where there is no actor committing the violence or where it is not practical to search for the actor(s); *such violence emerges from the unequal distribution of power and resources* or, in other words, is said to be built into the structure(s)". Therefore, colonialism was, by its very nature, a violent endeavour (Burke et al. 2016:145).

The appropriation of land and the consequential dispossession of Aboriginal people resulting in the dismantling of their economic and social structures constituted a defining form of structural violence that, Grewcock (2018:12) argues, operated hand in hand with foundational (overt) violence to eliminate Aboriginal people from the colonial frontier. Despite the seemingly benevolent intent of the humanitarian approach to governance that followed this initial dispossession, the process of protection equally represented a structurally violent means of managing remnant populations that had suffered much from the consequences of disease and overt violence (Edmonds and Johnston 2016:2[23]). Specific elements of humanitarian governance that reinforced an unequal distribution of power included the fragmentation of the population through the removal of Aboriginal people to institutions, the exclusion of groups from zones of European settlement and attempts to control Indigenous mobility. The material signature of these strategies is exhibited in the fabric of mission sites, pastoral stations and documents such as maps and plans which depict the imposition of colonial order at the landscape scale. Consequently, the opportunity to evaluate this broader spectrum of sites and material indicators has resulted in

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[23] Edmonds and Johnston (2016) use the term interchangeably with infrastructural violence and bureaucratic violence.

researchers pursuing different avenues of enquiry within this field. To demonstrate the diversity of recent archaeological investigation of conflict, several case studies are summarised here.

Research focussing on the material representation of conflict within colonial architecture on the frontier has not so much contributed to our knowledge of specific events, nor helped to quantify violent exchanges between Aboriginal people and settlers, but nevertheless added to our understanding of the ideological frameworks in which violent events took place and continue to exist within collective memory. Both Grguric (2008; 2010) and Burns (2010) argue that the use of architectural features such as gun embrasures, minimised window apertures, and the strategic siting of buildings to maximise vantage and access constitutes a material signature indicative of conflict as a longstanding expectation of Europeans on the frontier across south eastern Australia. More recent analyses of comparable architectural types have concluded that much of this research remains conjecture without detailed corroborating documentary or oral accounts (Wiltshire et al. 2018:102), but what these buildings do is to provide physical reference points for the cultural or collective memory of frontier violence (Burke et al. 2017; Wiltshire 2018). Burke et al.'s (2017) examination of Cambridge Downs homestead in Queensland found that prior interpretation of various elements of the building, which had been construed as evidence of fortification, more likely represented the perpetuation of folkloric symbolism which has developed in a community whose identity has centred around pioneering endeavour. Likewise, Wiltshire et al. (2018:107) notes that a similar functional interpretation of the architectural features of a shearing shed at Tatiara Station in South Australia's lower Murray Lakes area perhaps reveals more about current Indigenous/European encounters than it does about historic events. Importantly, though, this research relies not only on European documentary accounts and local history/lore, but also references Indigenous experience and cultural memory.

Current investigation of Native Mounted Police (NMP) camps in Queensland focuses not so much on determining the locations of massacres or other brutal conflict but is instead concerned with identifying those accessory places that were a consequence of the regime of widespread violence on the frontier. In seeking a new indicator for conflict, this work has illustrated the vast spatial extent and sheer number of sites that can potentially provide material evidence for hostile encounters. The NMP, a paramilitary force that was established in 1849 to protect settlers and 'disperse' Aboriginal people, conducted activities from a series of base camps distributed across an expansive pastoral frontier. Research led by Bryce Barker, Heather Burke and Lynley Wallis has

revealed around 174 individual sites, with almost 25% of these having been accurately located and archaeologically examined (Wallis 2018; Wallis et al. 2019:8). In addition to demonstrating the considerable spatial extent of conflict, this research further provides insight into the intersection of cultures and evidence of the persistent and determined resistance of Aboriginal people (Wallis et al. 2019:8).

Other research on the Queensland frontier by Morrison et al. (2019) examines the characteristics of intercultural engagements and emphasises the diversity in forms of contact between Aboriginal people and settlers, rather than focussing solely on sites and specific instances of violent conflict. Their research significantly extends a large body of work by other scholars that has previously investigated contact at nodes of colonial settlement such as missions (e.g. Lydon and Ash 2010) and pastoral stations (e.g. Harrison 2002; Paterson 2003), and responds to Silliman's (2010:33) suggestion that contact archaeology should avoid an overemphasis on cultural relations at the expense of labour relations, which have formed the core of colonial experiences for Indigenous people the world over. In applying a structured schema for classifying the content of historical documents, Morrison et al. (2019) characterise the varied forms of landscape expropriation and contextualise conflict within a spectrum of encounters, particularly Indigenous interaction with a capitalist economy, thus providing a more lucid and holistic appraisal of the protracted process of culture contact and Indigenous dispossession.

This type of approach has been commended by Burke et al. (2016), whose investigation of conflict on the central Murray acknowledges the importance of assessing cultural interaction at a regional scale. Furthermore, they recognise that various forms of violence were inherent in the colonial process, although, in evaluating events which took place during the initial phase of colonial expansion along the Murray River corridor, it is those most overt forms of violence that they address. Their research also employs a spatial approach to elucidate a series of encounters that were concentrated in several locations along the route used by settlers to overland stock from NSW to SA, and which culminated in the Rufus River massacre in 1841. The authors argue that this initial violence, induced by anxiety and proprietary greed, shaped the tone of ongoing cross-cultural encounters, resulting in a situation that was self-perpetuating (Burke et al. 2016:170). In concluding, they question whether the nature of encounters changed once European occupation of the region transitioned from transient use by overlanders to the more permanent forms of settlement typical of the pastoral frontier (Burke et al. 2016:171).

Prior work by Sullivan (2014) has, in part, addressed the nature of frontier conflict in this subsequent period to 1900. Using spatially comparative analysis she discerned 'hotspots' where sites of conflict documented in archival sources appeared to be clustered, thus determining the archaeological potential of localised areas within the broader Murray region. This analysis was stratified using the application of confidence levels to deduce priorities for field assessment. The majority of these sites were created prior to 1842 and formed the subject of the paper by Burke et al. (2016), but Sullivan further identified post 1841 sites for Indigenous occupation, supposed inter-tribal conflict, and shared spaces such as the Old Coach Road. She concluded that contact sites were typically located on a riverbend, at a raised elevation and along flat terrain, and that sites that were not located on river banks tended to be associated with a lake (Bonney, Clover or Littra) (Sullivan 2014:72–75). She proposed that areas of little or no ground disturbance on the north western side of Lake Bonney, the area around Lake Littra (particularly on the southern side), and the Lindsay/Murray River confluence were all areas worthy of further investigation.

Consequently, this research aims to address in greater detail, the documentary record relevant to the post 1841 period on the central/upper Murray. It borrows from the methodology applied by Morrison et al. (2019) in dealing with large volumes of primary documents in an attempt to find patterns and recurring themes. As an exercise in the preliminary phase of archaeological investigation, it avoids the problematic practice of interpreting material aspects of contact and conflict, but acknowledges the risks involved in applying reductive theoretical approaches that oversimplify cross-cultural encounters as acts of resistance or accommodation. The ultimate focus of this research is to find spaces; as the afore-mentioned scholars have attested, the formulation, division and transformation of space was an intrinsic aspect of colonialism and cultural interaction. Edges, in-between spaces, and remote places are perhaps those most likely to yield evidence of Indigenous occupation in a contested landscape. Unfortunately, they are the very places that are often absent in the documentary record. To counter this circumstance, this research incorporates, where possible, not just text-based documents relating to Aboriginal people in the region, but also pastoral maps which inadvertently define the spaces that were left after European colonisation. It also focuses on ration depots, primarily because they represent known locations in the landscape and provide the setting in which much of what we know about contact in the region was documented. In the absence of other clues, these sites might provide the only recoverable evidence that is available.

4. Research approach

This research employs systematic documentary analysis in order to characterise the nature and locales of conflict and other forms of contact between Aboriginal people and settlers on the central/upper Murray after 1841. The methodology initially proposed involved four distinct tasks: an examination of the documentary record (predominantly government records, but also personal/private records held in public archives), compilation of any population data contained therein, the development of a correlating spatial representation of locales described in the documents, and an assessment of the nature of the dataset to determine the consequences for the Aboriginal population. However, due to the paucity of both population data and spatial information contained within the texts, this research ultimately focused on the qualitative aspects of the data.

The study area extends from Moorunde, to the state border and, in some instances, texts pertaining to Lake Victoria and the Rufus River were assessed. Importantly, though, this research does not provide a comprehensive analysis of primary documents that might be relevant to the latter area, as only records that were accessible within South Australia were consulted (primarily those held by State Records of South Australia, but also those within the State Library of South Australia and the South Australian Museum Archives). This area largely reflects a region first defined in the earliest phase of colonial administration which was referred to as the 'Murray' region and was distinct from the Lower Murray and Lakes region that incorporated Lake Alexandrina. The temporal extent of this research is defined by the establishment of Eyre as Sub-Protector of Aborigines at Moorunde at the end of 1841 until the end of the nineteenth century.

4.1. Analysis of the documentary record

Analysis of the documentary record involved the targeted investigation of a range of primary and secondary texts (Appendix 1). A large proportion of these comprised correspondence to and from South Australian government agencies, primarily the offices of the Colonial Secretary (later known as the Chief Secretary), the Police Commissioner and the Protector of Aborigines. These documents are now held within the State Records of South Australia archive (SRSA). In many instances, government reports were published in the *South Australian Government Gazette* (*SAGG*)[24] and in

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[24] Digitised and published online by the Australasian Legal Information Institute.

the free press, and these texts were used to supplement records from the state archive. Personal papers and diaries held by the State Library of South Australia (SLSA) and the South Australian Museum Archives, as well as contemporary accounts and reminiscences of early settlers that were published in newspapers, were also assessed for content. Files held within the South Australian Police Archives were reviewed, although primary documents were not preserved within this collection.

Indexes and registers for government correspondence were used to identify documents that were spatially and temporally relevant using keyword searches if indexes were digitised, or manually if they were not. Similarly, keyword searches were performed to identify relevant private records held within the SLSA, and digitised newspaper content made available online by the National Library of Australia. There are a number of methodological issues regarding the use of keyword searching to locate or identify historical information, chiefly the omission of particular words does not mean that the subject matter is not addressed in the text (Bingham 2010:229); for this reason many texts were included on the basis of rather ambiguous descriptions[25] and then manually assessed to ascertain relevance. Various other limitations arising from errors in indexing and the absence of identified records within the archive also restricted the amount of information that was available.

All identified documents were reviewed and if relevant, copied (scanned, photographed or downloaded) and in some cases, transcribed. Bibliographic software (Zotero) was used to develop a database for managing the data and applying a controlled vocabulary of new keywords (tags) defined by the author. These were systematically assigned to each text to indicate references to individuals (who), the location(s) that the text pertained to (where) and the topic or subject matter (what), (Appendix 2), thus enabling the recall and comparison of similar texts and the assembly of information around specific events, places or time periods. Subject matter keywords were assigned intuitively in the first instance. Once the keyword assignment was completed it became clear that consistent themes had emerged from the data and so keywords were organised schematically to facilitate analysis of information (Appendix 2). A number of functional keywords, such as 'Protector's report', were also developed to aid document organisation and retrieval. Ultimately,

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[25] For example, an item appearing in the Registers of letters received and sent—Police Commissioner's Office (SLSA GRG5/3) entitled 'Copies of depositions taken at Moorundie in case of a complaint against P.C. Cusack' was assessed on the basis that it pertained to events at Moorundie and referred to police activity.

607 texts were identified, however, quantitative analysis was not attempted due considerable gaps in coverage of the documentation and other limitations alluded to above.

4.2.　Compilation of population data

Quantitative population data for the central Murray was compiled in three ways; from census statistics, ration distribution information, and casual estimates gleaned from periodical reports and other documented observations. As might be expected, a number of severe but slightly different limitations are inherent in each form of data. Generally, the spatial resolution of data is poor; there is no guarantee, or probably any likelihood, that it represents a given population in its entirety; and in almost every case it provides a gross value for the total Aboriginal population without any consideration of individual groups or the territorial extent from which they hailed.

The major limitation embedded in both the ration data and casual estimates is that only individuals who were in contact with Europeans are represented. It is not unreasonable to expect that these values, particularly early on, strongly reflect the fact that not all Aboriginal people came in to be counted or receive rations; Eyre acknowledged this fact in one of his earliest reports (SRSA GRG24/1/1842/24), stating that at his first 'muster' only 25 Aboriginal people were present, although that number quickly increased to 124 on the third occasion that he distributed rations[26]. Movement of Aboriginal people between the river and Adelaide, or even just within the district, also frustrated government officials in their attempts to ascertain discrete numbers or estimates for populations at separate locations across the region. Furthermore, the data is also temporally and spatially sporadic. For example, robust and almost complete information is available for numbers receiving rations at Moorunde for a period of some six years to 1855, but this phenomenon is not repeated at other sites or for other time periods.

Population census data spans the remaining part of the century, from 1861 onwards[27]. Whilst the methodology employed to collate this information was arguably more consistent than the techniques used in returning ration data or general population estimates, figures are reported on a county basis. These collection areas (figure 3) span a much broader extent than the Murray district

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[26] Moorhouse also described the Moorunde population in terms of those 'in regular contact' and those in 'irregular contact'.

[27] Census was performed in 1866, 1871, 1876, 1881 and 1891, and continued in the following century.

or study area, which makes compilation of data difficult. For example, Counties Eyre and Burra are contiguous to the river, but include parts of the Mount Lofty Ranges foothills and township areas, which are outside of the study area. These counties have been excluded from calculated totals in this data, however in doing so, the population on the western side of the river southward of North West Bend/Morgan is omitted. Furthermore, there is very little evidence which describes who collected this data or the manner in which it was done, although it is highly likely it was collected from depots when rations were distributed (SRSA GRG35/1/1861/471). Additionally, population estimates and other references to population size were extracted from documents and compiled in tabular format, noting the date, collection area, size of population and source/author of the data. Ration data was compiled in a similar format, but a greater volume of data enabled this information to be graphed in order to detect patters of change.
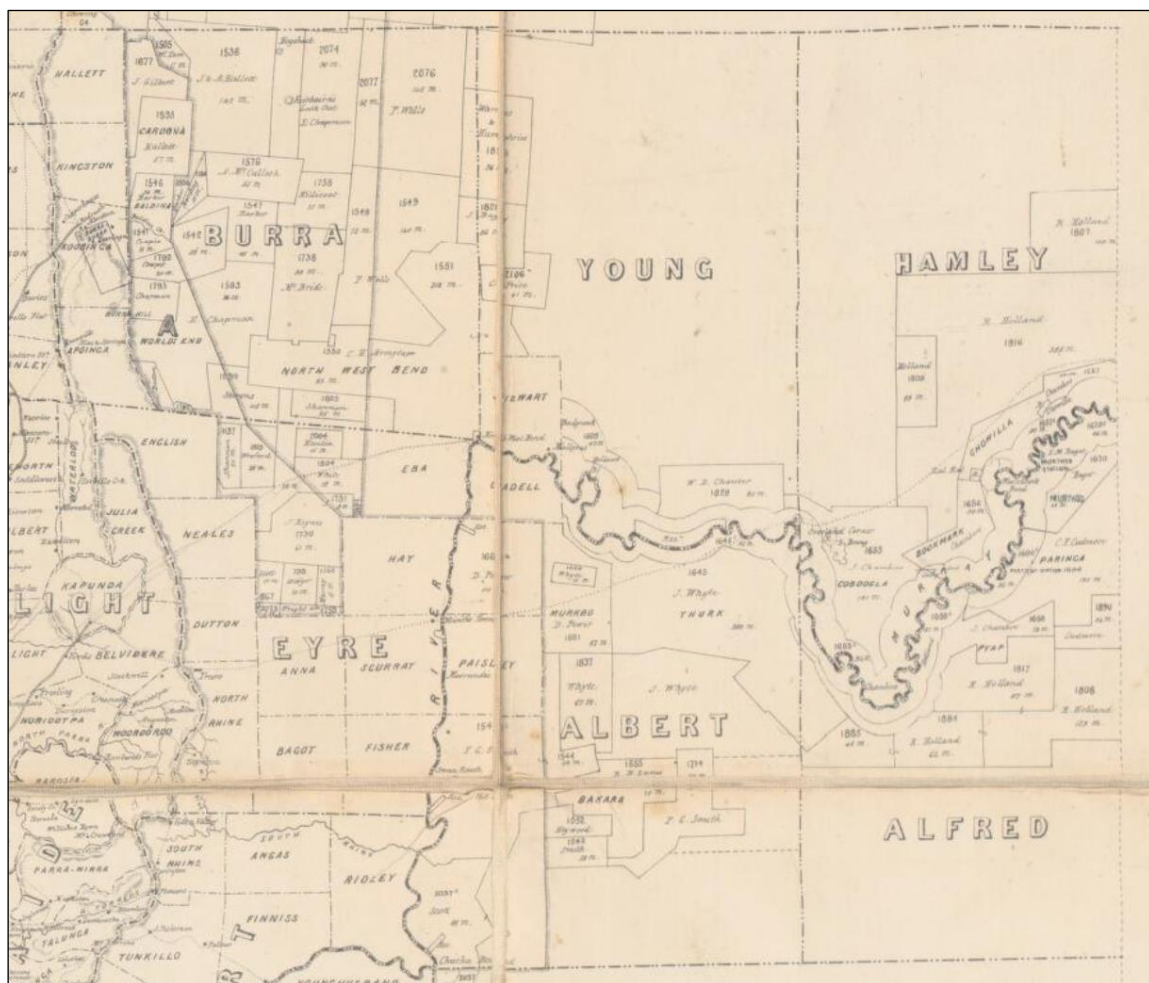
Figure 3: Showing counties used as collection areas for 1871 census
Source: Presgrave 1870; NLA http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj–231425821.

4.3.   Development of spatial data

Development of spatial information arising from this research involved two aspects. In the first instance texts were assigned descriptive keywords that signified a spatial location (see Appendix 3) and these were georeferenced. Unfortunately, many of the texts contained only very broad spatial references or none at all, bar the location of the author at the time the text was written. For example, many letters were written by government officials based in Adelaide and contained no other reference to location. Where this was the case, correlating spatial data were not defined. Ultimately, however, the resolution of the spatial information collated from texts was so poor that it was only suitable as a pictorial aid in providing a regional overview of points of contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans. Given both the paucity and granularity of spatial data derived from text based records, and also the inability of existing European settlement in the area to clearly reflect the distribution of settlers at the time of colonisation, point features from a series of 1851 pastoral lease maps (figure 2) were also digitised. This process helped to tie vague textual references to points in the landscape. Unfortunately, only the digitisation of the 1851 series was achievable within the scope of this project; further mapping of lease features from a later period would likely be beneficial in determining change in settlement over time.

5. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Analysis of letters, reports, government memoranda, diaries, press accounts and published recollections of early settlers, revealed a distinct and consistent set of topics relevant to understanding Indigenous/European contact on the river. The occurrence of topics in individual texts was flagged using the assignment of keywords or tags during data collection and registration, and these keywords were used to arrange texts thematically, bearing in mind the aims of this research (Appendix 2). Four distinct themes emerged from the data, and the evidence for these are presented below.

5.1. Rations, labour and exchange

A significant proportion of the information provided by the texts is concerned with various types of 'economic' exchange made between Aboriginal people and settlers. This constitutes, in a large part, the documents concerning ration distribution, but also the reports, correspondence and personal papers that document the ways in which Aboriginal people provided assistance to Europeans and engaged in labour during the pastoral expansion of European settlement on the Murray. Although the documentary evidence contained little information that might be used to substantiate the physical location of these exchanges within the landscape, most ration depots can be preliminarily anchored in the spatial dimension using deductive analysis of modern sources. Unfortunately, the location of exchanges occurring within the 'private' spaces of pastoral settlement could not be determined from the available texts, although it could be presumed that identification of homesteads and outstations (figure 2) goes some way towards achieving this.

Ration distribution in the 1840s and 1850s

One of the most prevalent subjects within the texts is that of rations. Whilst much of the correspondence takes the form of routine requests for supply or confirmation of receipt, information regarding the way in which the colonial government conceptualised this exchange with Aboriginal people can be gleaned from some documents. Aboriginal people on the Murray received rations at Moorunde (figures 4 and 5) between 1842 and 1855 (*South Australian Register* 26/3/1859:3), and then again in 1858 until the depot was shifted to Blanchetown (along with the

police station) in 1859 (figures 6 and 7). At Moorunde it appears that distribution took place at regular monthly intervals, whereas at other locations, like Lake Bonney and Chowilla, it was probably only sporadic during the 1840s and 1850s. In July 1847 Moorhouse instructed Scott to undertake distribution at Chowilla (SRSA GRG52/7/1847/314) and in the following year he was accompanied by a police constable to distribute rations at Lake Bonney (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1730). There are also reasonably frequent references by Eyre, Nation and Scott regarding their excursions to outlying areas, at which time they undoubtedly took rations for the Aboriginal people they visited. However, there is no clear evidence to suggest that these distributions took place on a regular basis. The only statistical information for a site other than Moorunde during this period is a single record for Paringa in 1853 (*SAGG* 02/11/1854).

Figure 4: Ruins at Moorunde, November 1913
Source: Zietz 1913, State Library of South Australia.

Figure 5: Court house or police station at Moorunde, c.1875–1900
Source: Anon. c.1875–1900, Moorundie Collection, State Library of South Australia
also appears in the Godson Collection, State Library of South Australia.

Figure 6: Buildings at Blanchetown, c.1870–1872; description reads "customs cottage (near river),
police station (partly hidden by trees)"
Source: Anon. c.1870–1872, Blanchetown Collection, State Library of South Australia
also appears in the Ewens Collection, State Library of South Australia.

Figure 7: Blanchetown Police Station, 1932; inscription on rear reads "Police Station, Blanchetown /
1932 / Reproduced in the Chronicle for July 28, 1932"
Source: Anon. n.d., Blanchetown Collection, State Library of South Australia.

The site at Moorunde now forms part of Portee Station and is listed on the South Australian
Heritage Register (Heritage Number 16294). The report of a site evaluation conducted in 1982 cites
correspondence to the Colonial Secretary (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/462) that described the condition
of buildings occupied by the police in 1846, and contains sketches made by several artists during
the 1840s and 50s that depict the arrangement of these structures (Heritage Conservation Branch
1982; see also Iwanicki 1988). However, early sketches made by overlander, and later Police
Commissioner, George Hamilton (figures 8 and 9) perhaps provide the only pictorial representation
of Aboriginal people at Moorunde that was ever produced. Preliminary archaeological investigation
of the area (Heritage Conservation Branch 1982) identified the location of various aspects of the
settlement and the foundations of what was thought to be the police station (figure 10). The
original police station at Blanchetown is now a private residence.

Figure 8: Distribution of flour at Moorunde c.1841
Source: Hamilton c.1841, State Library of South Australia.

Figure 9: The Murray River at Moorunde c.1841
Source: Hamilton c.1841, State Library of South Australia.
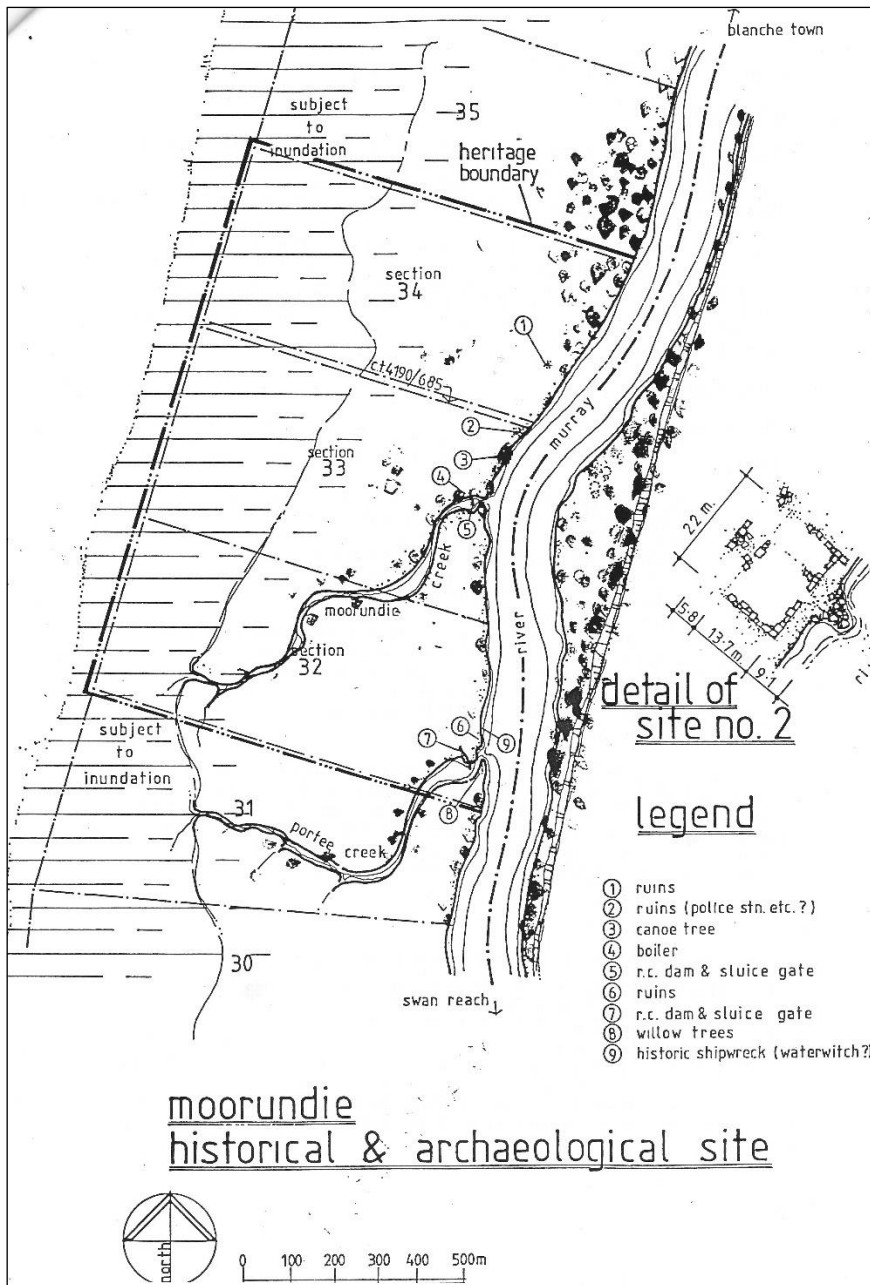
Figure 10: Moorundie historical and archaeological site plan
Source: Heritage Conservation Branch 1982.

Distribution during the 1840s and 50s was largely the responsibility of the Sub-Protector at
Moorunde. In 1846 pastoralists Frederick Jones and Frederick Handcock of Chowilla requested
police protection near the border, citing the 1841 events on the Rufus and the recent murder of
overlander George Bridger (see 5.4 below) at Mount Dispersion as reasonable grounds for either
the relocation of the station at Moorunde, or the establishment of a new police outpost (SRSA
GRG24/6/1846/1003). They concluded their letter by alternatively proposing that flour and

blankets would be an adequate substitute for police and requested to be provided with these so that they themselves could undertake distribution. The proposal was considered to be quite unorthodox and Moorhouse wrote the Colonial Secretary that:

> … the plan has always been opposed by the Government, for if one settler should be supplied there would be no end to the applications from other settlers. Should His Excellency find that the formation of another police station on the Murray is not, at present practicable, I would respectfully but strongly recommend that Mr Nation have permission to commence a monthly distribution of flour, in order to prevent hostilities between the settlers and natives. (SRSA GRG52/7/1846/271)

Almost a year later, the government finally sanctioned the distribution of flour at Chowilla. However, Moorhouse clearly stipulated that Scott, accompanied by a police constable, was to proceed to the Rufus to undertake the distribution, and that rations would not be provided to pastoralists (SRSA GRG52/7/1847/313). Written records of this, or any subsequent distribution, could not be located and it was subsequently impossible to determine where distribution may have taken place from. However, the assumption might be made that Scott established a camp near to Handcock and Jones head station (later Cator's), although in 1851, Bagot was providing accommodation to police in one of his huts (*SAGG* 23/10/1851:713) which was presumably on the opposite side of the river (see figure 2).

In 1858 the responsibility for distributing rations on the Murray was officially vested in the police (SRSA GRG5/2/1858/690). Although Overland Corner Police Station (figure 11) was constituted as a depot, there is little evidence to confirm that regular distribution commenced immediately. There was insufficient facility for storage of rations at that time (SRSA GRG5/2/1858/690), although requests were made to have store buildings repaired in 1862 (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/761), implying that rations were indeed kept there by that stage. Despite repeated instructions being issued to police regarding how numerical returns should be recorded (SRSA GRG5/2/1859/1121; SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791; SRSA GRG52/7/1864/76), the earliest record of this type for Overland Corner is in 1865 (*SAGG* 23/3/1865:266). This depot operated until the closure of the police station in 1894. The standing structure of the earlier station no longer exists, but the later building, constructed in 1877 (White 2018:344), is now a private residence.

Figure 11: Overland Corner Police Station, c.1890; earliest station buildings appear on the left, new station constructed 1877 on the right
Source: Anon. n.d., Overland Corner Collection, State Library of South Australia.

A store building was erected somewhere at Chowilla in or after 1859 (*South Australian Register* 26/3/1859:3), although this too was in a state of disrepair by 1862 (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/761). During this period police from Overland Corner patrolled the area, possibly distributing rations on a periodic basis, but by 1867 the responsibility for stores was transferred to the Sheep Inspector on the grounds that police had neglected their obligations (SRSA GRG52/7/1867/276). When the Inspector's cottage, adjacent to the Chowilla Station homestead (figure 12), was rendered uninhabitable due to constant flooding, he was relocated to a cottage near Lake Littra (Glenie 1998:29). A pug and pine building identified in a Department of Environment and Planning heritage survey in 1984 is believed to have been the original cottage used by Glenie between 1867 and 1871 (figure 13). The depot at Lake Littra (also referred to as Chowilla in the correspondence) continued to operate for several years (Glenie 1998:45; SRSA GRG52/7/00000/4), although was not believed to be a popular gathering place amongst Aboriginal people in the area (Glenie 1998:45). Correspondence suggests that the administration of stores reverted to police at Overland Corner after 1875, when the store building was destroyed by fire (SRSA GRG52/2; SRSA GRG52/7/1875/527 and various within SRSA GRG52/7/00000/4) and that rations were not necessarily distributed in the region again until 1889 when the police station at Renmark was established (SRSA GRG52/2; SRSA GRG52/7/00000/6). The cottage at Littra is listed on the South Australian Heritage Register (Heritage Number 60) and is situated in the Chowilla Game Reserve (figure 14). The original police

building at Renmark (figure 15) was situated on Ral Ral Avenue but the area has undergone
considerable modification since settlement.
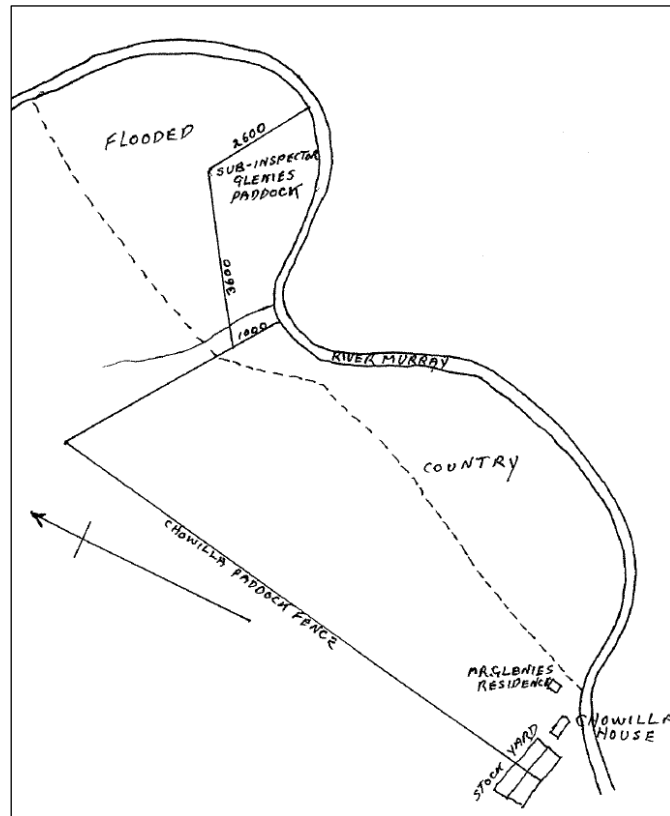
Figure 12: Location of original Sheep Inspector's site at Chowilla 1867–1871
Source: Glenie 1998:14.
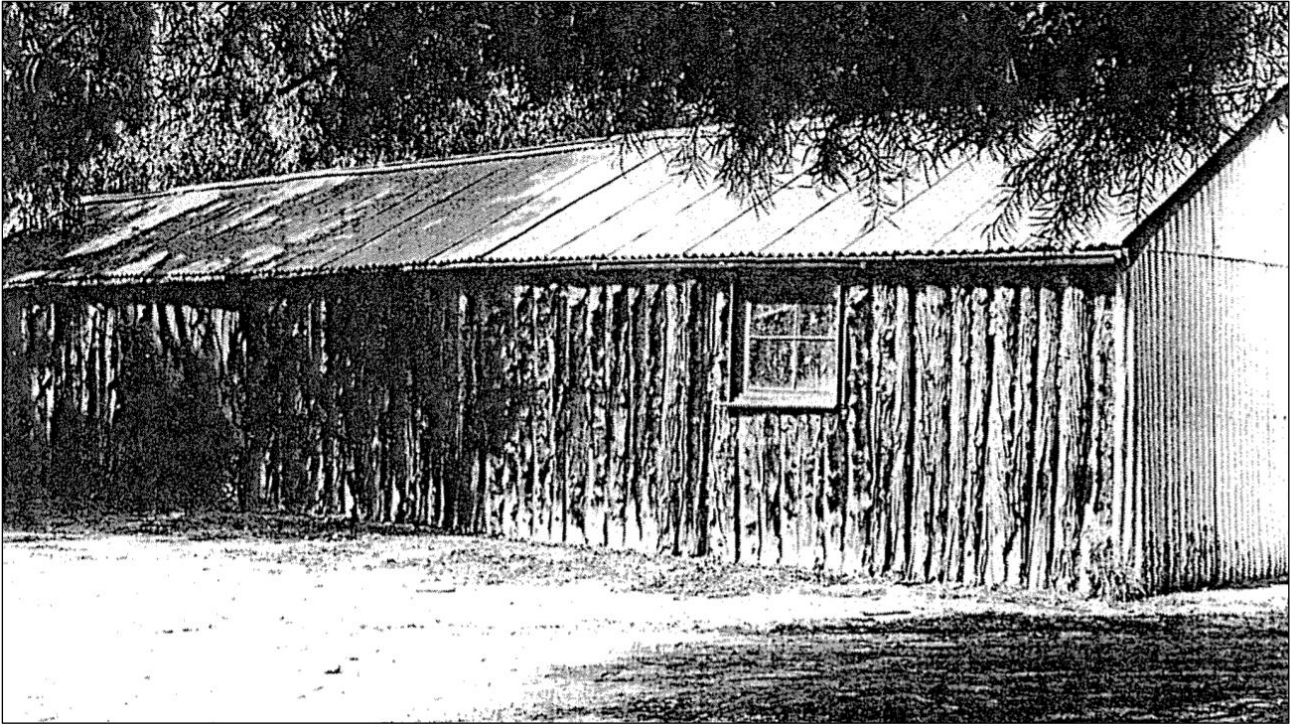
Figure 13: Pug and pine outbuilding – "Chowilla" Homestead complex c.1981
Source: Dallwitz and Marsden 1984.

Figure 14: Sheep Inspector's cottage at Lake Littra after restoration in 1992
Source: State Heritage Branch 1993:3.
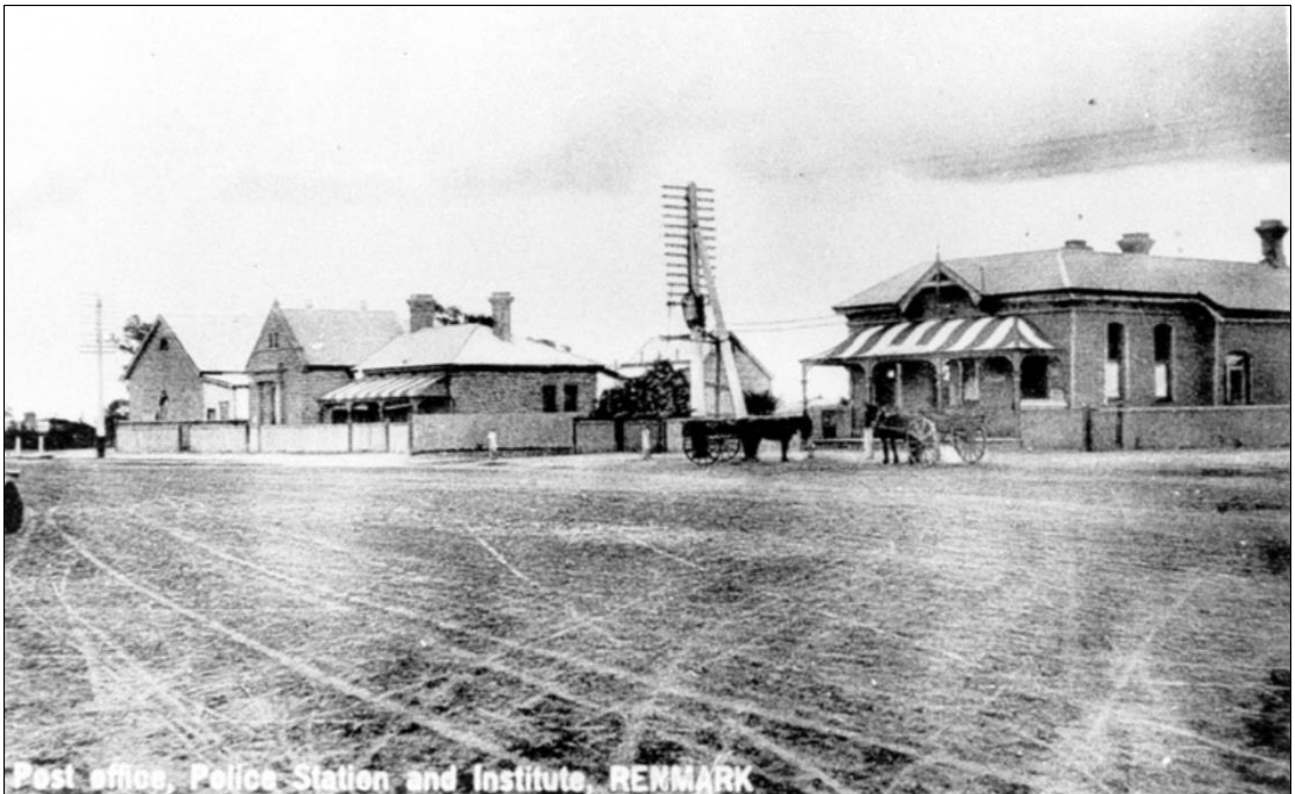
Figure 15: Renmark Police Station c.1910
Source: Anon. c.1910, Godson Collection, State Library of South Australia.

Rations were also issued from the police station at Morgan (figure 16) between 1879 (SRSA GRG52/7/1879/941) and approximately 1886. When Mounted Constable Turner notified Hamilton that seven Aboriginal people were camped at Morgan and requesting rations in 1888, he was informed that they would have to obtain their supplies from either Blanchetown or Overland Corner (SRSA GRG52/7/1888/535). The police station at Morgan was originally housed in the snag boat *PS Grappler* when it was first established in 1878, but the North West Bend Hotel on the river flat was converted to police barracks in the following year (White 2018:289). This building was situated on the flood prone river flats (adjacent the present day ferry crossing) and subject to considerable inundation in 1890, after which point police were relocated to Railway Terrace. The only remaining building on the original site is the morgue building which was constructed in 1886 (White 2018:290) around the time distribution of rations probably ceased, although the later building at Railway Terrace is now a private residence.

Figure 16: Police Station at Morgan c.1886; part inscription on rear of photo reads "Stables, Paull [?] Gate, Cells, Bush Outhouse, Police station and Residence"
Source: Anon. n.d., Morgan Collection, State Library of South Australia.

By the end of the century only the police stations at Blanchetown[28] and Renmark were still operating as ration depots in the region, and the role of the police, insofar as Aboriginal affairs were concerned, had changed considerably. The location of the ration depots throughout the region is depicted in figure 17 and tabled in Appendix 3.

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[28] In 1888 Hamilton advised police at Blanchetown that few stores had been necessary there in recent years owing to the proximity of the depots at Mannum and Murray Bridge (SRSA GRG52/7/1888/517). Several years later, though, he contrarily informed police at Mannum that they should encourage Aboriginal people to obtain supplies from Murray Bridge or Blanchetown (SRSA GRG52/7/1892/5).
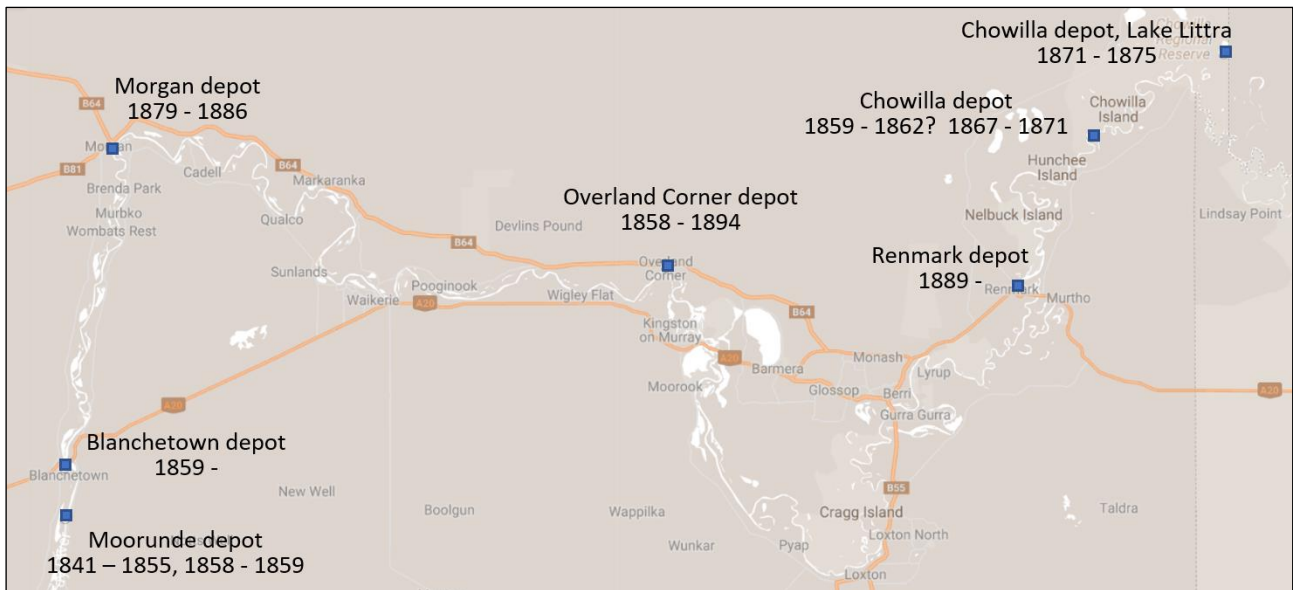
Figure 17: Ration depot locations and years of operation, central/upper Murray 1842–1900.

As Foster (1989) and Levi (2016) have noted, the government's motives for the distribution of rations changed over the years. When Eyre first established the depot at Moorunde he conceived the notion of ration distribution, in part, as a compensatory undertaking:

> ... as the country becomes more settled and the lands enclosed - their natural resources will no longer be left them and they will have a just right to expect that that deficiency should be made good to them by those who have been the cause of it. (Eyre and Grey 1985:21)

Encapsulated in the very same letter was a clear intention that the balance of power should remain with the colonists, and compensation through the provision of flour and specialist items, such as knives, fish hooks and tomahawks, was reserved for those who were deemed "most deserving". After Eyre's departure in 1844 there is little in the documentary record to suggest that rations continued to be perceived as remunerative.

The use of rations for conciliatory purposes, however, was more enduring. In 1845, shortly after William Nation had assumed the role of Sub-Protector at Moorunde, and was expecting the arrival of Aboriginal people from the Rufus, the Colonial Secretary wrote him that:

> … the Governor considers it so requisite to preserve a friendly intercourse with these
> men that he requests that you will have the goodness to take care that they receive the
> usual present of flour. (SRSA GRG24/4/1845/794)

When the notion of transferring the task of ration distribution to police was first mooted, Police Commissioner Finniss was in favour of the plan for several reasons, not least of all the belief that it would bring "the Natives into contact with the Police as friends and protectors"; he did, however, stipulate that it should be on the condition that "the law was not breached" and there was a fairly clear implication in his letter that his ulterior motive was to secure compliance (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:438).

A decade later Sub-Protector Scott was still emphasising the importance of negotiating peaceful relations through exchange:

> I venture most respectfully to suggest to His Excellency the Governor in-Chief, that it
> would be advisable if some fifty or sixty pounds worth of twine, fish-hooks, and line,
> were granted to me yearly for the purpose of making presents to the leading men of each
> tribe, with whom I am on intimate terms of friendship, and through
> whose instrumentality their people would doubtless be kept, in a comparatively
> crimeless state. (*SAGG* 27/12/1855:978)

It is worth noting that Scott had consistently reported on the already "crimeless state" of the Murray for the previous nine years, with little indication that specific negotiations with leading men had been a necessary requirement in achieving this. Given the impending closure of the depot at Moorunde, perhaps Scott's objective was to secure a surplus of items before his departure in what was potentially a period of uncertainty for the Aboriginal people of the area. It is also interesting to note that Scott made the very same request for fishing gear in the previous year, but intended to issue it to individuals in return for their compliance:

> … I would most respectfully suggest to His Excellency, that fish-hooks, lines, and twine for
> nets, be supplied, to give as presents to those who conduct themselves in an orderly
> manner; and that instead of fifty blankets per annum (an inadequate supply for a
> population of some five hundred aborigines), the number be increased to, at least, one
> hundred. (*SAGG* 25/5/1854:412)

Conditions for receiving rations were frequently imposed on Aboriginal people. In 1843, Murray people who visited Adelaide were told that their rations would be withheld if they did not return to their own district (SRSA GRG24/4/1843/82; SRSA GRG24/4/1843/132; SRSA GRG52/7/1843/93). By 1849 it seems that the government had tacitly accepted the presence of Murray people and other Aboriginal groups in Adelaide, but drew the line when they persisted in engaging in conflict:

> I cannot at present recommend any flour for the Encounter Bay Natives. A fortnight ago they came to Adelaide and in spite of all remonstrance and advice, attacked the Murray natives with spears, intending to drive them from Adelaide – Had it not been for the interference of the Mounted Police there would have been eight to ten lives lost. I would respectfully recommend that the Corporal in charge of the Encounter Bay station should be informed that the flour has been withheld in consequence of that tribe having come up to Town and commenced an attack upon the Murray Tribe in the immediate neighbourhood of Adelaide. (SRSA GRG52/7/1849/382)

Although not a precondition until later years, illness ensured that an individual received rations, presumably on request, and not meted out at the will of the government at the monthly issue. The 1850s appears to have seen an increase in the incidence of disease on the Murray and Scott frequently made a point of "reserving a portion for the sick and destitute" (*SAGG* 15/7/1852:424). For example, in 1853 he reported that "sick aborigines are always attended to when they apply to me for relief" (*SAGG* 2/6/1853) and in 1855, "twenty sick people have had small presents of flour" (*SAGG* 8/3/1855).

Rations were also used as a means of securing compliance, although the government often framed this as acts of 'reward'. During the mid 1840s those parents who permitted their children to attend the school for Murray children at Walkerville were issued with blankets (*SAGG* 17/7/1845:173; SRSA GRG52/7/1845/185). However, strict measures were imposed to ensure that Aboriginal people did not benefit from indiscriminate distribution and Moorhouse was required by Governor Young to write letters of recommendation for individuals to present to Sub-Protector Nation at Moorunde in order to acquire their blanket (SRSA GRG52/7/1845/196). The schools in Adelaide ceased operation by 1852, but blankets were still being used at that time as 'presents' for Aboriginal people at Port Lincoln in return for sending their children to the training institution there (*SAGG* 15/7/1852:424).

Aboriginal people were also rewarded for providing assistance to Europeans. When Charles Sturt required letters to be returned to Adelaide during his 1844–45 expedition, Sub-Protector Nation issued two men from the Rufus with "two pounds of flour a day each whenever they chose to apply for the same" (SRSA GRG24/6/1845/752). The grounds for reward in some other instances were more peculiar. In a letter to Scott in 1850, Moorhouse wrote:

> Regarding your proposal of having the dogs destroyed, and offering to compensate the owners with flour, I beg to inform you that the Lieutenant Governor sanctions 6 lbs of flour being given to the owner of every female dog who consents to have the animal destroyed. (SRSA GRG52/7/1850/443)

There is no evidence to indicate whether the proposal was either implemented or effective in achieving Scott's objective.

Changing nature of distribution—1860s to 1900

When distribution recommenced on the Murray in 1858, several years after the dissolution of the protectorate, it appears that the government intended that the function of rations should change considerably. The Crown Lands and Immigration Office, which had become the body responsible for administering Aboriginal affairs, made it clear that rations were to be reserved only for those who were suffering from illness:

> The Commissioner does not wish issues to be made to able bodied natives if there is reason to believe they can get work or can obtain a subsistence by fishing or hunting. Tobacco too should only be given by way of payment for services rendered. In case of sick or infirm natives however nothing should be withheld which can [….] add to their comfort or conduce to their recovery. (SRSA GRG5/2/1859/1121)

Documents pertaining to Aboriginal people on the Murray between this time and 1863 are virtually non-existent, although there is evidence that supplies were sent to Moorunde (SRSA GRG35/1/1859/210) and Blanchetown (SRSA GRG35/1/1860/1398) and were intended for Overland Corner and Chowilla, as indicated by police correspondence regarding the inadequacy of storage buildings (SRSA GRG5/2/1858/690; SRSA GRG5/2/1862/761). If rations were distributed, the

conditions under which this occurred remain unclear. In 1863 and 1864 there seems to have been some effort taken to provide articles such as tomahawks, fishing line and hooks, netting twine, pots, pannikins and spoons, as well as blankets, flour, rice, tea, sugar and tobacco (SRSA GRG52/7/1863/6,8,18; SRSA GRG52/7/1864/112,127,132,135,139). In the following year, the government commenced issuing shirts, cloth, needles and thread, and axes (SRSA GRG52/7/1865/304). The distribution of these types of items arguably reflects the intentions set forth by the Commissioner in 1858. By 1865, Protector Walker reported that:

> Corporal Bentley endeavors as far as his power or influence extends, to get the natives to work for the settlers, and this many of them do at the lambing and shearing seasons. He was obliged, shortly before my visit, to issue rations for a time to a number of able-bodied men, and in consequence of the flooded state of the river, they were unable to obtain fish: but as a rule no food is given to the healthy and strong. (*SAGG* 01/2/1866)

These intentions were enshrined in explicit written instructions issued to the police in 1867 (SRSA GRG52/1/1867/305), which were brought to the specific attention of Corporal Ewens at Blanchetown (SRSA GRG52/7/1867/192), perhaps suggesting that he had a particularly liberal approach to distribution. Blanchetown appears to have received fewer supplies than Overland Corner or Chowilla (SRSA GRG52/7/00000/2), although this might be attributed to a lower population[29] or the proximity of the depot at Long Island (Murray Bridge). Furthermore, the depot was provided with little in the way of non-food items, unlike the more remote stations on the Murray.

With food rations reserved only for the sick and infirm, demand seems to have waned towards the 1870s and 80s. Correspondence recorded in the letter books of the Protector of Aborigines (SRSA GRG52/7/00000/3; SRSA GRG52/7/00000/4) indicates that the depots at Overland Corner and Chowilla were beset by difficulties in acquiring adequate supplies. Items often went missing en route to the depots (SRSA GRG52/7/1871/136; SRSA GRG52/7/1874/318, 381), sometimes having been sent elsewhere or perhaps having been pilfered by contractors (SRSA GRG52/7/1867/353). The quality of stores was also questionable. Flour described as 'seconds' was often used during the 1860s (e.g. SRSA GRG52/7/1864/202; SRSA GRG52/7/1865/357) and there is repeated

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[29] But very little population data was recorded by police during this period, so no firm conclusions can be drawn.

correspondence between Sheep Inspector Glenie at Chowilla and the Protector's office regarding the inferior quality of the flour and tea supplied to Chowilla towards the end of the decade (SRSA GRG52/7/1869/832,839,847). Aboriginal people at Overland Corner were refusing to eat the flour provided there in 1874 (SRSA GRG52/7/1874/339,348), although there is some suggestion that this was because it had deteriorated in storage. By 1881, when the flour at Overland Corner was again deemed to be unsuitable for human consumption, Hamilton authorised its disposal and stated that no further supplies would be issued as there had been so little requirement for it[30] (SRSA GRG52/7/1881/564). Despite this, food rations continued to be stored at Overland Corner (SRSA GRG52/7/1884/987) and other depots for at least several more years, but by the 1890s it appears that police purchased small quantities locally only as required. The police station at Overland Corner closed in 1894 and by the end of the century the distribution of both food and non-food rations played a lesser part in the role of police stationed at Blanchetown, Morgan and Renmark.

Instead, the Protector's correspondence indicates that the procurement of canoes became one of the chief tasks of police in overseeing Indigenous welfare in the 1870s and thereafter. In 1873 fourteen canoes were purchased for Aboriginal people on the Murray, although the majority of these were retained for individuals in the Lower Murray and Lakes district and only two were sent to Blanchetown (SRSA GRG52/7/1873/296). At the end of the decade police requested the supply of two further canoes at Blanchetown, as well as funds for repairs several months later (SRSA GRG52/7/1878/777; SRSA GRG52/7/1879/929,939). Requests were also made for canoes to be supplied at Overland Corner (SRSA GRG52/7/1879/82), and eventually Chowilla (SRSA GRG52/7/1888/537) and Renmark (SRSA GRG52/7/1890/769[31]). Ongoing issues with the construction, supply and repair of canoes appears to have been a regular concern for police at all stations throughout the 1880s.

Like other European items that had been distributed to Aboriginal people over the years, it appears that only "the old and infirm and those who have families depending upon them for support" were entitled to receive canoes (SRSA GRG52/7/1882/670). Whether Aboriginal people were not inclined or able to construct their own canoes is not addressed in the texts pertaining to the central/upper

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[30] Although in 1884, Mounted Constable Stewart appears to have again reported that the flour at Overland Corner was unfit for human consumption, suggesting that further supplies had been issued (SRSA GRG52/7/1884/987). It's worth noting that Hamilton made similar comments about the lack of demand for flour at Blanchetown in the years up to 1888, when he received an account from M.C. Shanks for 100lb of flour (SRSA GRG52/7/1888/517).

[31] Here the term boat is used, rather than canoe, in other texts the terms are used interchangeably. The significance of this, if there is any, is not clear.

Murray, but Sub-Protector George Mason who was stationed on the lower Murray claimed that settlers "complain[ed] very much at the natives intruding on their land, and destroying their finest trees by taking off the bark for canoes" and requested that the government supply them (*SAGG* 7/2/1860:126). By 1889 correspondence suggests that "able-bodied" individuals may have been able to make an application for a canoe, but were expected to contribute some of the costs of construction (SRSA GRG52/7/1889/653; see also SRSA GRG52/7/1891/896; SRSA GRG52/7/1899/472). Funding for canoes appears to have declined towards the end of the century and police increasingly made arrangements for the transfer of canoes to a new individual when someone died (e.g. SRSA GRG52/7/1891/882). When Mounted Constable Schmidt. who was stationed at Morgan, requested a new canoe for 'Scrubber', who had recently returned home from hospital, Protector Hamilton wrote:

> The funds at the disposal of this Office during the current year will not permit of any new Canoes being given to Aborigines, and they should be more careful in keeping their boats in repair – a couple of gallons of Tar can be procured for Scrubber's Canoe if he makes a proper use of it. (SRSA GRG52/7/1898/367)

Whilst the degree of government support to the Indigenous population on the Murray greatly diminished between the inception of the rations distribution scheme in 1841 and the end of the century, the material nature of those items that were supplied in the latter part of the period makes them more amenable to detection in the archaeological record. Although it's unlikely that material traces of ration distribution would survive to the present day, given the significant modification of most of the sites described here, the likelihood of finding evidence of the exchange is somewhat improved by the greater durability of items such as axes, tomahawks, spoons, pannicans or quart pots over and above European foodstuffs like flour. Perhaps the greatest complicating factor, however, is that these items would have been removed to Indigenous occupation areas, the locations of which were not identifiable through an analysis of these primary records.

Aid, assistance and labour: Aboriginal contribution to European settlement

Although there are numerous texts from the 1840s and 50s that describe the ways in which Aboriginal people were expected to participate in various commercial undertakings (e.g. wood-getting, fishing, hunting) and find employment in traditional European occupations (e.g. shearing, domestic service), this subject is largely absent from the documentary record after the 1860s. Perhaps once Aboriginal people became entrenched within the European economic system, they ceased to be of interest to government officials or other European commentators of the period. Earlier documents, however, reveal considerable information that suggests that Aboriginal people facilitated European settlement on the Murray to a greater extent than they challenged it. What is also apparent is that this was not necessarily effected entirely through formal labour arrangements imposed by Europeans, but also through various forms of assistance, exchange and trade through which Aboriginal people maintained some autonomy.

As adept swimmers and fishers who were familiar with local topography and able to negotiate the river in canoes, Aboriginal people possessed a valuable set of skills that Europeans lacked. Even the very first Europeans on the scene, those pastoralists who overlanded stock from New South Wales and were often geared for hostility, benefited greatly from Aboriginal assistance. Of crossing the Darling at its junction with the Murray in 1847, Thomas Shaughnessy Jr wrote:

> There were about 400 blacks camped here at the crossing place. We shot a bullock for
> the blacks. They then commenced to take our things across the Darling River in canoes.
> The blacks tied two casks, mouth down on the centre of the dray and pulled them across
> with ropes. We swam the cattle and horses across and killed another bullock for the
> blacks. (Shaughnessy 1847)

Another pastoralist, John Keighran, had been "informed the natives were very troublesome, but … found them quite the reverse" (*South Australian Register* 30/12/1848:4). Crossing the Murray in the same area as Shaughnessy a year later, he described the following scene:

> They then asked me what I would give them to convey my property to the opposite bank.
> I soon struck a bargain with them, and gave them a portion of flour, beef, tea, sugar, and
> three fishing hooks each. I also allowed them the use of our cooking vessels; the number
> of natives so employed and remunerated by me, being twenty-five. No white men could

have laboured more willingly or have done more than they did, so that they well earned
what I gave them. They kept continually swimming backwards and forwards, rendering all
the assistance they could; and best of all, there was nothing missing when we started the
next morning… (*South Australian Register* 30/12/1848:4)

John Schell (Ogilvy 1924:1) likewise remembered Chapman's Crossing at Paringa in the 1850s, a
shallow part of the river where crossing was easier, but also facilitated by Aboriginal people who
camped on the Renmark side and were willing to help in return for flour and tobacco. His recall of
the situation suggests that this was a longstanding affair and it is possible to imagine that either or
both the camp and the crossing were in part situated to take advantage of a mutually beneficial
arrangement.

Local knowledge of the river and skill in the water resulted in Aboriginal people being useful to
settlers in various other ways. In 1853 Francis Cadell relied on Aboriginal men at Chapman's Station
and near the Darling to pilot the *Lady Augusta* through difficult waters. When settlers drowned in
the river, Aboriginal assistance was often necessary to recover the bodies (e.g. SRSA
GRG5/2/1858/231; SRSA GRG5/2/1859/213; SRSA GRG5/2/1863/1809) and there were probably
many other occasions where they saved settlers that went unrecorded. Sarah Smith (nee Kerridge)
recalled how a young Aboriginal boy known to the settlers as Satan saved Billy Jackson from
drowning when his cart tipped during a river crossing near Mount Hancock:

Bob could not swim so he bounced the little black boy to save [Billy's] life. But Satan only
said "Wait a bit, wait a bit. Him too much fight yet." Then, when he saw him almost sink
for the last time he rushed in, got him by the back of the neck, and brought him safely to
land. He afterwards said "Supposem me go first time. Too much hold on. Then two fellow
tumble down [die]." (Smith 1931:7)

Trade of fish and game for European items constituted an important and much repeated exchange
between Aboriginal people and settlers on the Murray, particularly in 1840s and 1850s. Allen
(1853:22) describes more than one instance where the crew and passengers on the *Lady Augusta*
were approached by Aboriginal people offering fish (also *Adelaide Times* 16/8/1853:2). Likewise,
women of the Kerridge and the Napper families, who settled near Lake Bonney in the 1850s, both
recall Aboriginal people bringing food to trade with Europeans. Sometimes these exchanges were

welcomed; "They kept us supplied with duck, fish and kangaroo … we gave them a little tobacco, tea and sugar" (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 20/12/1929:6), but other times they were not; "The blacks would bring us fish and ducks, but would want so much in return in the way of clothes that it was almost impossible to satisfy them" (Smith 1931:5). In later years Aboriginal people at Blanchetown participated in a more formalised trade arrangement, providing fish and game for dealers who supplied settlers in mining towns. In his report of July 1865, Police Trooper Ewen's wrote:

> They have been very industrious lately, fishing and shooting for dealers from Kapunda,
> Tanunda, and the Burra, for which they have been very well paid. The Burra dealer has
> given 10s. per cwt. for fresh fish. (*SAGG* 1/2/1866:718)

Several schemes to exploit Indigenous labour were proposed in the 1840s and 50s, although it is difficult to determine how successful these were; none appear to have been long-lived and others were possibly never implemented. An early report from Moorhouse describes Murray people collecting 'mimosa' (acacia) bark on the Adelaide Plains in the summer of 1844 (*South Australian Register* 17/1/1844:2). Several years later a proposal to have them gather scrub wood for charcoal production in the Murray district does not appear to have come to fruition (SRSA GRG24/4/1851/320). In the 1850s, just prior to the introduction of the steam trade on the Murray, it was suggested that Aboriginal labour might be used in the removal of debris from the waterway[32] (SRSA GRG24/4/1852/500), however, in the annual report for 1852 Scott noted that the snags had all been submerged by flood waters and that it was a "very unfavorable time to employ the aborigines for the purpose of removing obstructions from the bed of the river" (*SAGG* 23/12/1852:772). Similarly, Aboriginal people were also expected to contribute to the stockpiling of wood for fuel. In 1853 Sub-Protector Scott wrote that Aboriginal people had cut and stacked six or seven tons of wood in preparation for the first voyage of the *Lady Augusta*, but without a team of bullocks he was unable to supply any more as:

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[32] A task that was also allocated to Native Police, but there is no documentary evidence to demonstrate that it was one that they actually undertook.

> … the labor of carrying it, a distance of perhaps half a mile, is very great, and occupies
> considerable time; and, moreover, the natives are not equal to the task, the quantity of
> wood required being considerable. (*SAGG* 28/7/1853:498)

There is little evidence to suggest that this continued on a long term basis.

Pastoralists were probably more successful, on the whole, at negotiating labour arrangements with Aboriginal people. The diaries of James Hawker (1841–1845 in SLSA PRG209), who settled near Moorunde in the 1840s, reveal the myriad of ways in which both Moorunde and Rufus men assisted in procuring native game and helped to establish his farm. Hawker frequently enjoyed fishing and hunting trips with them (1843:81,85,88; 1844:98) and relied on their help to herd his sheep and pigs (1844:92,110,112), construct huts and yards (1843:79; 1845:133), run errands (1844:95), work in the garden (1843:83) and cut canoes for his use (1843:79; 1845:96). Periodic reports from Eyre, Scott, Moorhouse and Walker contain repeated references to the 'employment' of Aboriginal people as shepherds, stockmen, horse-breakers and labourers during harvest (e.g. SRSA GRG24/6/1844/1416; *SAGG* 30/1/1851:79; *SAGG* 08/3/1855; *SAGG* 1/2/1866:718), although it is clear that they didn't necessarily receive wages and were sometimes paid simply with food or clothing (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/225; SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1811.5; SRSA GRG52/7/1868/597). Aboriginal women also gained employment in settler households, although government documents contain few references to this. But the recollections of early settler's record work done by women as wet nurses (Smith 1931:7) and domestics (Nott 1924 in South Australian Museum AA238).

In the 1850s, with the onset of the gold rush, Aboriginal labour was seemingly indispensable to the pastoral industry when many Europeans abandoned runs in South Australia in favour of the prospect of success on the Victorian gold fields. Scott reported in May of 1852:

> The squatters of the Murray can also bear witness to the great and important services
> the natives have rendered them during the late scarcity of labor; and, on several
> occasions, natives have been left in sole charge of the squatters' property; and it is
> gratifying to state, that in no instance has the confidence placed in them been taken
> advantage of. (*SAGG* 17/6/1852:366)

Scott noted in the same report how "extremely useful" Aboriginal people had been to those travelling to the gold fields along the Murray and that "a brisk barter has been kept up between

them, much to the advantage of the natives". In the late 1850s he himself employed Aboriginal men as shearers and shepherds and paid them with cash and rations for their services (Scott 1858–1859 in SLSA PRG608).

The assumption that Murray people continued to be employed by settlers beyond the 1860s is not borne out in the texts. This does not necessarily mean that they didn't participate within the European economic system, in fact, it is highly likely that they did; possibly a more plausible explanation is that this type of activity didn't generate much correspondence or other documentation. This research was unable to identify any pastoral records concerning Aboriginal people other than those kept by Scott (Scott 1858–1859 in SLSA PRG608[33]). With little detailed documentary evidence regarding Aboriginal employment in the pastoral industry we can rely only on occasional references in the few Protector's reports that exist for the period that suggest that able-bodied Aboriginal people continued to work as shearers, farmhands and shepherds:

> Only a few natives have visited [Overland Corner] lately, and those are mostly unable to
> do hard work—all the others are fully employed in the different woolsheds and
> shepherding. (Corporal Shaw cited in Hamilton 1875:4)

Possibly much of this work had to be obtained in the Lower Murray and Lakes region:

> The bulk of the natives are now down on the Lower Murray, only a few are employed on
> stations above [Overland Corner]. (*SAGG* 20/8/1874:1667)

> Very few of the natives have been [at Chowilla] for the last half year, and during the last
> two months there have been none at all … [t]hey have all gone down the River to get
> employment at the stations during the shearing time, and will not return till it is over.
> (*SAGG* 20/8/1874:1667)

Several other documents reiterate the fact that men were probably largely employed in occupations associated with sheep-rearing and wool-production throughout the rest of the century (e.g. *SAGG* 6/4/1876:636; SRSA GRG52/7/1886/231; SRSA GRG52/7/1887/397). Aboriginal people continued to trade items such as possum skins, although police accounts suggest that this type of

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[33] Inwards correspondence for Calperum Station (1887, 1888) was reviewed but no relevant documents were identified.

work was not as lucrative as it had been in the 1850s and that agents willingly exploited their suppliers by "exchanging a lot of trash for the skins" (Sergeant Shaw cited in Hamilton 1880). Women may well have been engaged in these types of exchanges, and probably continued to work in domestic occupations, but there is little written information to substantiate this supposition.

Although the texts analysed here provide little detail about the space in which these exchanges were enacted, they strongly support existing assumptions about declining population in the region and suggest that the contact between large numbers of Aboriginal people and colonial officials at ration depots that had been typical in the first two decades of European settlement gave way to a pattern of interaction involving smaller numbers of individuals that took place on pastoral stations. Whilst the location of pastoral settlement has been identified through the mapping of features marked on the lease maps of 1851 (SRSA GRS/11677, see figure 2), further assessment of later lease records may prove beneficial in determining places of contact in the landscape.

5.2.   Other forms of governance

As the texts have thus far illustrated, a primary way in which the government attempted to achieve control of the Indigenous population was through the work of the Protectors, police and the rations distribution scheme. This, however, was not the sole mechanism of bureaucratic control affecting people on the Murray during the nineteenth century; the government utilised several other strategies to maintain power and erode Indigenous autonomy.

Separation and removal through education and marriage

The early establishment of the Native School, and then later the Walkerville School and the Native School Establishment, heralded the first attempts by Europeans to separate Aboriginal children from their parents. It is impossible to determine how many Murray children attended the Native School up to 1844 prior to them being relocated to Walkerville, but a requisition (SRSA GRG52/7/1844/135) for the provisioning of the schools just before Walkerville opened suggests that there may have been greater numbers of Murray children (30) than Kaurna children (20). Just two months later, in May 1844, Moorhouse claimed that the average number of pupils attending the Walkerville School was 70 (SRSA GRG52/7/1844/142), but by the beginning of 1845 that number had dropped to between 39 and 60 (SRSA GRG24/6/1845/35). In 1846 Moorhouse stated

that the school had an average attendance of 59 (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/34), but this figure appears to be for the new Native School Establishment which was a combined school for all Aboriginal children. Interestingly, Tom Gara (cited in Hemming and Harris 1998:49) argues that only a few Kaurna children remained at the Native School Establishment after 1847, therefore, the majority of pupils may have been from the Murray. These children hailed not only from the Moorunde area, but also from as far as Chowilla; at one point Moorhouse claimed that "all the Murray children as far as the New South Wales boundary have been more or less in school" (SRSA GRG52/7/1849/367). Figures for children attending ration distribution at Moorunde in the 1840s vary considerably; in 1842 the highest number of children in attendance was 76, although in February 1846, 190 were recorded. The catchment area for this population cannot be established, but even so, if 70 of these 190 children can be said to have been in school it is clear that attendance was certainly considerable, even if only temporarily.

These initial and impressive attendance rates were likely achieved in two ways. As mentioned above, Murray people who sent their children to the school received promissory notes that could be exchanged for blankets that were not available to other individuals. Many parents, however, were not amenable to their children attending school and Eyre (1846:2) reported that:

> … the masters have consequently to go round the native encampments to collect and
> bring away the children against their wishes. This is tacitly submitted to at the time, but
> … I have often heard the parents complain indignantly of their children being thus taken;
> and one old man who had been so treated, but whose children had run away and joined
> him again, used vehemently to declare, that if taken any more, he would steal some
> European children instead, and take them into the bush to teach them.

Initially established as a day school only, the school at the Native Location commenced operation as a boarding school in June 1843 due to concerns about the degree of influence that adults continued to exert over the children. On visiting the Murray camps at night, Eyre (1846:2) complained that he had:

> … seen the school children ridiculed by the elder boys, and induced to join them in
> making a jest of what they had been taught during the day to look upon as sacred. A still
> more serious evil, resulting from this system was, that the children were more

completely brought into the power, and under the influence of the parents, and thus their natural taste for an indolent and rambling life was constantly kept up.

However, detaining children as boarders did little to prevent them from returning to their communities. Notable examples are recorded in Moorhouse's correspondence with the Colonial Secretary in 1845 (SRSA GRG52/7/1845/230) when six Murray girls departed the school with a boy called Wombarno, and then again in 1848 (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1565) when 32 Murray children were persuaded that "Native Sorcerers" were going to poison the water in Adelaide, and that they should return to their families on the Murray. The government response in both cases was to despatch police to locate the children and bring them back. Another instance was reported in January 1850 when 29 children, some of whom were apprenticed in the Government Printing Establishment, left town with their parents after the races (*SAGG* 18/4/1850:259; SRSA GRG52/7/1850/424). Moorhouse apologetically informed the Colonial Secretary that the printers would have to wait until Scott sent a further supply of children from the Murray before any more boys could be expected to return (SRSA GRG52/7/1850/424).

By 1850 the Adelaide schools had been in operation for a decade and three distinct cohorts of children had been educated there, although Moorhouse lamented the difficulties inherent in maintaining their attendance:

> … they have invariably been enticed away by their parents or friends at the age of puberty, when just fitted for employment as apprentices or domestic servants. (*SAGG* 31/10/1850:610)

Scott's remarks reflected the same sentiment:

> I regret exceedingly that the Murray native children still continue to abscond from the school in Adelaide. I have remonstrated with the leading natives on the subject, in the strongest terms, but I find it impossible to subdue that superstitious feeling which induced them to entice their children away from the habitations of the Europeans; and unless it should please His Excellency to use some compulsory measures, I am afraid the attendance of native children at the school in Adelaide, will be both uncertain and irregular. (*SAGG* 18/4/1850:259)

When the Poonindie Native Training Institution at Port Lincoln was established by Archdeacon Mathew Hale in that same year, it seemed that a remedy for the problem was imminent. Eleven children were sent to Poonindie from the Adelaide school in the first instance. Moorhouse wrote:

> This institution is intended for the reception of children who have been educated in the school; they are to be married, have their own huts and plots of ground for cultivation, and what is most desirable, be kept almost entirely from the influence of their parents. (*SAGG* 30/1/1851:81)

Not only was the site so geographically isolated that the removal of parental influence was assured, but in seeing the children married Moorhouse was confident that they would be further discouraged from returning to their family and community on the Murray. He had initially suggested marrying the children in 1846 after having observed a scheme in operation in the Swan River colony (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/520). At that time, he had felt that it was the only means of preventing the girls from leaving the school, but there is no indication that any marriages were made.

At Poonindie, however, youths were married almost immediately without any regard for kinship structures or affiliations (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:16). Brock and Kartinyeri's (1989) work provides biographical sketches and genealogies of a number of the inhabitants, including many Murray people. Between 1850 and 1852, when the first three intakes were made, 61 Murray children were relocated from Adelaide to Poonindie; by 1854, 27 of the residents were from the Murray which represented over half of the institutions' population (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:24, after Hale 1889). Many of these early residents died[34], some were dismissed, but few absconded (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989:20, 23–34). It is therefore reasonable to suggest that Moorhouse's aim of removing Murray children from the influence of their parents, and their subsequent relocation to Poonindie where they were married, made to adopt European lifestyle, and culturally and geographically isolated, must have had significant long-term implications for the Murray population.

Whilst the location of the Native School and Poonindie is well established and has been the subject of archaeological evaluation (for instance see Harris [1999] and Griffin [2000, 2010], respectively),

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[34] Brock and Kartinyeri (1989) state that 73 deaths were recorded for the first decade; this figure is for the entire population, which includes Adelaide, Murray and Port Lincoln people.

the Walkerville School and the Native School Establishment are less well known. The Native School Establishment was indicated on maps from the period (figure 18), but the location of the Walkerville School does not appear to have been determined. It was run from a building leased from John Morphett which seems to have been inadequate and in need of repair (Foster 1990:27); further investigation of the tenure of the area would be required to establish an approximate location.

Figure 18: Detail of Plan of the City of Adelaide 1851, showing the location of the Native School Establishment
Source: Penman and Galbraith 1851, State Library of South Australia.

Indigenous mobility, vagrancy and access to the landscape

A significant amount of early government correspondence regarding Murray people was to do with their presence in Adelaide and, more particularly, the conflicts arising between groups from different outlying regions. The first record of these events seems to be an entry in William Cawthorne's diary in December 1842 (transcribed in Foster 1991:8) in which he described "a dreadful fight between the Mount Barker and Encounter Bay blacks against the Murray River Blacks". Similar conflict was repeated in March and November of the following year (Foster 1991:11,26; SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1008) but in 1844 and 1845, police were able to prevent battles

from occurring (Foster 1991:45–46; SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1008). Avoiding the detection of authorities, further contests were waged in April 1846 (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1008; SRSA GRG52/7/1846/256) and May 1849 (*SAGG* 19/7/1849:312; SRSA GRG52/7/1849/382), but there is no evidence to indicate similar conflict in the intervening years of 1847 and 1848. The last mention of an intentional meeting of Indigenous groups in Adelaide appeared in the final Protector's report of 1851, when Moorhouse stated that "the Encounter Bay, Lake Alexandrina, and Murray River tribes, all met by appointment"; it was a seemingly peaceful encounter (*SAGG* 24/3/1853:191). The principal objection to these battles appears to have been the increased numbers of Aboriginal people congregated in the city[35]. Few fatalities resulted from these contests (Cawthorne in Foster 1991:45; SRSA GRG24/6/1843/466), the government responded to these events with police presence and surveillance (e.g. *SAGG* 19/7/1849:312; SRSA GRG24/6/1843/466) and by threatening to withhold rations unless people returned to their own districts (e.g. SRSA GRG24/4/1843/82,142; SRSA GRG24/6/1843/545).

Although the presence of Murray people in Adelaide was frequently attributed to these annual battles, there were various other motivating factors. During the 1840s, as has been noted, family and friends were reluctant to return to their communities on the river whilst their children were attending school. In the 1850s, many of the periodical Protector's reports suggest that Aboriginal people were drawn to the city during winter months, where food and other items were easier and cheaper to procure, and when severe weather made fishing in their own district more difficult (e.g. *SAGG* 23/10/1851:715; *SAGG* 28/7/1853:498; *SAGG* 2/11/1854:776; SRSA GRG52/7/1853/577).

Whatever the cause, the continuing presence of Murray people in Adelaide throughout the 1840s and 1850s was a source of considerable aggravation as far as European authorities were concerned. Not only did the government have to deal with the large-scale annual battles, but also more minor and impromptu intra-racial conflict and, according to many of Moorhouse's reports, frequent instances of intoxication and public nuisance (e.g. *SAGG* 15/7/1852:424; *SAGG* 15/12/1853:815). Furthermore, Murray people who were residing in Adelaide were not available to work for settlers on the river, and this was possibly of equal if not greater concern (*SAGG* 17/6/1852:366; *SAGG* 28/7/1853:498)[36]. In 1846 Police Commissioner Finniss wrote to the Colonial Secretary detailing a

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[35] Or Holdfast Bay, which is indicated in texts for 1843 (SRSA GRG24/6/1843/466,524).
[36] Although in winter of 1852 Moorhouse stated that he was unable to get the Murray people residing in town to return to their district as they had complained that there was not enough employment for them in the district (*SAGG* 15/7/1852:424)

plan that he had contrived in conjunction with Moorhouse (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:319; SRSA GRG24/6/1846/318). He proposed that Aboriginal people visiting Adelaide:

> … be registered by the Protector and be provided with small tin medals, having numbers, to be worn as a bracelet around the arm or the neck. All Natives not provided with these marks, which would enable the Police to distinguish them, to be ordered back to their District where they have abundance of food. In case of their being found in Town after this notice they might be apprehended as vagrants which it appears to me could be legally done.

Later in the letter he suggested that it might be feasible to have Aboriginal people tattoo themselves with their identification numbers, and that they be confined to a designated area of parkland. Just twelve months later Scott received word from Moorhouse informing him that Murray people would be imprisoned for vagrancy if they were found "wandering or begging" in the streets of Adelaide (SRSA GRG52/7/1847/299). At the same time Moorhouse wrote to the Colonial Secretary, explaining that Governor Robe intended that Aboriginal people should be employed by the Town Surveyor so that they had "no excuse for practicing vagrancy" (SRSA GRG52/7/1847/301; SRSA GRG 24/6/1847/440). Although there is no evidence to suggest that any of these proposals came to fruition, or that any Aboriginal people were arrested as vagrants (see Nettelbeck 2018:90), these documents illustrate the alarming lengths that the government was prepared to go to in seeing that Indigenous mobility was contained within acceptable limits.

In 1853 Sub-Protector Scott suggested that Aboriginal people from his district be altogether prohibited from visiting Adelaide. His report is perhaps the only document which demonstrates any concern for the welfare of the Aboriginal population, as opposed to concern for the inconvenience experienced by Europeans. He alluded to both the diminishing number of people on the Murray, and to their general condition and wellbeing:

> Year after year they return to their homes more squalid and miserable than ever, and possessed of greater vices, and consequently much more difficult to manage than when I first knew them. (*SAGG* 28/7/1853:498)

By the time the depot at Moorunde was closed in 1858, there was little government correspondence regarding the mobility of the Indigenous population, although the press reported that:

> The encampment of aborigines still continues on the bank of the bank of the Torrens near to the Company's Mill. It consists of about 120 persons of all ages. There appear to be very few children among them. They belong to the Lake Bonney tribe, and have come into town to obtain supplies of various kinds - blankets, twine for nets, fishhooks, tomahawks etc. They have received liberal supplies of those articles. The intention of the tribe was to remain in their present locality during the winter season. This course being very undesirable, because of the facilities afforded near to town for acquiring habits of intoxication and mendacity. They have been persuaded by presents and by promises of supplies being forwarded to them at the Overland Corner Police station to move off [to] their own place. It is expected they will leave on Monday next. (*South Australian Register* 23/7/1858:2).

It seems that Sub-Protector Scott's pleas may have fallen on deaf ears and that people from the river continued an annual winter migration. One wonders whether the group of approximately 120 individuals, comprising all ages, but few children, represented the Lake Bonney population in its entirety.

Concluding that "great evils arise from collecting different tribes from a great distance to a central depot", the Select Committee enquiry of 1860 recommended that settlers undertake ration distribution in order to prevent Aboriginal people from travelling beyond their own districts (LCSA 1860:2). This did not eventuate in the Murray region, and as previously noted, distribution of rations by police was possibly sporadic and infrequent in the early 1860s. Protector Walker's report of 1863 makes a general reference to the propensity of Aboriginal people to "loiter … about the towns and stations begging for their food" (SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791), but it seems unlikely that the presence of Murray people in Adelaide or other areas caused the same degree of vexation that it had in the 1840s and 50s.

By the 1870s and 80s, it appears that Indigenous mobility had altogether ceased to be an administrative problem, although this is not surprising given the dramatic reduction in population. Occasional complaints from police about individuals who were seeking blankets at stations beyond

their usual district are apparent in the Protector's correspondence; in these circumstances police were advised to use their own discretion so long as care was taken to see that people did not obtain more than one blanket by visiting multiple stations (e.g. SRSA GRG52/7/1876/589; SRSA GRG52/7/1888/517). It is also worth noting that if stores were limited at a station, young men were expected to go elsewhere to obtain their blanket (SRSA GRG52/7/1868/487). Seemingly, mobility within the landscape was tolerated so long as it was to the government's advantage.

After the introduction of the railway to Morgan in 1878, police were occasionally required to issue rail passes to facilitate people to move around the area to seek employment (e.g. SRSA GRG52/7/1886/231), or medical attention (egg SRSA GRG52/7/1879/76; SRSA GRG52/7/1885/20; SRSA GRG52/7/1894/141). The government rarely sanctioned relocation to Adelaide. When elderly, sick or destitute people could not be cared for by relatives or at pastoral stations, or obtain medical assistance locally or at the hospital in Kapunda, they were sent to Point Macleay (SRSA GRG52/7/1887/335; SRSA GRG52/7/1887/363). In a bleak reminder of the 1840s and 50s, correspondence suggests that neither the hospital nor the Destitute Asylum were prepared to admit Aboriginal people from outlying districts, including the Murray (SRSA GRG52/7/1883/820; SRSA GRG52/7/1884/950; SRSA GRG52/7/1885/136). In 1889 Hamilton advised Mounted Constable Teate of Renmark Police Station:

> When the sickness is of a long-continued chronic character, requiring nursing and medical attendance for some time, it would be desirable to have the patient forwarded to the nearest Hospital. It is better, as far as possible, to avoid sending the Natives to Adelaide where they frequently remain till they become a public nuisance. (SRSA GRG52/7/1889/674)

In 1892 Aboriginal people were also being discouraged at other nearby centres of European population such as Mannum:

> Should any Natives require rations, you can purchase a small supply of tea, sugar and tobacco for issue at same time - but as there are Depots at Blanchetown and Murray Bridge, it would be well to give no encouragement to the Aborigines to hang about Mannum for any time. (SRSA GRG52/7/1892/5)

The transgression of European law

Whilst the provision of rations might have constituted the primary *function* of government officials insofar as the management of Aboriginal people was concerned, their overriding *objective* was to ensure the maintenance of law and order. During the 1840s and 1850s it seems that attempts to bring Aboriginal people within the realm of European law through their prosecution for petty crime was persistent enough. Occasional cases of drunkenness and theft by Murray people were seen both in the Police Magistrates Court in Adelaide and the Resident Magistrate's Court at Moorunde (e.g. *South Australian* 07/2/1843:2; *South Australian* 26/9/1843:2; SRSA GRG4/133/00000/1). In April of 1847, in what must have been an extraordinary scene, between 40 and 50 Moorunde people were brought to court "charged with cutting certain trees, the property of Joseph Gilbert, Esq., of the Barossa range, and doing damage to the amount of 1s" while "waggish boys" stood by the door and "made them signs by drawing the finger down the ear and round the throat that every man jack of them was about to be hanged" (*South Australian Register* 21/4/1847:3). Language barriers confounded the proceedings which were attended by Moorhouse, who had difficulty speaking their dialect, so one of the accused was discharged to act as interpreter. The judge appeared uncertain about how legislative protocol might be applied, perhaps needlessly, as very few of the defendants could understand what was happening. To add to the chaos, the *Register* reported that the women carried approximately fifty yelping and barking dogs between them. Ultimately, they were all released with a caution which was delivered by Moorhouse, although it is likely that this was little understood either. The problem of Aboriginal evidence beleaguered colonial administration for some years and was one of Eyre's great preoccupations (see Eyre 1845:350–356). In 1844 an ordinance pertaining to the admissibility of Aboriginal evidence were passed by the Legislative Council, but was later subject to various amendments (Raynes 2002:14–15).

Accordingly, many of the 'crimes' perpetrated by Aboriginal people from the Murray did not result in prosecution. Of the other documentary references that pertain to Indigenous transgression of European law in the period, many describe events in which Moorunde people committed various illegal acts beyond the boundaries of their district. Of particular concern was the prevalence of begging and theft on the road between Adelaide and Moorunde, an activity which made the annual assembly of large numbers of Murray people in Adelaide all the more frustrating for colonial

administration. In a report in 1843 Moorhouse described the route to Adelaide as "that part of the colony most exposed to attack" and that Aboriginal people had not hesitated to procure food in that area through "threats and intimidation" (Colonial Office Great Britain 1844:342). He was no doubt reiterating comments made in correspondence between Eyre and the office of the Colonial Secretary (SRSA GRG24/4/1843/267; SRSA GRG24/6/1843/545,722) regarding the frequency of robberies committed by Murray people between Adelaide and Moorunde. The problem did not appear to have abated by 1852, when Moorhouse again requested that something be done to prevent Murray people from visiting Adelaide in order to suppress "the commission of offences on the line of road between their districts and Adelaide" (SRSA GRG24/4/1852/111).

Theft of sheep in the North Rhine area (near present-day Keyneton) was documented in 1843 (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:40) and 1844 (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:119) and seemingly generated much attention from authorities, probably not least of all because the latter incident threatened to erupt in violence (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:119; SRSA GRG24/6/1844/472). It is difficult to discern the exact nature of events that took place, but it is possible that persistent Indigenous presence and the loss of stock had unnerved one shepherd to the point where, brandishing a shotgun, he threatened to shoot two innocent Moorunde men who were travelling to Lyndoch with a message for a settler[37]. Police trooper Gordon "on hearing the Shepherd say he wished his gun had been loaded, told him he would not have [been] justified in firing at them under such circumstances" (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:119). Eyre concluded that pursuing prosecution of Aboriginal people for the theft of stock was pointless; there was no evidence available which would suffice in court (SRSA GRG4/133/00000/1; SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:40).

There is little evidence of Indigenous interaction with the European legal system after the 1840s. For the dozen or so Police Commissioner's reports that could be identified for the period between 1849 and 1855, and which contained returns of felony cases for which the police had received information, there are few incidents that record Aboriginal people as victims or perpetrators and not a single case that involved an individual from or on the Murray. Accusations of both petty theft and sheep theft were levelled at Aboriginal people on the Murray during the period (*SAGG* 31/10/1850:610; *SAGG* 2/6/1853:362; *South Australian Gazette and Mining Journal* 20/1/1849:3), but it seems no substantiating evidence was ever presented or a conviction pursued. In 1851

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[37] This event appears to be one that Eyre (1845:321) wrote about retrospectively and in which he suggests that an Aboriginal man was not just threatened with the gun, but that the weapon was discharged.

Samuel McGlynn accused Moorunde man Tenbury of assaulting his son, for which Sub-Protector Scott withheld Tenbury's rations for two months (SRSA GRG24/6/1851/447), but correspondence suggests that McGlynn's complaints might have had as much to do with a longstanding grievance with Scott, as they did with Tenbury's misconduct (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/851; SRSA GRG24/6/1851/447). In the remaining decades of the century, any evidence to suggest that Aboriginal people from the Murray district challenged the norms for legal conduct set out by Europeans, had all but disappeared from the government record.

5.3. Health and population

Much has been written about the health of the Aboriginal population in the Murray region during the nineteenth century; in fact, that disease was the overriding cause of population decline is the principal thesis of Peter Dowling's work (1990; 1997). However, primary documents contain only scant data about population and even less information about Indigenous health or healthcare. Ration data does provide some gross insight into changes in population, which is extended by statistics recorded in censuses from 1861 onwards, and ill-health was frequently acknowledged by Protectors and police at a broad level. However, the paucity of information means that few firm conclusions can be drawn about either the timing or extent of population decline, or the wellbeing of Aboriginal people during the period.

Quantitative population data

The reports of Protectors and later, returns from police stationed along the Murray, contain both estimates of Indigenous population and actual numbers for those attending ration distribution. The number of births and deaths are also reported, but it's difficult to determine whether this information is complete, and it is very likely that it is not. In the earliest phase of settlement and prior to the abolition of the Aborigines Office, Protectors Moorhouse, Eyre and Scott recorded general estimates of the size of the Murray population (table 1). Unfortunately, these figures are often inclusive of the Lower Murray and Lakes population but they do depict a considerable decline between Eyre's arrival on the Murray just prior to 1842 when he estimated a total population of 1300 for the area comprising Moorunde to the Rufus, and 1855 when he estimated a population of 760 for that area and the lower Murray (to Wellington) combined.

The decline depicted in the estimates made by Moorhouse and Scott is, to some extent, borne out in the ration data (figures 19, 20; Appendix 4); maximum numbers assembled are much higher during the mid to late 1840s than in the 1850s. In February of 1846, 604 Aboriginal people assembled at Moorunde for the monthly distribution of rations. By 1848 the maximum number was 392, and by 1855, the last year in the data series, only 192. While there are other reasons that this may have occurred (for example, the perceived value of rations may have changed over the period), it seems plausible to conclude that this reflects a decline in population, if only in the local area. The possibility that individuals obtained rations from other depots cannot be ruled out but is unlikely to be a significant factor because ration distribution from other sites appears to have been sporadic. The exception would be November 1853, when 71 people assembled at Paringa. It should also be noted that demand may have been influenced by the fact that a number of Aboriginal people likely received rations in return for labour by this stage; for example Scott remarked that 30 or 40 men were employed as stockmen on the stations by the end of 1854 (*SAGG* 8/3/1855:203).

Year	Location	Estimate	Author	Notes
1842	Moorunde to Rufus district	950	Eyre	includes 200 adult males
1842	Rufus district	350	Eyre	includes 100 adult males
1842	Lake Bonney	150	Eyre	
1842	Lake Victoria	600	Eyre	incudes those assembled from wider region, includes 200 adult males
1843	Moorunde	500	Moorhouse	incudes 300 in regular contact, 200 in irregular contact
1844	Murray district	500	Moorhouse	
1844	Moorunde	400	Eyre	
1848	Rufus to Darling	200	Moorhouse	
1848	Wellington to Rufus	900	Moorhouse	
1849	Upper Murray	500	Moorhouse	
1851	Wellington to Rufus	900	Moorhouse	
1852	Wellington to Rufus	900	Moorhouse	
1853	Wellington to Rufus	800–840	Moorhouse	
1854	Wellington to Rufus	760–800	Moorhouse	
1855	Moorunde	500	Scott	incudes those assembled from wider region
1855	Wellington to Rufus	760	Moorhouse	

Table 1: Estimates of Indigenous population, central/upper Murray 1842–1855
Source: derived from Protector's reports (State Records of South Australia; *South Australian Government Gazette*).
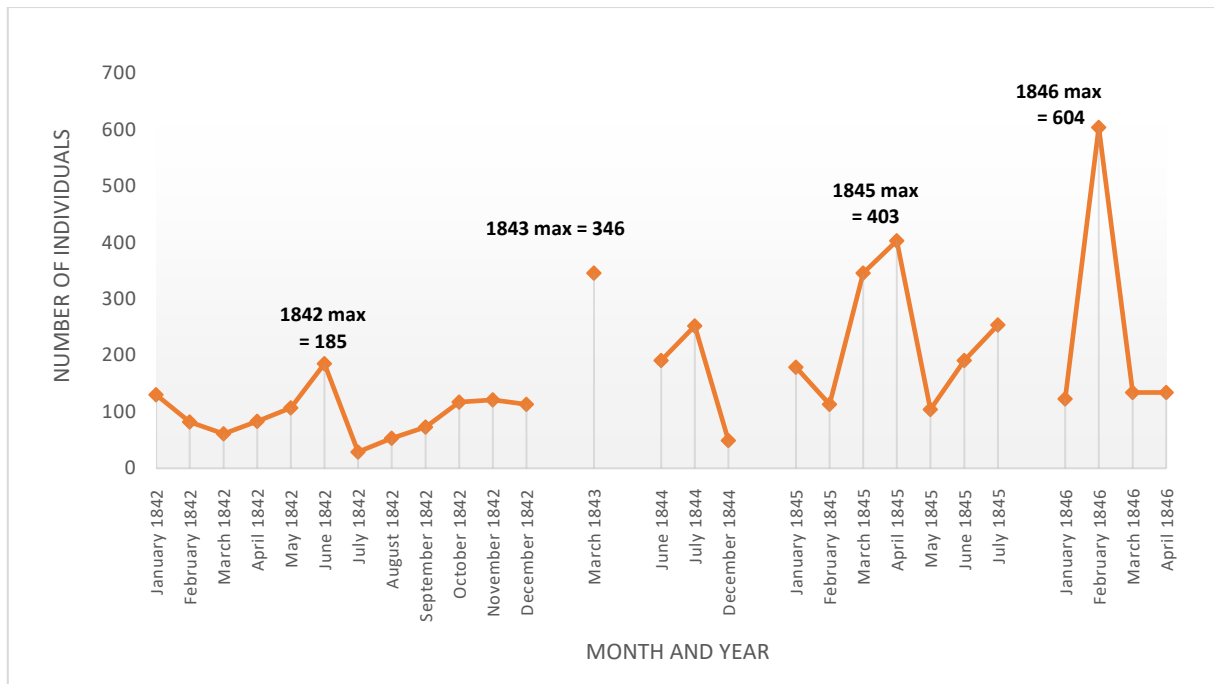
Figure 19: Number of individuals receiving rations at monthly distributions, Moorunde depot 1842–1846
Source: derived from Protector's reports (State Records of South Australia; *South Australian Government Gazette*).
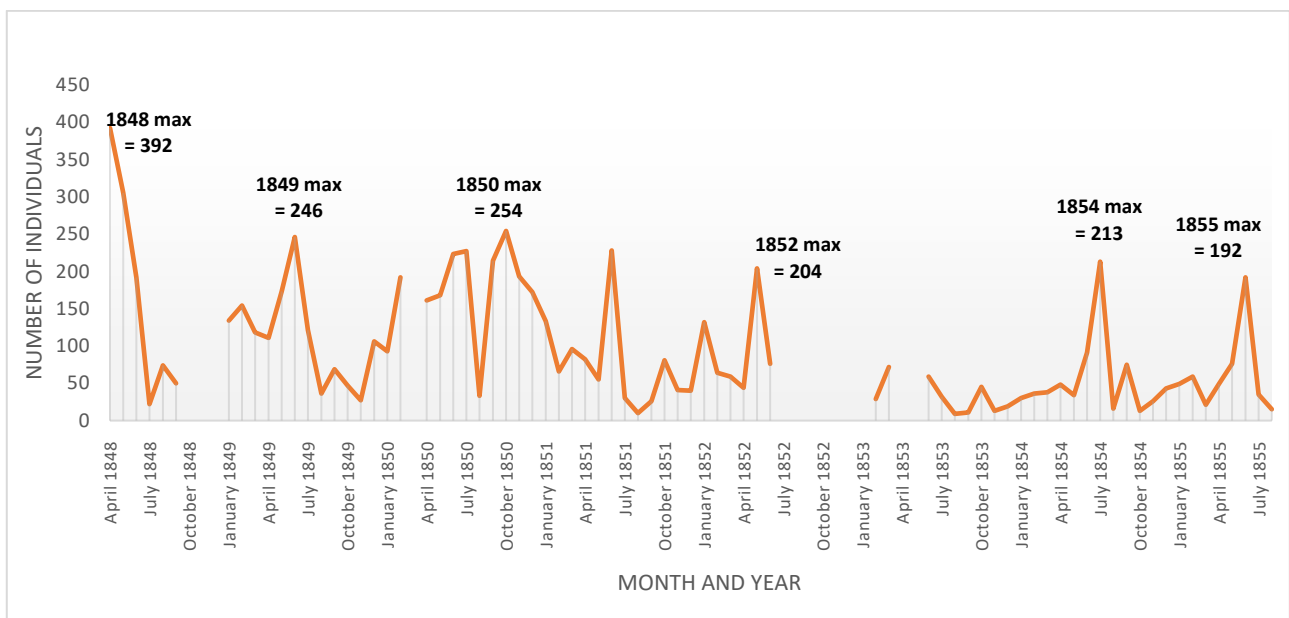
Figure 20: Number of individuals receiving rations at monthly distributions, Moorunde depot 1848–1855
Source: derived from Protector's reports (State Records of South Australia; *South Australian Government Gazette*).

By the end of the 1850s, and continuing into the 1870s, data was periodically returned by police (table 2). It is unclear whether these numbers are estimated or absolute, but in some cases the word 'average' precedes the given figure. Importantly, if the data provided is derived from the returns that police were obliged to make (SRSA GRG52/1/1867/305), then it presumably represents only those individuals who were permitted rations in the 1860s and thereafter, i.e. "the sick, the old and infirm, orphan children, women with children under 12 months" and able-bodied people who were in dire need. Furthermore; it is reasonable to suppose that police officers didn't regard this type of work as a priority; correspondence between the Protector's office and the police gives the impression that police regularly neglected to complete returns (e.g. SRSA GRG52/7/1864/76). Therefore, it is unlikely that these data provide a very accurate reflection of the number of Aboriginal people living on the Murray; they do, however, demonstrate declining population consistent with other sources.

Month/Year	Location	Number	Author of Protector's report	Notes
March 1859	Moorunde	55	Hitchin	
	Overland Corner	140	Hitchin	
	Chowilla	60	Hitchin	
	TOTAL	255		
December 1865	Blanchetown	25	Walker	
	Overland Corner	42	Walker	
	Chowilla	48	Walker	
	TOTAL	115		
August 1868	Blanchetown	40	Walker	incudes those visiting from Overland Corner
	Overland Corner	8	Walker	estimate of average
	Chowilla	35	Walker	large proportion from NSW
	TOTAL	83		
August 1874	Blanchetown	19	Hamilton	estimate of average
	Chowilla	40	Hamilton	estimate of average
	TOTAL	59		
February 1875	Blanchetown	19	Hamilton	

Table 2: Returns provided from ration depots, central/upper Murray 1842–1855
Source: derived from Protector's reports (State Records of South Australia; *South Australian Government Gazette*).

It is difficult to attempt any correlation of data that appears in the 1860s and 1870s Protector's reports written by Walker and Hamilton (primarily the figures reported by police) with the census data. The discrepancy in collection areas, principally the inclusion of Blanchetown numbers in reports, and the impossibility of extracting Murray population from the County of Eyre census

figure, mean that no direct comparison can be made. Again, the rate of decline is reasonably consistent between the two data sets. Protector's reports do not exist for the period after 1880, therefore the only available population data is that provided by the census in 1881 and 1891, which show a total of 16 and 23 individuals for the Murray region, respectively. In correspondence between the Protector and the police for that period, approximately 30 separate individuals are named[38] over the 20 year period, suggesting that census figures are conservative, to say the least.

The fact that Aboriginal people were highly mobile, that many left the area for work, even if only temporarily, and that methods for documenting numbers were deficient, confounds any attempt at detailed analysis of population change. However, the assembled quantitative data, despite its shortcomings, provides a coarse overview of how Indigenous demographic information for the area was recorded. Furthermore, it validates the existing understanding that population decline on the Murray was rapid and substantial.

Colonial attitudes to population decline and Indigenous health

In 1860 the Select Committee settled on six key factors that they believed had contributed to population decline including infanticide, cultural practices that impaired the "physical powers" of the young men, the introduction of syphilis, alcohol, promiscuity and a disproportion of the sexes (LCSA 1860:1). Despite the apparent concern for the plight of the Indigenous population, the tone of the conclusions made in the report suggests that colonists were able to comfortably shift the blame for decline onto Aboriginal people themselves. Problematically, the report lacked much evidence to substantiate their claims. In March 1863, when John Walker appears to have completed his first "tour of inspection" as Protector after the Select Committee enquiry handed down its findings, he similarly reported that "the Aboriginal population is gradually diminishing", although conceded that disease was amongst the principal causes:

> The chief causes of this decrease are presumably, and no doubt truly, believed to be
> Disease, Infecundity of the female and Infanticide. The diseases to which the Natives
> seem most liable are Pulmonary Consumption, Inflammation of the Lungs, Afflictions of

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[38] Allowing for individuals who had different forms of the same name, the number is still as high as 25.

the Liver, Rheumatism and diseases of the Skin. Syphilis does not prevail to any great

extent but Gonorrhoea is common in some districts. (SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791)

His remarks about infanticide reveal more about racist colonial attitudes than they do about the reality of circumstances on the Murray or elsewhere in the colony. Although several references to infanticide appear in government correspondence and reports over the years, they are largely non-specific comments about what was *perceived* to be a recurrent practice amongst Aboriginal communities (e.g. *SAGG* 23/3/1865:266; Beveridge 1889:26). Specific accounts of infanticide were rarely recorded for the central Murray. A diary entry written by James Hawker regarding an event near Cumpungo (Cumbunga Creek) in the winter of 1845 reads:

> Passed an unfortunate gin on the road who was about to be confined, I asked her
> husband why he did not attend to her, his answer was she will be all right bye and bye.
> About an hour after I went to his camp about 2 miles from where we left the gin and
> found her with him I asked him how she got there and what had become of the child. He
> said with the greatest coolness that the child was born a few minutes after we left her
> and that as it was a white mans child he had knocked it on the head. The woman had
> walked up to the camp as if nothing had happened. (Hawker 1845:138 in SLSA PRG209)

The only other account, nearly twenty years later, comprises several letters exchanged between Corporal Besley at Overland Corner and the Chief Inspector of Police and regards the alleged infanticide of the baby of an Aboriginal woman from Disher Island and a European shepherd from Tintre (Tyntra Station) (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/812). Much of the information received by the police was hearsay and, although Besley and Protector Walker exhumed the body, they were unable to establish the cause of death (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/812). The mother of the child initially asserted that an older Aboriginal woman had killed the baby because it was a "white piccaninnie", but later stated that it had been stillborn, a conclusion on which all the other Aboriginal people who were questioned agreed (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/812). Although Besley claimed that "the practice of the blacks killing their children" was common (SRSA GRG5/2/1862/812) and Walker believed that it prevailed to an even greater extent than was generally supposed (SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791), there is no evidence to support their assertions. Importantly, in the two cases which are recorded, the child was said to be fathered by a European man.

The sexual transgressions of overlanders prior to the Rufus River massacre were acknowledged by Moorhouse in a letter to the Colonial Secretary in 1842 (Taplin 1879:118), but little other evidence of interracial sexual relations—consenting, sanctioned, or otherwise—is apparent within the record for the post 1841 period. Even though the absence of evidence for sexual violence is not unexpected[39], there are also very few references to the supposed promiscuity of Aboriginal women, although the government was quick to cite this as the cause of population decline. In 1863, Protector Walker, in providing an explanation for the phenomenon, wrote:

> Many of the black women are quite sterile, and the total number of births must be small in proportion to the Adult population. This sterility and infecundity probably arises from debility or exhaustion of the female organs owing to premature and too frequent excitement. Sexual intercourse is often if not generally begun while the girls are yet mere children and afterwards they lead the lives of common prostitutes. (SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791)

In later years, when writing about Aboriginal people of the Riverina district in Victoria, Peter Beveridge (1889:7) concluded that the "profligacy of [Aboriginal] women" was "another fell source from whence much destruction to life proceeds". The contempt with which European men held Aboriginal women has been acknowledged elsewhere (for instance, see Ball 1993; Connors 2017) and while both Walker and Beveridge's remarks are alarmingly racist and sexist, they were typical of the period. Although promiscuity was identified by the Select Committee (LCSA 1860:1) as one of the six contributory factors in population decline, the report contained no evidence to substantiate this claim. Moorhouse, when questioned "Are they not in the habit of stealing each other's wives", responded that "they like to do it, to get fresh blood into the tribe", the implication being that routine cultural practices were perceived as promiscuous behaviour.

The 1860 Select Committee report contains few references to alcohol use or misuse amongst Aboriginal people, although Protector's reports and other government correspondence indicate that alcohol consumption was occurring by that time. References to alcohol use are infrequent during the 1840s; on acknowledging several cases of drunkenness in Adelaide in the first quarter of 1851, Moorhouse remarked that it was "a vice which has not been hitherto very prevalent" (*SAGG*

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[39] Connors (2017:35) notes that although historians have frequently acknowledged sexual violence on the frontier, detailed exploration is rare because primary evidence is scant.

17/4/1851:265). However, reports in the following year suggest that alcohol use was becoming more widespread; in May of 1852 Moorhouse attempted to obtain the conviction of several individuals who had been selling alcohol to Aboriginal people in Adelaide but was unsuccessful in all but one case (*SAGG* 15/7/1852:424). At the end of the year he noted that Murray people were becoming increasingly fond of alcohol and concluded that pursuing the conviction of Europeans for supply was useless (*SAGG* 24/3/1853:191). Instead, he saw six Aboriginal people charged with drunkenness (*SAGG* 24/3:191/1853). Moorhouse's remaining reports for the years 1854 and 1855 contain repeated references to the intoxication of Aboriginal people from the Murray, the public nuisance created, and the convictions made. Much of this activity appears to have taken place in the Adelaide parklands, but Kensington was also identified as a problem area (*SAGG* 2/6/1853; *SAGG* 24/5/1855:408). What is also apparent from these documents is that alcohol consumption was not amongst Scott's concerns and was rarely mentioned in his reports, suggesting that there was less opportunity for Aboriginal people to acquire alcohol outside of the Adelaide area during this period.

In contrast, the Colonial Surgeon stated in that same year:

> But few of the natives are given to intoxication. I have not infrequently known natives of this province refuse intoxicating liquors, as they said they were not good for them. (SRSA GRG24/90/00000/2 Item 82)

There are less frequent references in texts written in the 1860s and subsequent decades, but it appears that alcohol may have been more readily acquired on the river in later years. Not only were there numerous publicans willing to supply alcohol to Aboriginal people (SRSA GRG5/2/1868/726; SRSA GRG5/2/1869/90), but it seems that settlers used alcohol in lieu of wages (SRSA GRG52/7/1868/597; SRSA GRG5/2/1868/1181). Increasing numbers of Europeans through the area and the advent of the steamer trade on the Murray also contributed to the problem (SRSA GRG52/7/1868/597). Complaints of Aboriginal drunkenness on the Murray were rare, but not non-existent. It is not clear how frequently Aboriginal people were charged with alcohol-related offences, although in his annual report for 1879 Hamilton (1880) noted that the only convictions on the Murray in that year were for drunkenness, and that there were 18 of those. Occasionally police would make concerted attempts to identify and prosecute those who were involved in supply (SRSA GRG5/2/1868/1181; SRSA GRG5/2/1869/90).

Whilst government records document jurisdictional matters relating to alcohol consumption and provide little reflection on how alcohol impacted Indigenous health, the recollections of several early settlers of the region, recorded in the 1920s, contain poignant accounts of alcohol misuse. Both Jack Coombs and John Schell remembered widespread drinking amongst the Aboriginal population, particularly in the area around Wentworth where there was a seemingly higher population (Ogilvy 1923:26, 1924:1). Coombs recalled a particular occasion where, after drinking in Wentworth, a group of sixty or seventy Aboriginal people disappeared "and some of them never turned up again"; he was later told by an Aboriginal boy that they had all "died on the road from the effects of drink" (Coombs, paraphrased in Ogilvy 1923:26). Similarly, Schell claimed that "the pubs [in Wentworth] sold the blacks hell fire stuff that killed them in hundreds" and that Aboriginal people "suffering from alcohol were seen staggering down the Wentworth road with the Protector of Aboriginals looking at them and the police of the day well in the joke" (Schell, paraphrased in Ogilvy 1924:1). Although no such accounts were identified for the central Murray region within South Australia, similar consequences may have been likely in the Blanchetown to Chowilla area.

Illness and medical aid

In the 1840s Protector Moorhouse noted a variety of diseases in his periodical reports, but the most prevalent appear to have been influenza and 'the Itch' (scabies), which he believed had sometimes been confused with smallpox. According to Moorhouse, these instances of disease were often severe but not fatal (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/225). Eyre had very little to say about disease at Moorunde, nor did his successor Nation, but the prevalence of sickness was a constant theme in Scott's reports. He makes repeated references to the number of sick individuals but is less specific about the diseases from which they suffered. Similarly, information is provided about the number of deaths, but not the causes; it would, however, be reasonable to assume that a significant proportion of deaths resulted from illness. In the seven years between April of 1848 and August of 1855, Scott reported a total of 81 deaths for Moorunde (Appendix 4)[40]. In contrast, only four births were recorded. There is no data to indicate the number of deaths that occurred further upstream.

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[40] Moorhouse also reported that "seven of the Murray tribe died from inflammatory affections of the chest" in Adelaide in August/September 1851 (*SAGG* 23/10/1851:715). it appears to be the only instance where he records the death of Murray people in Adelaide.

Medical treatment during this time seems to have been almost entirely limited to the provision of extra rations. It appears that those who were ill received more frequent issues of flour and were not required to wait until the monthly distribution (e.g. *SAGG* 18/7/1850:433; *SAGG* 23/2/1854:149). There is some suggestion that settlers may also have cared for those who were unwell (*SAGG* 18/7/1850:433), but they do not appear to have received any conventional European medical attention. In 1854 Scott remarked that:

> Sickness has prevailed to some extent among the Aborigines, and they are decreasing in numbers day by day without a probability of prevention, as it would be impracticable to cause them to adopt the European method of treating sick persons, even if medical aid were at their disposal. (*SAGG* 8/3/1855:203)

In 1860 the Select Committee enquiry (LCSA 1860:1) found that "great suffering has been occasioned, especially amongst the aged and infirm natives, by the insufficient and ill-timed supplies, both of blankets and provisions" and that disease had been induced and aggravated by "partial and irregular clothing". Despite this, the report did not contain even a single recommendation regarding the care or medical treatment of Aboriginal people. When John Walker was finally appointed Protector following the committee's enquiry, his first general report of 1863 recommended:

> A proper supply of Medicines should be forwarded to each of the depots not already provided therewith for many cases of disease would no doubt be cured and much suffering avoided in others, by the administration of such remedies as might safely be entrusted to non-professional hands.   In populous districts such as Mount Gambier, Goolwa and Wellington it is desirable I think if possible to engage the services of a Medical gentleman, at an annual salary to attend the Natives (within a certain radius) in cases of extremity and to give advice, Medicines, and c., to all the sick belonging to the district on supplication. (SRSA GRG35/1/1863/791)

The supply of medicines to depots on the Murray appears to have commenced in the mid 1860s. In 1865 police at Blanchetown received a supply of pectoral drops and reported favourably on the relief provided to those that suffered from chest complaints (*SAGG* 1/2/1866:718). Medicines seem

to have been regularly made available throughout the remaining decades of the century, and were willingly accepted and sometimes requested by Aboriginal people:

> Old and young, not actually laid up, make mournful complaints to me of their sufferings, and ask for medicine I do all I can for them with my medicine chest, and am happy to say that, according to the statements of the natives, have given a great relief. (Police Trooper Ewens cited in Hamilton 1875)

By the 1870s it appears that certain registered medical officers could attend cases of sickness or ill health amongst Aboriginal people. However, correspondence between the Protector and police at Blanchetown, Overland Corner and Renmark suggests that no-one had been appointed for this purpose in the Murray region (SRSA GRG52/7/1869/843; SRSA GRG52/7/1883/820; SRSA GRG52/7/1889/674). On the rare occasions that doctors in the district did attend Aboriginal patients, and submitted their accounts to the Protector for payment, they were faced with bureaucratic obstruction. When Dr Kelly White provided medical assistance to patients at Renmark in 1889, Constable Teate was reprimanded by Hamilton for not first obtaining permission to employ a doctor (SRSA GRG52/7/1889/674). On receiving the account Hamilton wrote:

> … will you be good enough to request Dr White to render his a/cs with full details, as in its present form the Colonial Surgeon will not pass it for payment. The charge allowed for each visit is 5/- with 5/- per mile one way for distance travelled, - the nature of the medicines supplied should be fully specified – and the nature and extent of any operation performed should also be stated. (SRSA GRG52/7/1889/686)

In Morgan in 1894, W. Telfer's account for attending an Aboriginal boy who was "suffering from poison" elicited the following reply:

> I have the honor to inform you that your a/c cannot be received in its present form – there is nothing to show by whose authority or instructions this expense was incurred. You should render the a/c with full details, showing number of visits paid to patient, and value of medicines supplied – and forward the a/c through the Police at Morgan, who may be able to certify it – I will then submit it to the Colonial Surgeon and the Minister of

Agriculture and if they pass it, the amount will then be payable to you. (SRSA
GRG52/7/1894/158)

Although there are many casual references to the widespread extent of illness amongst the
Aboriginal population on the central/upper Murray, very little specific information is recorded
about their medical conditions or medical treatment, which seems to have occasionally been
attempted in later years. Of notable absence is any information about the chronic conditions that
Aboriginal people presumably suffered from, particularly in the last few decades of the century
when the effects of changing diet and the introduction of tobacco and alcohol were likely to have
had a considerable impact.

5.4.   Physical violence

There are numerous texts that imply that physically violent encounters were widespread. For
example, the recollections of several settlers contain broad references to violence perpetrated
against Aboriginal people in the mid to late 1800s. Both John Schell (Ogilvy 1924:1) and Elizabeth
Napper (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 20/12/1929:6) recalled stories of Aboriginal
people being murdered in large numbers on the Darling, Schell claiming that there was "evidence
that the shooting down of blacks along the Darling was fairly common"[41]. These types of accounts
were repeated for other areas further downstream. Fred Crabb described violence perpetrated by
police at Moorunde:

> In the very early days of settlement along the Murray the blacks were shot down by the
> police. A squad of police were always stationed at Murrundie near Blanchetown. They
> used to shoot the blacks as they passed the police station in canoes. But with the coming
> of the 'second' lot of whites along the river that sort of thing stopped. I have never seen a
> black shot, but what I have told you about the very early days is true. (*Murray Pioneer
> and Australian River Record* 1/6/1933:6).

An early Blanchetown resident similarly recollected violent encounters taking place in that area:

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[41] See also Woolmer 1986:14, who quotes Schell "Often I have heard men boasting of how they shot a nigger down",
the implication is that this was taking place around Wigley's Flat and Thurk Station, not just the Darling.

… somewhere between Swan Reach and Blanchetown … about 20 blacks swimming in the river were killed because some man had stated he had found some of his cattle speared. The blacks were shot without trial of any sort. (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 5/11/1926:5)

It was not possible to ascertain any further information about these events, however, there is information to indicate seven separate and well defined violent events on the Murray during the study period, and a further incident that requires further confirmation through archival records that are held interstate. These events are summarised in table 3 and depicted in figure 21.
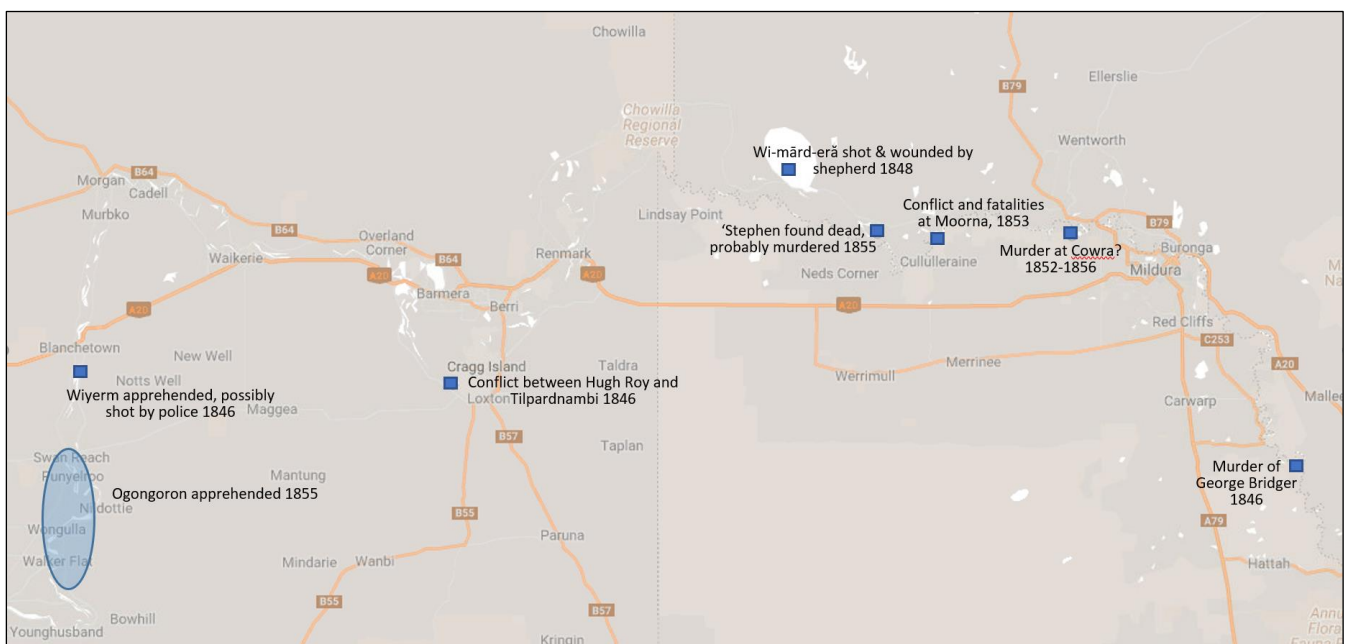
Figure 21: Sites of known violent conflict, central/upper Murray 1842–1900.

Date	Description	Location	Fatalities
1846 June	Murder of George Bridger by Aboriginal people	Near Mount Dispersion, NSW	1 European
1846 July	Possible shooting of Lake Bonney man Wiyerm by police, suspected of arson	Moorunde, SA	
1848 April	Rufus River man Wi-mārd-eră, shot and wounded by a shepherd	George Melrose's station near Lake Victoria, NSW	
1848 December	Conflict between several Europeans and Aboriginal men, assault on Hugh Roy, Tilpardnambi charged	'Mr. William's Station', Piapco, SA	
1853 August	Murder of two European labourers and shooting of Aboriginal suspects by police and settlers	Edward Bagot's Moorna Station, NSW	2 Europeans 1 or 2 Aboriginal men
1855 August	'Stephen' found dead, probably murdered, whilst in employ of Frederick Jones, overlanding stock from NSW to SA	Between the SA/NSW border and the Darling Junction, NSW	1 Aboriginal man
1855 September	Ongongoron (also 'Black Billy'), charged with rape and assault in Adelaide, pursued and apprehended on the Murray	Undetermined, possibly south of Moorunde, SA	
c.1852–1856?	Patrick McGrath believed to have killed an Aboriginal man in conflict ensuing from McGrath's assault of an Aboriginal woman	McGrath's Cowra Station, Victoria	1 Aboriginal man

Table 3: Violent conflict on the central Murray 1842 to 1900.

The shooting of Wi-mārd-eră in 1848

The earliest unexplained violent encounter recorded within government documents took place around April 1848, when an Aboriginal man named Wi-mārd-eră from the Rufus River was shot and wounded by a shepherd on George Melrose's station near Lake Victoria. Sub-Protector Scott reported the incident to Protector Moorhouse, but how he had acquired information about the shooting, or from whom, was either not recorded, or the documents have since been lost or destroyed[42]. The earliest existing letter regarding the incident is written from the Colonial Secretary A.M. Mundy to Scott requesting that he make enquiries, with the assistance of the police, so that further details could be supplied to Governor Robe (SRSA GRG24/4/00000/21:211). It is clear that

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[42] In fact, Scott's letter to Moorhouse cannot be located, the only evidence of it is a reference in later correspondence between Colonial Secretary A.M. Mundy and Scott.

Scott, in his initial report, had not provided the names or descriptions of either man involved in the shooting.

Scott's reply was written two months later and explained that, having visited Melrose's station, he was unable to obtain further details of the incident owing to the absence of the station manager at the time the shooting occurred. He stated:

> I was not able to gain any information with respect to the native Wi-mārd-erā being so violently assaulted. Mr Melrose resides on the River Rhine and his sheep stations near the Rufus are managed by an overseer – the present overseer is quite ignorant of the affair – but the late Manager, whose name is Finn would doubtless be able to give every information, respecting this case. (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1096)

A week later Scott forwarded a statement by George Melrose confirming the name of the overseer, but stating that he knew nothing about the shepherd, who had since left the station "without settlement" (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1142).

The historical record contains no further reference to the shooting of Wi-mārd-erā. There are no letters or remarks from Moorhouse, the Colonial Secretary or the Governor, nor is there any police correspondence. The existing record implies that Wi-mārd-erā survived the shooting, but his whereabouts or wellbeing were not discussed. There appears to have been no attempts to locate the suspected shepherd or the overseer, Finn. Scott's report on the 13th November 1848 makes only the following comments concerning the Rufus area:

> During the past year I have visited every station within my district. I have also on two occasions visited the station belonging to the Messrs. Bunce near the Rufus, and on different occasions I have taken the opportunity of visiting the tribes near Lake Bonney having ridden altogether an aggregate distance of thirteen hundred and twenty six miles. (SRSA GRG24/6/1848/1811½)

This appears to be the first report produced by Scott after his appointment[43], therefore an acknowledgement of the incident involving Wi-mārd-erā might be expected. Moorhouse's annual

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[43] It is possible that Scott was acting only temporarily as Sub-Protector and did not provide regular reports for that reason. See footnote Chapter 3.

summary, which is included with his report for the quarter ended December 1848, refers only to "two unfortunate collisions between the Europeans and Native population" at Mount Remarkable and Port Lincoln, and resulted in European fatalities[44]. Only a year later, when there was seemingly some debate between the Protector and the Police Commissioner regarding the necessity for various stations in the outlying districts, including one proposed for the upper Murray, Moorhouse remarked in a letter to the Colonial Secretary that:

> The Upper Murray supports about 500 Natives, and there never was a station in this
> district; in seven years there has only occurred one case of assault of a native upon a
> European and none of the Europeans upon the Natives, that have been reported to me.
> The Commissioner of Police states that a station is now in course of formation at Ral Ral,
> on the Upper Murray. (SRSA GRG24/6/1849/2001)

In his summary of Aboriginal-settler relations in the region, Moorhouse seems to have conveniently ignored the attack on Wi-mārd-erǎ. The Police Commissioner's report for the period does not appear to have been published in the *South Australian Government Gazette*, and could not be located within SRSA records, nor could any clear reference to the incident be found in contemporary press reports.

The murder of Aboriginal man 'Stephen' in 1855

There is also a distinct deficit in the record concerning the alleged murder of an Aboriginal man known only as 'Stephen' that took place in New South Wales near the border, probably in August 1855. 'Stephen' was employed by Frederick Jones, who occupied runs north of the Murray near Chowilla, and was accompanying him while overlanding stock from New South Wales to South Australia. After 'Stephen' had been found dead "just beyond the boundary of the province under circumstances which [left] no doubt of him having been murdered", Jones proceeded to Moorunde and notified Sub-Protector Scott (SRSA GRG24/6/1855/2742). Scott indicated that he did not have the authority to act, given that the incident had taken place beyond the border of the colony, so on the 18th August Jones wrote to the Colonial Secretary, B.T. Finniss, requesting that the Governor instruct Scott to proceed with enquiries into the matter (SRSA GRG24/6/1855/2742). Scott was

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[44] Moorhouse acknowledges that an Aboriginal person was shot during the Port Lincoln incident.

authorised to take any appropriate action in order to bring the murderer to trial, or to obtain evidence that could be forwarded to a magistrate in NSW (SRSA GRG24/4/0000028:647). In early September 1855 Scott notified the Colonial Secretary that the death of 'Stephen':

> … has been investigated by Mr Commissioner Perry, Police Magistrate of the Albert District of New South Wales and the supposed criminal has been arrested and forwarded to Goulburn, New South Wales to take his trial. (SRSA GRG24/6/1855/2990)

Preliminary investigation of NSW government records revealed no evidence of a suspect being captured or transferred to Goulburn for trial; nor does there seem to have been any details of such a trial published in newspapers, despite trials at the Goulburn courts being seemingly well reported during that period (Jennifer Sloggett, State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales, pers. comm. 2019). The exact circumstances of 'Stephen's' death remain unknown, as do his origins; none of the correspondence on the matter contains information to indicate that he was a man of Murray origin. As was the case with Wi-mārd-erä, the murder was not acknowledged in any of the official periodical reports made by Scott, Moorhouse or the Police Commissioner at the time, Colonel P. Warburton (*SAGG* 8/11/1855:843; *SAGG* 27/12/1855:978).

In 1924, Charlie Schell, a long time resident and stockman from the central Murray region, recalled the murder of an Aboriginal man on James and Pat McGrath's Cowra (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 19/12/1924:1)[45] Station that must have taken place between 1852 and 1856. The property fronts the Murray on the south side of the river between the Lindsay (Victoria) and Darling (NSW) junctions, which broadly matches Scott's description for the location of the murder. In Schell's account (which was recalled some considerable time after the event, was hearsay, and written by a third party):

> Jim McGrath fell foul of the authorities for killing a black and was taken by the police to Melbourne, where he succeeded in getting off. McGrath, it was said, molested the young women of nearby tribes, and then when attacked by the young men he unfortunately killed one. (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 19/12/1924:1)

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[45] Reported in another retrospective account of *George* Schell's earlier life as Kulkyne Station (*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 15/8/1924:1).

Although the time and location of the event recorded within the government record matches Schell's recollections, two separate incidents are suggested by nature of the descriptions given. However, the possibility that the event described by Schell is the same incident that was reported by Frederick Jones cannot be ruled out.

Conflict at Moorna in 1853

The remaining incident for which there is clear evidence of violent confrontation, and in which Aboriginal fatalities resulted, occurred in 1853 when two Aboriginal men were accused of murdering two[46] European labourers somewhere between Chowilla and the Darling junction, and were later shot whilst 'escaping' authorities. Whilst the subsequent apprehension of a Murray man, Metairim (also Metrim, 'Spring Cart Gully Jemmy') was well reported, as it coincided with Francis Cadell's first voyage along the river in the *Lady Augusta*, very little real detail of these conflicts was documented.

The initial incident probably took place around the 14th August (*Adelaide Times* 24/8/1853:2) and on the 23rd August 1853 Alexander Tolmer wrote to E.B. Scott that he had just received information from Edward Bagot stating that:

> … two labouring men travelling from one station to another in the neighbourhood of Chowilla on the Upper Murray had been murdered by the Natives and their bodies cut to pieces and buried; and that his overseer has possession of two legs with boots on and a portion of the Body of one of these unfortunate men. (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/4:210; see also SRSA GRG24/6/1853/2177)

Tolmer was instructed by the Colonial Secretary, B.T. Finniss, to send a detachment of mounted police to act in conjunction with Scott and to capture the offenders (SRSA GRG24/4/1853/635). At the same time Finniss wrote to Scott to establish the chain of command on the arrival of the police from Adelaide:

> In case it should be necessary on this – or any future – occasion, for you to be personally present with the Police party, the rule to be followed in taking the command will be –

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[46] Note that Kinloch's (1853) account refers to only one European

that the Senior officer in rank – whether of the Adelaide or Native Police – will command the whole party; - and your rank, as Inspector, will - of course – render you senior to any officer of Police not an Inspector. (SRSA GRG24/4/1853/634)

The tone of the letter perhaps implied that Finniss was apprehensive in sending a party of police to the upper Murray and anxious to see Scott placed firmly in command in order to defray a potential repeat of the events that had occurred in the area more than a decade earlier. No further letters regarding the incident appear to exist with the exception of one from Tolmer who wrote again to Finniss on the 12th September summarising the outcome of the despatch of police from Adelaide:

> Mr. Scott left Moorunde on the 26th August, and arrived at Chowilla near the Boundary line on the 29th; at that Station; that Gentleman received information that the murders mentioned in my communication to him had occurred in New South Wales; and that the Authorities of that Colony had taken cognizance of the matter: warrants having been issued for the apprehension of three Natives, two of whom were shot in the attempt to capture them; the third happened to be a South Australian Native, an inhabitant of Paringa, a Station twenty miles below Chowilla where Mr. Scott retraced his steps and arrived on the 31st; on the 1st instant he fortunately fell in with the said Native and took him into custody, and forwarded him on the 2nd per "Steamer" *Lady Augusta*", in charge of P.C. Phillips, for the purpose of being handed over to the New South Wales Police. (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/4:221)

Scott provided an even briefer summary account in Protector Moorhouse's quarterly report for September 1853:

> Since the date of my last report, the aborigines of this district have, with one exception, behaved peaceably towards the Europeans. A native, by name Metairim, an inhabitant of Paringa, is said to have been present at a murder which occurred some short time since at a place called Mooroona, in the Colony of New South Wales. The magistrates of the aforementioned Province having issued a warrant for his apprehension, I deemed it prudent to take the said native into custody; having done so, I sent him up to Mooroona per steam-boat, for the purpose of being handed over to the New South Wales Police.

No other mention of the incident was made by either Scott or Moorhouse in the final report for that year (*SAGG* 23/2/1854:149), nor did any reference appear in Tolmer's quarterly Police Commissioner's report (*SAGG* 10/11/1853:743) or the subsequent and final Commissioner's report for that year prepared by P.E. Warburton after Tolmer's dismissal (*SAGG* 23/2/1854:152)[47].

The murder of settlers was no doubt deemed to be of great interest to the public and the press published numerous versions of events which, although lacking in many details, provided a somewhat clearer account than that contained in government correspondence. The first article appeared in the *Adelaide Times* on the 24th August 1853 entitled "Shocking Murder by the Blacks" in which Metairim, referred to as 'Spring Cart Gully Jemmy', was described as the "ringleader" in the mutilation and murder of three men at "Monna, Mr Edward Bagot's head station". Further accounts of the apprehension and extradition of Metairim were repeatedly published throughout September and October as press correspondents accompanying the party on the *Lady Augusta* returned regular reports of the progress of the voyage. On the 12th September 1853 the *Adelaide Times* published information consistent with Tolmer's account in his letter to Finniss written on the same day, but also included greater detail regarding the despatch of various South Australian police from Adelaide and Gawler. According to the *Adelaide Times* (12/9/1853:3), Police Constable Philips was sent on the 23rd August to accompany E.B. Scott to Chowilla to make enquiries about the murders. On the following day, Corporal Coward was despatched from Adelaide, along with Police Constable Richards from Gawler, with instructions to overtake Philips (*Adelaide Times* 12/9/1853:3). It was not until Coward and Richards arrived at Paringa that they finally met with Scott and Philips who, travelling at least one day ahead had already reached Chowilla and determined that Metairim had been present at the murders as a witness only. In the interim, a NSW police constable had been sent down the river with a warrant for the suspects, apprehending two other Aboriginal men with the assistance of neighbouring settlers (*Adelaide Times* 12/9/1853:3). The *Adelaide Times* (12/9/1853:3) reported that on "the prisoners attempting to escape, they were shot, when just on the point of plunging into the Murray".

An alternative account, given to the press by Scott's brother G.B. Scott, described the arrest in greater depth:

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[47] Tolmer was dismissed from the Commissioner's role in November that year and demoted to Inspector (Mayo 1976).

> We found at the station Mr. E.B. Scott, SubProtector of Aborigines, from Moorundee, and
> his brother Mr. G.B. Scott. The former had just returned from the border, and had taken
> a native prisoner charged with being concerned in the late murder. Mr. G.B. Scott had
> been at the Darling, and informed me that the New South Wales Police had taken one of
> the actual murderers, but shot him dead as he was attempting to escape. Another had
> been shot by the settlers as they were endeavouring to secure him, and though he got
> away it is hardly likely he will survive his wound. (*South Australian Register* 12/9/1853:3)

Numerous details are still omitted and the date on which the apprehension and shooting took place can only be estimated, although it presumably occurred after the 23rd August and had taken place before the 1st September. It is not clear whether Metairim was present during the capture of the other Aboriginal men; some accounts imply that three men were apprehended and two were shot (*Adelaide Times* 16/9/1853:2), whereas other versions suggest that Metairim returned to Paringa shortly after witnessing the murder of the Europeans (*Adelaide Times* 12/9/1853:3). What is clear is that Metairim was back at Paringa on the 2nd September and when the *Lady Augusta* departed, he was on board, escorted by Police Constable Philips, under the instruction of Scott, to be delivered to NSW authorities at Moorna (*Adelaide Times* 12/9/1853:3). They were met by a magistrate, Dr Fletcher, "who refused to interfere in the case of the prisoner; considering his arrest illegal" (Allen 1853:26; see also *Adelaide Times* 8/10/1853:2). Of Metairim's involvement in the incident, Allen (1853:26) stated:

> The prisoner himself acknowledges his acquaintance with the fact of the murder of the
> white men shortly after it occurred, but which he did not reveal on account of giving
> offence to the tribe he was with; but he denies any participation in the crime.

Metairim was the only person to be identified or acknowledged as a witness to these events, but no definitive conclusions can be drawn on the extent of his involvement in the murders or whether he was present during the capture and shooting of the two other Aboriginal suspects. Nor is it clear how the murder of the European labourers came to be known in the first instance. In fact, details of these murders are surprisingly scant. The identity of the men is not revealed in any correspondence or press report and the circumstances under which the murders took place are described in the briefest detail in only two documents; Bagot's description cited by Tolmer in his letter to Scott

(SRSA GRG5/9/00000/4:210; also SRSA GRG24/6/1853/2177) and Kinloch's (1853:14) reference to the NSW magistrate's remarks published in his journal[48] of the voyage of the *Lady Augusta*:

> Mr Fletcher spoke with some degree of feeling of a barbarous murder committed by a
> black, about ten days before, upon a white man, whose horse he had undertaken to
> guide through a ford.

The contemporary record appears to contain no other references to the events that took place at Moorna, although it is worth noting that the recollections of an early settler that were published more than 65 years later make a connection, albeit a tenuous one, between the murder of two shepherds on the Murray around 1853 and an Aboriginal man known as Nanya (also Nania, Nannyer, Nynia, Nonnia). In 1918 the *Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* (18/10/1918:4) published Mrs. D. Valentine's account of her family's early experiences on the Murray, in which she stated:

> I believe it was shortly after my people arrived on the Murray that two shepherds
> were murdered either in this district or the Wentworth district. Grandfather always
> believed it was Nannyer (Nanya?) who murdered at least one of them and after he
> committed the crime he fled with two or three other blacks to the Scotia Blocks where he
> was captured with about thirty others about 22 years ago.

The 'discovery' of an Aboriginal group in the back country, who lived separately from those Aboriginal people in the more heavily settled areas along the Murray, appeared to be a topic of great public interest and was well reported in the press in 1893. The only apparent reference to this group in the government record is contained within a single police correspondence file. It comprises several letters, the first of which was written by John Robertson of Chowilla and Bookmark stations on the 6th February 1893 to Mounted Constable David Teate, who was stationed at Renmark Police Camp, notifying him of the existence of "11 wild blacks and 20 to 30 dingoes at Trussell's dam nearly opposite the 30th mile post of the Boundary fence between this colony and New South Wales" (SRSA GRG5/2/1893/148). Robertson's primary concern was the threat posed to his stock by the dingoes and he suggested the police might be able to take steps

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[48] A retrospective, edited and published text.

towards "rounding this tribe up and shifting them to a more civilized region" (SRSA GRG5/2/1893/148). He gave several minor details about the group, that had been furnished by his boundary rider, Edward Topham, concluding that:

> We have heard of a few blacks out in our back Country for a great many years but had no idea there were so many of them or so many dogs. It would be better to get these blacks now as soon as the rain comes they will travel. (SRSA GRG5/2/1893/148)

Teate forwarded the letter to the Protector of Aborigines, E.L. Hamilton, with his own letter explaining that the Aboriginal people who lived in the back country had been known to settlers in NSW for some time but would "clear away" whenever a settler approached them (SRSA GRG5/2/1893/148). He added that they were "better left alone in their native state" than rounded up as Robertson had suggested. Requested to make further enquiries, Teate reported in the following month that these people were known as the "Nania" tribe and inhabited the "unoccupied country between Trussel's dam 40 miles north of the river Murray and Popiltah on the anna branch NS Wales" and had not been seen by settlers for at least sixteen years. "Nania" he wrote "is reported to have committed a murder on the river and cleared away for fear of being hung in the early days" (SRSA GRG5/2/1893/148). It is not clear whether Teate was referring to the murder of a European or an Aboriginal person. Newspaper reports of Nanya's tribe in the 1890s (and another spate of articles in the 1920s) suggest that Nanya murdered another Aboriginal man[49]. Nanya and his people were eventually persuaded to 'come in' by three other Aboriginal stockmen working on Crozier's station at Moorna[50] (*Observer* 31/7/1920:31) in 1893. It is clear that stories about Nanya have, over time, transmuted into folk lore and the degree of his involvement in violent encounters is likely to remain unknown.

The shooting of Wiyerm by police in 1846

The only other documented incident of a potentially violent act towards an Aboriginal person took place in 1846, when police seemingly shot an Aboriginal suspect in an arson case. The court

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[49] Most references imply that a man was murdered (*Australian Town and Country Journal* 20/2/1897:25; *The Chronicle* 3/9/1921:30), but in one account Nanya (Nynia) is said to have murdered an Aboriginal woman (*Barrier Times* 17/12/1898:35).

[50] Or to Popiltah Station (Cudmore 1893 in SLSA PRG189), there are various accounts.

appearance of Wiyerm was routinely reported along with other cases heard in the court on the day in question, but there is no record of the case either within available police records[51] nor the Protector's correspondence. On the 26th July, Wiyerm, a Lake Bonney man, appeared in court in Adelaide, charged with setting fire to a hut and cattle run at Moorunde (*Adelaide Observer* 1/8/1846:6). On hearing the testimony from mounted police constable Eastwood and the owner of the run, referred to as Mr. Martin, the judge found there was insufficient evidence to convict Wiyerm. There had been no witness to the fire, and although Wiyerm had admitted to carrying a fire stick he explained that it was a common practice during winter and denied any knowledge of the incident. The *Adelaide Observer* (1/8/1846:6) reported the following detail regarding Wiyerm's apprehension:

> It appears that the prisoner (who was as innocent of the charge alleged as any one in
> Court) had resisted his apprehension, keeping the police at bay for some time by
> throwing stones, and c., and in the fray had received a wound in the breast from which
> he was evidently suffering great pain.

It's not clear whether the wound was the result of gunshot, although it seems likely. Wiyerm was acquitted, at which point he disappears from the documentary record.

The murder of George Bridger in 1846

There are very few references to violence perpetrated by settlers against Aboriginal people on the central Murray after 1841, but fewer still are those accounts where settlers were the victims of conflict. In fact, with the exception of the murder of the two European labourers at Moorna in 1853, George Bridger's murder near Mount Dispersion in 1846 is the only other fatal incident of this kind. It took place some distance beyond the state border, just several miles from Mount Dispersion in NSW (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1035) but is mentioned here as it was comparatively well documented within South Australian government records. Although there is no specific evidence

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[51] The only station on the Murray during this period was at Moorunde, for which there are no station books held by either SRSA or SA Police Historical Society archives; Police Commissioner's correspondence (SRSA GRG5/2) is held by SRSA, but a significant proportion of the letters received for the period up until c. 1850 is missing).

available, the documents suggest that there was a very strong possibility that reprisal attacks occurred shortly afterwards.

Bridger (also Bridges, Britcher) was the son-in-law[52] of pastoralist Henry Jarvis (also Jervis) who was bringing a small party of six men and a number of cattle to Adelaide via the Murrumbidgee, Darling and Murray Rivers. A reasonably detailed account of the conflict was given in a statement by Herbert Hilder (also Elder) to the Commissioner of Police, B.T. Finniss, when the party arrived in Adelaide (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1035). Henry Jarvis and his son George separated from Bridger, Hilder and the remaining two men (John Jones and Thomas Johnson) to look for lost stock on the 28th June. The remaining four camped at a lagoon three miles east of Mount Dispersion on that evening, and on the following morning proceeded west. Approximately three miles onwards, when the group had difficulty discerning the path, "seven or eight blacks" who had been travelling behind "pointed it out" (SRSA GRG24/6/1846/1035). Intimidated by their presence, Hilder claims that they told them to keep back, but on arriving at a clearing in the scrub, they stopped and:

> We took the guns down to start the blacks away. Directly we took the guns Jones fired a gun, it was not pointed at any one. He said it had gone off itself, when I saw it was pointed at the ground. He seemed very much alarmed, he could not lift the gun to point it. Immediately on hearing the report the blacks sprung up out of a creek which we had just crossed – they began to cooee and were answered in every direction; they then began to jump about and take up their spears. Bridger and I went towards the blacks to try to drive them back and I told Jones to come on, as he was lagging behind; he had another gun loaded in his hand besides the one which went off. We drew back to the dray when Jones would not come up. We stood there a few minutes, the blacks kept increasing in numbers. I told Bridger we had better go on and let them take the dray, he said "I will give them some beef, it may pacify them" He took some beef out of the cask, and threw it down to them, some came and picked it up, the rest remained behind. They seemed a little pacified then, and I went to round the cattle, Jones called out to me, "Herbert, Herbert" I looked round and saw Jones running towards the dray, Bridger was on the ground with a spear in his back. I ran towards the dray to get a gun, a black ran after me and another went after Jones. They followed us a few rod, we ran away and caught a horse each, we mounted them without saddle or bridle. We went back making a

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[52] Described in some accounts as his nephew.

circuit to avoid the blacks, and went on till we met the two Jarvis's. While I was running

away, I turned around and saw several blacks on the dray while others were in front of

the bullocks keeping them back. I also saw Bridger sitting on the ground with the spear in

his back, and several blacks running towards him and throwing waddies at him. The last I

saw of him, they had just got up to him and were in the act of striking him with their

waddies. When he first received the spear in the back I heard him exclaim "Oh Lord, have

mercy upon me". These were the only words I heard him use. (SRSA

GRG24/6/1846/1035)

Jones was clearly nervous, and armed, but in Hilder's account only a single shot was fired. But the

version of events given to the press by Thomas Johnson (who is notably absent from Hilder's

account) implies that guns may have been used more than once. The *South Australian Register*

(9/9/1846:2[53]) published the following account (italics added):

Mr Johnson walked from the cattle towards the dray: but before he could reach it Jones

had fired a shot, which, however, he said was an accidental one. Bridges having

expressed his determination to proceed, Mr Johnson returned to the cattle, and caught

his horse, which was the only one saddled. By this time Elder had joined him alongside

the cattle, *which some dogs belonging to the blacks were attacking; but they were got rid*

of without having scattered the cattle. On looking round towards the dray, Mr Johnson

saw Bridges handing some beef to the blacks, and observed that as he turned from them

they speared him through the back and under the right arm, and he fell to the ground.

Elder and Jones were no longer visible, and he concluded they had been speared too.

Retreating upriver, the three men were subsequently reunited with Henry and George Jarvis, who

wanted to return to Bridger's body, but were convinced to proceed further east towards the station

of Mr Ross, which they had passed prior to reaching Mount Dispersion on the previous evening. Still

en route the following day, the party met with two European men, from whom they learnt that Mr.

Tooth's overlanding party was approaching from the east, and headed for Adelaide:

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[53] Also *Adelaide Observer* 12/9/1846:4. Briefer references were published elsewhere (see *Moreton Bay Courier*
19/9/1846:4 and *Launceston Examiner* 19/9/1846:4).

> … Johnson and Elder went to meet them, and upon asking the assistance of Mr Tooth's
> superintendent, Mr Newman, the services of an armed and well-mounted man were
> granted, and Elder was left with Mr Newman. The armed man, who had served in the
> British cavalry, and was very properly called "the trooper," carried his musket in "a boot,"
> and had plenty of ammunition. Johnson, too, was furnished with a brace of pistols. (*South
> Australian Register* 9/9/1846:2)

The remaining account describes the party's return to the location of Bridger's death, the discovery of his body which was covered in "a little grass, a few stick and sand" and the interment of his remains. There is no evidence to suggest that reprisal attacks were carried out by these men, but their intentions appear relatively clear. Jarvis eventually arrived in Adelaide some time in August and reported the incident to police. The Commissioner at the time, B.T. Finniss, notified the Colonial Secretary, A.M. Mundy, explaining that as events took place beyond the border of the colony, the government was not in a position to "punish the perpetrators, or prevent an occurrence of similar outrages" (SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:366–367). He forwarded copies of the depositions of Henry Jarvis and Herbert Hilder, and a statement by Frederick Walker and seven other squatters who, along with two Natta Natta men, had accompanied Jarvis on his return to find Bridger's body. The statement of Walker, who was later notorious as the Commandant of the Corps of Native Police in NSW, and the other men, merely reiterates those of Jarvis and Hilder. There's no indication that a reprisal attack was undertaken either before Jarvis and his party continued to Adelaide or after, by Walker and his men, although it is clear that they were well equipped for it (*South Australian Register* 9/9/1846:2) and Walker's proclivity for rendering "essential services" to squatters in the Darling area shortly became well known (*Sydney Morning Herald* 3/10/1850:7).

These events of course gave rise to the appeals made by Frederick Handcock and Frederick Jones, who occupied the run near Chowilla. It is difficult to determine if these men were genuinely alarmed by the possibility of experiencing an attack, but it seems unlikely. When Handcock drowned in Limbra Creek in the following year, the press described him as being "much-loved" by Aboriginal people (*South Australian* 7/12/1847:3). It is also worth noting that Jarvis repeated a similar journey less than twelve months after Bridger's death, arriving in Adelaide in March 1847. The *South Australian Register* (3/3/1847:2) reported that Jarvis met with numerous Aboriginal groups in the vicinity of Mt Dispersion, "but tact, timely presents of pipes, tobacco, and fishhooks,

not only conciliated them, but procured their valuable help". Jarvis, having been acquainted with the perils of overlanding stock along the Murray, was seemingly well-prepared.

The pursuit and apprehension of Ogongoron/'Black Billy' in 1855

An incident which appears repeatedly in both contemporary records of events on the central Murray and in retrospective accounts and local histories, involved the pursuit and subsequent apprehension of Ogongoron (also Rulgongoran, 'Black Billy'), who had been charged with various offences that had taken place in the Mount Lofty Ranges. What is interesting about the incident is not so much Ogongoron's alleged crimes, although the nature of these is the subject of much of the associated correspondence, but the involvement of Native Police and the way in which Ogongoron was characterised as a desperate and dangerous fugitive despite accounts to the contrary. Furthermore, although Scott claimed that Ogongoron was not known to him or other local Aboriginal people (SRSA GRG5/2/1855/625), the possibility that he was from the Murray might still be entertained.

Ogongoron appeared in the Supreme Court on 5th December 1855, charged with the rape of nine year old Susan Phillips (also Honora Phillis, Susan Phillis, Hannah Phillis) at "the Sources of the Torrens"[54] earlier that year in August; he pleaded guilty but stated that he was intoxicated at the time he committed the offence (*Adelaide Times* 6/12/1855:4). He was also charged with assault and attempted murder of Police Trooper Henry Nixon on the 1st September 1855. Nixon had been escorting Ogongoron from Mount Barker to Adelaide after taking him into custody for the assault on the young girl. Ogongoron allegedly attacked Nixon at Glen Osmond, en route from Mount Barker, seizing his sword and cutting him across the face, before escaping further into the hills and eventually to the Murray. Ogongoron pleaded not guilty to this latter charge; he was, however, found guilty of both charges and sentenced to life imprisonment for the rape, and death for the attempted murder of Nixon (*Adelaide Times* 6/12/1855:4).

Sub-Protector Scott and two Native constables were responsible for Ogongoron's apprehension once he reached the Murray. Whilst police documents and press accounts contained much detail about Nixon's assault and Ogongoron's escape at Glen Osmond, they contain very little content regarding Ogongoron's recapture on the Murray. There are no reports written by the European

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[54] Described by Scott some years later as Angaston (SLSA PRG608)

police who were dispatched to follow Ogongoron to the Murray, nor does there appear to be any contemporary account by Scott regarding the apprehension, which seems to have been undertaken only by native troopers[55]. A single file relating to the matter exists within the police correspondence record series (SRSA GRG5/2/1855/625), comprising five letters, one of which was written by Scott on the 6th September merely stating that Police Trooper Harvey and the native troopers were currently in pursuit of Ogongoron. Neither are the quarterly reports from Protector Moorhouse or Commissioner Warburton any more enlightening. Moorhouse stated that it was unnecessary for him to elaborate on the Commissioner's account and Warburton simply wrote:

> I need scarcely say that, the Police were earnest in their efforts to catch this ruffian; but the difficulty of the country, the continued fall of rain obliterating his tracks, and the intimate knowledge which Black Billy possessed of the best hiding lines, enabled him to conceal himself for a long time; at last he got on the Murray, where Mr. Scott, of Moorundee, seized him, thereby effecting a capture second to none in public importance during this Quarter. (*SAGG* 8/11/1855:845)

The most detailed version of events was probably written many years after the incident took place, although it is not dated. Scott's (SLSA PRG608) personal papers contain many unfinished vignettes of his time at Moorunde, but his account of 'Black Billy's' capture entitled "A Bush Tale" appears to be virtually complete. Scott wrote that he sent a European corporal and two native police through the bush to find Ogongoron, but they were unsuccessful. Determined to persevere with the search Scott then decided to take his boat:

> … and with a crew of three Natives and myself pulled away downstream from Moorroonde and on the third morning of our departure from my home I met with a friendly Lake Bonney Native who was returning to his home and from him I gathered all information I required on Black Billy viz that the fellow I was in search of was in a camp of Black Fellows on the left Bank of the River about three quarters of a mile from where I was I then detached my two Native Troopers, with instructions to seize Billy in the camp

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[55] Police Trooper Alfred Lawrence wrote to Scott in 1902, reminiscing about the events on the Murray at this time; he remarks that he was ordered to abandon pursuit of Ogongoron in favour of pursuing 12 European men who had escaped from the Adelaide Gaol at approximately the same time. Scott's account also suggests that only native police were present when Ogongoron was apprehended. Both documents are contained in Scott's personal papers (SLSA PRG608).

at all [hazards?] and I would drop down stream with my old native warrior and be close to them to render all assistance in the capture. – my plan was so far frustrated for Billy and his companions had crossed The River to [?] a Lagoon on the opposite side of The River – my Native Police crossed the River and soon reached the newly formed camp where they seized Billy and called lustily for me and on hearing their call my old warrior and myself [darted?] from our [concealment?] in the [reeds?] and ran full eighty yards in all haste to the rescue of our comrades – my Natives clung to the prisoner, right [well?] and on reaching him I soon had the handcuffs on him and secure – but in the struggle, one of my men was bitten through the neck and the other had a spear wound through one of his feet and blood was spattered over my men and the prisoner [In the mean time?] the scene was a little savage for about twenty Aborigines, some with spears and waddies [?] near wailing a dirge for having lost one of their number by force of Law [It?] was a [?] sight for the grief of Billy's friends seemed to touch their hearts that he should be [taken?] from them for ever: but as I could converse at that time with them in the [I.a.wung?] dialect it [?] them in their [sorrow?] as they followed [?] my boat to see the fate of their comrade … [no further pages in document]

It is difficult to determine the location of Ogongoron's capture, although it was potentially some distance south of Moorunde if Scott's recollection of events is accurate. The reaction of the Aboriginal people assembled suggests that Ogongoron was known to them and that he was, perhaps, from that part of the Murray.

Following his capture, Ogongoron was transferred from Moorunde to Adelaide, accompanied by Police Trooper Thomas Harvey and an unnamed native constable sometime in November. On the 16th of that month Corporal Alfred Burtt, stationed at Gawler, wrote to Senior Inspector George Hamilton alleging that Ogongoron had again attempted to kill a police officer. He claimed that on being accompanied outside of the public house where they had stopped for the evening at Truro, Ogongoron "endeavoured to strangle [a native constable] which he would have done but for the timely arrival of assistance" (SRSA GRG5/2/1855/625). In a letter written to Scott two weeks later, Harvey refuted the accusation, explaining that he was aware there had been a struggle between the native constable and Ogongoron when the latter man had refused to return inside, but when he went to the two men he:

> … found [the] prisoner sitting on the ground with N Constable standing over Prisoner Bk
>
> Billy returned with me very quietly to the tap room, N Constable says Prisoner used no
>
> threatening language, neither did he make any attempt at his neck, but asked him why
>
> he shouted (SRSA GRG5/2/1855/625)

A note contained in the same file conveys a similarly passive image of Ogongoron, describing him as "a young man - pock marked – has a thin painful voice as though the lungs were affected" (SRSA GRG5/2/1855/625). On his imprisonment at the Dry Creek Prison in December of 1855 he was described as a former stock keeper and colt breaker for John Baker of Morialta, of 'intelligent expression' and hirsute appearance (SRSA GRG54/39/00000/1:92). The last written record concerning Ogongoron is a notation in the prison book dated January 1856.

Conflict between Tilpardnambi and Hugh Roy in 1848

The remaining violent encounter for which there is evidence in the documentary record took place in 1848 when hut keeper Hugh Roy was assaulted by Aboriginal man Tilpardnambi. Even the broad location of this event is uncertain; it was described as taking place at William's Station at Piapco (*South Australian Register* 20/12/1848:3). William's Station was situated south of North West Bend but Piapco is probably an early form of Pyap[56], an area which was more likely occupied by John Chambers at that time[57].

Roy alleged that he was approached in his hut by Tilpardnambi and another Aboriginal man who requested flour. Tilpardnambi had been known to Roy, who claimed to have often given him flour, but had refused him both on that occasion and a fortnight previously (*South Australian Register* 20/12/1848:3). Roy claimed that when he refused him, Tilpardnambi proceeded to pick up a stick and beat him with it (*South Australian Register* 20/12/1848:3). After having received several blows to the head, Roy called for assistance before picking up his gun which, he said, "the blacks wrested … from him" (*South Australian Register* 20/12/1848:3). Two men working nearby, James Fahey and Patrick Carroll, came to Roy's assistance and recovered the gun; they had not seen Roy receive any

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[56] Various references in South Australian newspapers associate the Piapco run with Bookpurnong just north east of Pyap (e.g. *Adelaide Observer* 2/8/1873:1)

[57] The same account, which describes the initial court proceedings, explains that Tilpardnambi was accompanied to court by Moorhouse and a "native lad named Mudlong" who acted as an interpreter. This perhaps suggesting that Tilpardnambi could not be easily understood by Moorhouse and was more likely from Pyap than William's Station, where Moorhouse was more familiar with local dialect.

blows but they claimed that the Aboriginal men attempted to spear them so they broke their spears at which point those that had assembled during the event all retreated across the river (*Adelaide Observer* 30/12/1848:3). Roy left for Wigley's Station to report the matter and found that the police had taken Tilpardnambi into custody on his return (*South Australian Register* 20/12/1848:3).

Tilpardnambi appeared twice before the Police Magistrate's Court in December of 1848, before finally being sentenced in the Supreme Court in March the following year where he was found guilty of aggravated assault and sentenced to 18 months hard labour. This event does not appear to be recorded anywhere in police or Protector's correspondence and receives only vague mention in the Protector's quarterly report for the end of March 1849 where the convictions for the period are noted (*SAGG* 3/5/1849:205). In March of the following year, however, Moorhouse wrote to the Colonial Secretary and requested the early release of Tilpardnambi owing to his age and health:

> This man is upwards of 60 years of age and confinement to the end of the term would in Mr Moore's language accelerate his death. I may venture to use a more pointed expression, and state that in my opinion this Native cannot live six months longer in Gaol. (SRSA GRG52/7/1850/430)

According to Moorhouse's subsequent Protector's report in March 1850, approval was granted (*SAGG* 18/04/1850:259) and Tilpardnambi was presumably released shortly after.

6. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1. The extent of physical violence on the central/upper Murray

The available documentary evidence does not demonstrate that widespread violent conflict prevailed in the period following early overlanding along the River Murray and the events surrounding the Rufus River massacre. Despite the anecdotal evidence provided by the assertions of early European settlers on the Murray, which have become embedded in local narrative (e.g. *Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record* 18/10/1918:4; Ogilvy 1923, 1924) and regional histories (e.g. Woolmer 1986), there are few texts that record violent encounters, and nothing which demonstrates that large numbers of fatalities resulted from conflict. What is instead apparent is that isolated instances of physical violence occurred occasionally, although were not prevalent within the study region, and were instead concentrated in that part of the Murray between Lake Victoria and Mount Dispersion. Importantly, though, the absence of documentary evidence cannot rule out the possibility that other violent incidents occurred and simply went unrecorded.

Of the eight encounters for which time, location (albeit approximate) or some indication of the individuals involved were recorded, four resulted in fatalities and all occurred east of the state border. This in itself complicates examination of the events, as this research has been limited to an investigation of records held within South Australia. With so few recorded deaths, any statistical analysis of the distribution of the events across the study area would be unwise, but the fact that they occurred in NSW is consistent with the historical perceptions of the European population that the Darling region was more prone to conflict than those areas downstream. This area was inhabited by Aboriginal people who were viewed by South Australian colonists as more dangerous and alien than the familiar Indigenous inhabitants of the closer settled areas around Adelaide and even Moorunde (Pope 1989:8). For a period, it also represented an administrative no-man's land; in the cases involving the murder of George Bridger, Stephen, and the conflict at Moorna, South Australian government officials were quick to absolve themselves of any judicial responsibility (*SAGG* 15/12/1853:817; SRSA GRG5/9/00000/2:366–367; SRSA GRG24/4/0000028:647). It was also an area that had a distinctly different approach to frontier policing and where the Native Police "effected a great amount of good in checking the lawless state of outrage on the part of the native blacks" (see Skinner 1975:166 citing the 1857 *Report from the Select Committee on the Native*

Police Force). While these facts alone were not the cause of violence, they may well have contributed to creating an environment in which there was a greater likelihood of violence occurring.

Of the remaining four incidents that were documented, two occurred on the river south of North West Bend and involved altercations with police or authorities. The incidents at Pyap and Lake Victoria were between individual Aboriginal men and pastoral station employees. The conflict between Tilpardnambi and Hugh Roy is the only recorded violent encounter for the region between Moorunde and Lake Victoria. It is also the only documented case of a conviction being pursued for an assault; something that might have been expected to be more prevalent given the circumstances. Wolski's (2000) analysis of interaction between pastoralists and Aboriginal people in western Victoria during a similar period concludes that outstations were the setting for much interaction, although this was both violent and amicable. It is a logical conclusion that contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans on the Murray also took place at outstations to a considerable extent, and equally likely that fractious relations were commonplace and gave rise to violence. Whether this might have resulted in police involvement and the production of official records is difficult to determine and cannot be confirmed, given that police records for stations on the river prior to 1900 do not exist. Further analysis of historical spatial information combined with field survey might enable the location of outstations to be determined, and some potential may exist for future archaeological investigation.

Although there is little to indicate that violence was perpetrated by police to the extent that occurred in NSW, texts concerning the apprehension of both Wiyerm and Ogongoron provide evidence to demonstrate that police were capable of exerting brutal force when dealing with the Indigenous population. Importantly, Native police were involved not just in government schemes, like the removal of snags from the river and the tracking of individuals in the bush, but also actively participated in the pursuit and capture of other Aboriginal people. Although the lone description of Native Police involvement in the apprehension of Ogongoron does not enable us to equate the role of South Australian Native troopers with those in the NMP in NSW, their short-lived activity on the Murray during the first iteration of the corps in SA was perhaps not as benign as has been previously suggested (e.g. Nettelbeck and Ryan 2017:53).

An unexpected aspect of the data is the absence of the sort of euphemistic language which appears to have typified many violent encounters on the frontier (Attwood 2017:27; Foster 2009). There is

no veiled account of a reprisal attack for either of the identified incidents that resulted in European fatalities. When the two European labourers were murdered at Moorna in 1853 and police and settlers pursued the alleged offenders, no attempt was made to conceal the fact that the suspects were shot whilst trying to escape. On the other hand, texts pertaining to the murder of George Bridger stop short of mentioning any retributive action at all. Given that a heavily armed party that included the likes of Frederick Walker were involved in locating Bridger's body and recovering Jarvis's stock and equipment, it might well be imagined that retribution was sought. That there is nothing said in their statements is explicable, yet even the fervent accounts published by the press fail to contain any inkling that counterattack might have followed the murder of the European man. Nor was this type of language detected elsewhere in the data, or during the preliminary process of identifying and collating documents.

The texts demonstrate a distinct shift in tone and subject matter over the sixty years that have been examined and it is clear that the documented occurrence of violent conflict on the central/upper Murray was confined to the first two decades of the period. This is a period in which overlanding continued, but gradual pastoral expansion along the Murray incontrovertibly changed the nature of European/Indigenous relations. Perhaps the pastoralists, with a vested interest in establishing long term relationships and negotiating labour arrangements, were more conscientious and better able to achieve accord than overlanders, who passed quickly through the area with their large mobs of stock. Given the nature of race relations elsewhere on the South Australian frontier (for instance, see Foster and Nettelbeck 2012; Pope 1989), this seems unusual, but in the absence of data to the contrary, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that overt forms of violence on the central/upper Murray subsided considerably after the events at Rufus River and that few fatalities resulted from violent encounters in the decades that followed. Importantly, however, other aspects of colonisation continued to have serious and detrimental consequences for Aboriginal lives.

6.2.   Forms of contact and control

Much of the documentary evidence for Indigenous/European contact on the central/upper Murray concerns the distribution of a variety of food and non-food 'rations', beginning with flour and blankets at the scheme's inception, and later coming to include tea, sugar, tobacco, medicines, fishing gear and clothing. During most of the first two decades of the period under examination,

rations were regularly distributed by Sub-Protectors whose sole purpose was to oversee the 'social management' of the Indigenous population. Whilst regular distribution occurred at Moorunde, rations were only distributed periodically from centres such as Lake Bonney and Paringa. When, in the latter part of the century, depots were constituted at Overland Corner and Chowilla, and later again at Morgan and Renmark, distribution was generally undertaken by police as an adjunct to other duties. Previous analysis (Foster 1989) of ration distribution on the Murray has implied that distribution from sites east of Moorunde was regular and consistent from the 1850s onwards, but primary records indicate that it was more likely sporadic. Although police were stationed at Overland Corner in 1855 and police stations constituted as depots in 1858, storage facilities at the station appear to have been insufficient and police disinclined to accommodate distribution. There's no documentary evidence that rations were distributed from Overland Corner until 1863, and even then, records only document outgoing supplies from Adelaide and contain no information about if or when they were distributed to Aboriginal people. The situation at Chowilla was the same and in 1867 responsibility for distribution was transferred to the Sheep Inspector seemingly because police had neglected the task. Storage facilities at the Inspector's depot also appear to have been inadequate, and in 1871 the entire site was relocated to Lake Littra which, Glenie (1998:45) has suggested, was not popular amongst Aboriginal people. Although there are clearly considerable gaps in the primary records for the period in question, there appears to be a distinct possibility that ration distribution east of the Moorunde – Morgan region was poorly administered, infrequent, and had little impact on the lives of Aboriginal people. By the mid 1860s, when depots in this area were, to some extent, functional, rations were reserved for only the sick, elderly or infirm.

Rationing, as a principal point of direct interaction between Aboriginal people and colonists, came to represent colonial policy in a variety of forms over the years. When distribution first commenced at Moorunde, the dual intent of the scheme was clear: not only would it alleviate the collective European conscience through acts of compensation for Indigenous dispossession, but it would also demonstrate European aspiration for conciliation and peaceful settlement. Within a very short period of time, however, the use of rations evolved into a tool for negotiating compliance. Even in Eyre's first year at Moorunde threats of interruption to supply were issued to the Moorunde people when they failed to remain in their own district. Compliance was later sought in a variety of other

circumstances, including school attendance for children and the performance of tasks, such as running errands and messages.

Importantly, though, ration distribution became the principal strategy used in influencing the movement of Aboriginal people within the landscape, and the colonial government's primary means of exerting control over the Indigenous population. There is evidence that different schemes for curbing mobility were proposed or attempted, including identification of individuals using bracelets and tattoos and the enforcement of vagrancy laws, but the government ultimately relied on rations distribution as a way of retaining Murray people within their own districts. The issue of Indigenous mobility evidently became less problematic for the colonial government after the 1850s; with the integration of people into the pastoral workforce and a decline in the overall size of the population, large scale seasonal or periodic migrations appear to have subsided. Documents regarding those individuals who remained in contact with colonial outposts on the Murray in the last few decades of the century suggest that the government were still inclined towards preventing people from relocating to areas of concentrated European settlement.

Whilst the implementation of colonial policy appears to have been effectual at Moorunde during the 1840s and 1850s, I would suggest that the impact of ration distribution elsewhere on the Murray, or after 1855, was relatively inconsequential. Foster (1989) and Levi (2016) have argued that the success of colonial policy in controlling Indigenous mobility and influencing internal group dynamics and behaviour was achieved through the creation of dependence upon rations. Despite these arguments and the apparent intentions of the colonial government, there is no evidence in the primary record to suggest that Aboriginal people viewed rations as an economic necessity, or that they replaced traditional sources of food. This has implications for future archaeological investigation of ration depots as locales of cultural interaction on the Murray. Whilst these sites have the potential to reveal something about the nature interaction between Aboriginal people and bureaucracy, they might also reveal that contact at these places was negligible. In fact, there is a distinct possibility that Aboriginal people were more likely to acquire European food and other items through interaction with pastoralists, especially once their participation in the labour force increased with the advent of the Victorian goldrush. Employment on stations also considerably influenced the movement of Aboriginal people within the landscape.

Previous government schemes to mobilise an Indigenous workforce en masse had been trialled and failed, but with the exodus of Europeans to the Victorian goldfields at the beginning of the 1850s,

the pastoral industry became reliant on Indigenous labour in order to survive. Government officials certainly reported on the benefits to pastoralists in the region, but little detail is available about where people went or when and whether they returned. It is clear that Aboriginal people continued to work in the pastoral industry even after the end of the 1850s, but government records contains only casual estimates about the numbers employed and a vague suggestion that people may have travelled well beyond their district to obtain work. One conclusion that can be reached on the basis of the documents analysed here is that employment within the European workforce probably contributed to a process of fragmentation that had previously been enacted through the removal of children and young adults from their communities in the 1840s and 1850s. It is possible, though, that it afforded them a somewhat greater degree of autonomy by providing access to colonial goods and position of relative power than the alternative of remaining outside of the European labour system.

Attempts to disrupt Indigenous social organisation and convert Aboriginal people into useful members of the industrial classes were fundamental to the colonial process from the very outset (Foster 1990:11) and significant numbers of Murray children and youths were coerced into attending school in Adelaide and the training institute at Port Lincoln. While the exact extent of the removal of children from their families and communities is impossible to determine, documentary evidence provides some insight into the way this practice was conducted and the impact it had on the communities on the Murray. In the 1840s concerted efforts were made to attract and retain children in the schools in the city; they were 'rounded up' both from Murray encampments in Adelaide and from the river, and threats and bribes were used to secure a degree of parental acceptance. The success of this scheme was limited; Aboriginal people demonstrated considerable resistance to the removal of their children. It was also short-lived, but before its demise in the early 1850s, the government had instituted an alternative strategy for the removal of young Aboriginal people from the influences of their own society. The training institute at Poonindie near Port Lincoln commenced operation in 1850 and accepted its pupils both from the school in Adelaide and later recruited directly from the Murray area. It is likely that the number of children and youths who were separated from their community comprised only a small proportion of the entire population, but equally likely that they represented a critical cohort in terms of its long term survival.

Contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans on the Murray after 1842 assumed a number of forms, but the documentary evidence of this interaction is limited in that it primarily concerns the ways in which colonial authorities mediated Indigenous/European relations. Ultimately, most intercultural relationships would have been formed directly between *settlers* and Aboriginal people, particularly given that ration distribution to the wider populace probably only occurred at Moorunde during the 1840s and 1850s and was irregular and confined to a subset of the population for the remainder of the century. Whilst a reasonably accurate location for ration depots has been determined in all but one case (the police camp/depot at Chowilla up to 1867), it's likely that pastoral stations, particularly outstations, represent sites of equal if not greater value for the future investigation of cultural relations on the Murray. Although it is difficult to accurately conclude exactly what the nature of these relations was like on the basis of the documents examined here, the record contains evidence for co-operation as well as conflict.

6.3.   A hypothesis for population decline

Dowling (1990) concludes that population decline amongst Aboriginal people of the central/upper Murray resulted from the cumulative effects of introduced diseases, fatalities arising from frontier violence, and the consequences of migration. Although his research provides a model of decline for the Erawirung[58] and Ngawait people, it is reasonable to assume that circumstances were little different for the populations living either east or west of his study area. Estimating a pre-colonisation population of approximately 3000 people (Dowling 1990:157), he claims that decline commenced prior to 1830 when fertility was severely impacted as a result of the introduction of syphilis and gonorrhoea which spread up-river from the Murray mouth, and reduced the population by approximately 48% (Dowling 1990:158–159). Between 1830 and 1837, a second wave of disease—smallpox—emanated from the east and the rate of reduction increased to 75% (Dowling 1990:160). After 1838, fatalities resulting from frontier violence contributed to population decline, although the overall rate returned to approximately 50% (Dowling 1990:160). In Dowling's model the greatest and most rapid decline occurs largely before the 1840s which means that a population of only several hundred people occupied the Riverland area when the study period for this research commenced. What is important about Dowling's thesis is that the impact of these diseases had a

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[58] Dowling (1990) uses the name Jirawirung

permanent and progressive effect in reducing fertility. Syphilis results in a high incidence of spontaneous abortion and still births, and gonorrhoea causes low conception and high sterility rates amongst both men and women (Dowling 1990:165–66). These diseases had the effect of reducing the number of breeding individuals in subsequent generations, and although this is a condition from which healthy populations ordinarily recover, the Murray population was unable to do so in the early period (Dowling 1990:167).

Unfortunately, few documents provide firm evidence about birth or death rates, and those which do are spatially and temporally restricted. However, for the period between April 1848 and August 1855, when the data appears to have been reported for most months at the Moorunde depot, the number of deaths (81) far exceeded the number of births (4), which is consistent with Dowling's theory. Furthermore, if we accept that this data provides a reasonable representation of population fertility and mortality rates, then the suggestion that infanticide was prevalent amongst Aboriginal communities and was a contributing factor in population decline at that time (LCSA 1860) borders on the absurd.

Whilst the reports of the 1840s and 1850s contain little information for the cause of the 81 recorded deaths, they frequently allude to the high incidence of pulmonary disease, a fact both complicated and compounded by the introduction of tobacco and a likely rise in its use as it became more readily available. The assumption that the Indigenous population also suffered from other health-related problems arising from the introduction of alcohol and changes to diet is not unreasonable, although there are only casual references to alcohol use and certainly no empirical data to support this. The extent to which European foods were incorporated in the Indigenous diet is unknown, and warrants further enquiry given that the evidence presented here suggests that ration distribution was not as prevalent as has been previously assumed.

As has been discussed, the colonial approach to the 'social management' of the Indigenous population involved the removal of children and youths from their communities to geographically remote locations; the imposition of a European economic system that demanded that physically able men (and probably women) seek employment at least sometimes beyond the boundaries of their own districts; and interruption to Indigenous patterns of settlement and mobility. This interference with the distribution of Aboriginal people throughout the landscape would have undoubtedly impacted demography at a local level. Brock and Kartinyeri (1989) have demonstrated that a number of Murray people were 're-located' to Eyre Peninsula. Whilst this can only account

for a small number of individuals, the migration of people, particularly the youngest and fittest—the would-be parents of the subsequent generation—would have had long term consequences with respect to population decline.

Increasing mortality and diminishing fertility, combined with the fragmentation of the population as a result of small scale migration, more than likely accounted for the substantial decline in the local Indigenous population. Whilst the likelihood of a much higher fatality rate arising from continued frontier violence cannot be ruled out, there is no evidence to substantiate this possibility. In fact, the fecundity of the population was quite conceivably so critically altered by the introduction of venereal disease, combined with fatalities arising from violent conflict in the period prior to 1842, that recovery was impossible. It is therefore possible that the fate of the Indigenous population on the central/upper Murray was well established by the time pastoral settlement of the region commenced in earnest in the mid to late 1840s.

6.4. Concluding remarks and recommendations for future research

Responding to the suggestion by Burke et al. (2016) that the frontier violence that typified the situation on the central/upper Murray prior to 1842 may have continued after the Rufus River massacre, this research set out to establish the nature of cultural interaction in the region and determine the cause of apparent Indigenous population decline. Relying on primary documents as an evidence base, it concludes that violent conflict between Aboriginal people and Europeans appears to have subsided considerably. There are no written records to indicate that fatalities arising from conflict occurred anywhere west of the border after 1841, however, several isolated occurrences were recorded during the 1840s and 1850s between Lake Victoria and the Darling. Although an outlying incident, the murder of George Bridger at Mount Dispersion in 1846 was well reported in the South Australian colony, and possibly caused some anxiety for settlers close to the border.

Given the lack of evidence for widespread conflict, it is difficult to conclude that violent fatalities on the frontier after 1841 could have contributed to the collapse of the Indigenous population in the region. Other studies in this field (primarily Dowling 1990) suggest that a declining fertility rate, as a result of the combined and cumulative effects of smallpox and venereal disease, was the principal cause of population decline. Unfortunately, there is little empirical evidence in the correspondence

and reports of the Protector's and police to corroborate this, but it is nevertheless a plausible theory. It is also plausible that this situation was compounded through the removal of Aboriginal children and youths during the 1840s and 1850s. Although this scheme was undertaken on a comparatively minor scale, further documentary research may be able to better ascertain the extent and effect of this practice.

Whilst government authorities sought to 'civilise' and acculturate the youngest members of the Murray population through removal and institutionalisation, their attention and effort was predominantly focussed on curbing the mobility of those that remained on the river. This goal was largely achieved by the implementation of a ration distribution scheme that operated at Moorunde between 1842 and 1855. In later years the scheme was extended to other depots, but distribution was probably sporadic anywhere east of Overland Corner. Furthermore, by the end of the 1850s, rations were only available to that portion of the population who were identified as sick, elderly or infirm. Although food and other items were probably shared, for most people, their chief means of acquiring European goods would have been through engagement with the labour system. Consequently, intercultural relationships, particularly after 1850, were largely enacted between Aboriginal people and settlers. The documentary record provides few insights into the nature of this form of contact.

This research has mostly identified locales of contact at a rather gross level, reflecting the lack of spatial detail contained in the primary texts. It has, however, established the location of ration depots and some pastoral outstations with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Archaeological investigation of depots, particularly those at Moorunde and Lake Littra which probably represent the least disturbed sites, could provide additional insight into the nature of contact that primary documents fail to reveal. Further examination of other map sources, particularly lease maps drafted after the initial survey of 1851, would likely yield more information about patterns of pastoral expansion and development, and help to confirm the location of pastoral outstations documented here. Further investigation of these sites, which potentially represent a key location for interaction between Aboriginal people and Europeans on the Murray, is critical to the future examination of cultural relations in the region. As Wolski (2010:78) notes, outstations were tangible manifestations of the local frontier and potentially a key resource for archaeologists seeking windows into contact.

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A P P E N D I X   1 :   S O U R C E S

Source/Agency	Content
Australian Data Archive (Australian National University)	Digital census data 1861–1891
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	Protector's reports 1867–1879
Australasian Legal Information Institute	*South Australian Government Gazette* 1839–1999
National Library of Australia	Digitised newspaper collection
South Australian Museum	Archives collection
State Library of South Australia	D8405, Extracts from reminiscences of Sarah Jane Smith, nee Kerridge PRG209, Papers of James Collins Hawker PRG260, Papers of Dr John Harris Browne PRG189, Papers of the Cudmore family PRG608, Papers of Edward Bate Scott PRG422, Papers of the Norman family PRG177, Papers of Edward John Eyre PRG50, Papers of the Gawler family BRG124/1, Inwards correspondence: Calperum Station
State Records of South Australia	GRG4/133 Chief Magistrate's Court, Moorundie - Record of proceedings GRG5/2 Police Commissioner's Office - Correspondence files GRG5/9 Police Commissioner's Office - Out letter books GRG24/1 Colonial Secretary's Office - Letters and other communications received GRG24/4 Colonial Secretary's Office, later Chief Secretary's Office - Letters sent GRG24/6 Colonial Secretary's Office, later Chief Secretary's Office - Correspondence files GRG24/90 Colonial Secretary's Office, Governor's Office and others - Miscellaneous records GRG35/1 Crown Lands and Immigration Office, later Crown Lands Office - Correspondence files GRG35/402 Surveyor General's Office - Reports on pastoral leases GRG52/1 Aborigines' Office and successors - Correspondence files GRG52/7 Protector of Aborigines - Letter books

APPENDIX 2: TEXT CLASSIFICATION - KEYWORDS

Theme	Keywords	
Physical violence	Physical violence Defensive architecture Police protection	Death (violent) Death (massacre) Death (poisoning)
Rations, labour, exchange	Procure natural resources Cultural mediation Gift/exchange food or water Undertake settler occupations Snag removal	Assist river crossing Deliver information Body retrieval Navigate/track Rations Canoes
Governance	Dogs Identification/tattooing Vagrancy Indigenous mobility Children, separation Sorcery Marriage Missions Schools	Imprisonment Judicial system Theft Theft (sheep) Land grants Physical violence (intra-racial) Native Police Police Police stations
Health, population	Alcohol Public house Disease/illness Medical aid Promiscuity	Death (illness) Death (geronticide) Death (infanticide) Population (fecundity/mortality) Indigenous economy Environmental change Population
Functional	Police Commissioner's report Protector's report Reminiscences *Lady Augusta* (Vessel) Flood Gold rush	Death (natural) Death (unknown causes) Exploration Overlanding Census

Appendix 3: Locations named in texts

Ration depot locations	Address
Moorunde	Off Murrylands Road, Blanchetown SA 5357; CT 6076/101 D86185 A56
Blanchetown Police Station (former)	1–5 The Parade, Blanchetown SA 5357
Morgan Police Station (former)	Adjacent High Street, Morgan SA 5320; CR 5756/714 H120700 S502 / CR 5340/648 H120700 S432
Overland Corner Police Station (former)	Off Old Coach Road, Overland Corner SA 5330; CT 5208/785 F35269 Q56
Renmark Police Station	Ral Ral Avenue, Renmark SA 5341
Sheep Inspector's residence (Chowilla)	Off Wentworth-Renmark Road, Chowilla SA 5341; CT 6187/438 D112998 A200
Sheep Inspector's residence (Lake Littra)	Off Wentworth-Renmark Road, Chowilla SA 5341; CR 6211/865 H836200 S1229

Appendix 3: People named in texts

Alick (Aboriginal person)
Black Moriah (Aboriginal person)
Burtnarice (Aboriginal person)
Chowilla Charley (Aboriginal person)
Chowilla George (Aboriginal person)
Cockatoo Tommy (Aboriginal person)
Crow, Jim (Aboriginal person)
Crow, Lewie (Aboriginal person)
Davey, Harry (Aboriginal person)
Davey, Helen (Aboriginal person)
Disher (Aboriginal person)
Doctor (Aboriginal person)
Dosey (Aboriginal person)
Emily (Aboriginal person)
Genarrambies (Aboriginal person)
Georgy (Aboriginal person)
Hancock (Aboriginal person)
Hickey, Jean (Aboriginal person)
Jack (Aboriginal person)
Jacob (Aboriginal person)
Jane alias Mrs Moody (Aboriginal person)
Jemmy (Aboriginal person)
Joey (Aboriginal person)
Johnny (Aboriginal person)
Johnny Weeako (Aboriginal person)
Judy (Aboriginal person)
Kangaroo Jimmie (Aboriginal person)
Koanir (Aboriginal person)
Lake Jemmy (Aboriginal person)
Laura (Aboriginal person)
Lindsay, George (Aboriginal person)
Lowie (Aboriginal person)
Lumpy (Aboriginal person)
Macwaran (Aboriginal person)
Major (Aboriginal person)
Malo (Aboriginal person)
Mary (Aboriginal person)
McKinley, Bob (Aboriginal person)
Metairim / Spring Cart Gully Jemmy (Aboriginal person)
Miall (Aboriginal person)
Minge (Aboriginal person)
Mitchell, Harry (Aboriginal person)
Monday (Aboriginal person)
Mongo Jimmy (Aboriginal person)

Monkey (Aboriginal person)
Moother Mootherin / Flash Jack (Aboriginal person)
Moses (Aboriginal person)
Mudlong (Aboriginal person)
Mullu-ullu-um-billi (Aboriginal person)
Mungaroo (Aboriginal person)
Nadbuck (Aboriginal person)
Nanya (Aboriginal person)
Nation (Aboriginal person)
Neinery (Aboriginal person)
Neista (Aboriginal person)
Ngalle Ngalle (Aboriginal person)
Nickeinge (Aboriginal person)
Nimalla (Aboriginal person)
Noon-too-Been (Aboriginal person)
Ogongoron / Black Billy (Aboriginal person)
Panyeranaby (Aboriginal person)
Peter (Aboriginal person)
Policeman Jack (Aboriginal person)
Poo-yee / Amy Johnson (Aboriginal person)
Potalem (Aboriginal person)
Pulkanti (Aboriginal person)
Regin / Tobey (Aboriginal person)
Richard (Aboriginal person)
Sambo (Aboriginal person)
Satan (Aboriginal person)
Scotty (Aboriginal person)
Souprawarton (Aboriginal person)
Stephen (Aboriginal person)
Tenbury (Aboriginal person)
Tiah, Harry (Aboriginal person)
Tiah, Jimmy (Aboriginal person)
Tilpardnambi (Aboriginal person)
Tinaboolin (Aboriginal person)
Tinarnambi (Aboriginal person)
Tingcombe (Aboriginal person)
Tolperoo (Aboriginal person)
Tomby, Charles (Aboriginal person)
Toothers (Aboriginal person)
Warpalla (Aboriginal person)
Williams, Fred (Aboriginal person)
Wi-mārd-erǎ (Aboriginal person)
Wiyerm (Aboriginal person)
Wombarno (Aboriginal person)
Wpiwp (Aboriginal person)
Wurrosi (Aboriginal person)

Allen, James (European)
Andrews, E.W. (European)
Bagot, Edward (European)
Bailey, Thomas (European)
Bell, R.N. (European)
Beveridge, Peter (European)
Birch, W. (European)
Blackeby, (European)
Bridger, George (European)
Brock, Daniel George (European)
Brown, (Police)
Browne, John Harris (European)
Burr, Thomas (European)
Butler, G., Captain (European)
Byrne, Patrick (European)
Carroll, Patrick (European)
Cawthorne, William Anderson (European)
Chambers, James (European)
Chambers, John (European)
Chapman, John (European)
Coombs, John George (European)
Coombs, Mrs (European)
Cornwall, Henry (Soldier)
Crabb, Fred (European)
Cray, (Publican)
Cudmore, A.F. (European)
Duins, (Police)
Fay, James (European)
Finn, (European)
Finnis, Boyle Travers (European)
Fisher, Joseph (European)
Fletcher, Atholl (European)
Fletcher, F. (European)
Glenie, H.S. (Sheep Inspector)
Goodwin, Thomas, Reverend (European)
Grey, George (European)
Hale, Matthew (European)
Hamilton, James (European)

Hamlin, James (European)
Handcock, Frederick (European)
Hawker, James Collins (European)
Heywood, E. (European)
Higgins, Samuel (European)
Hilder, Herbert (European)
Hitchin, E. (European)
Hodding, (European)
Holland, Richard (European)
Holmes, Charles (European)
Holmes, H. (European)
Hughes, Charlotte (European)
Ingham, Robert (European)
Jackson, John Alexander (European)
Jarvis, (European)
Jarvis, Henry (European)
Jones, Frederick (European)
Jones, William aka Lanky (European)
Kahtz, C. (European)
Keighran, John (European)
Kent, (Doctor)
Kerridge, Sarah Jane (European)
Kinloch, Arthur (European)
Knott, (European)
Kortright, Cornelius (European)
Landseer, George (European)
Lang, Alexander (European)
Lang, William (European)
Lee, George (European)
Lindsay, John, Captain (European)
MacGlin, Elizabeth (European)
MacLean, D. (European)
McCormac, Jack (European)
McGlynn, Samuel (European)
McGrath, James (European)
McLeod, A. (Sheep Inspector)
McLeod, Donald (European)
Melrose, George (European)
Mitchell, John (European)

Mitchell, Thomas, Major (European)
Morey, Edmund (European)
Muller, P. (European)
Mundy, A.M. (European)
Napper, Edith Mary (European)
Napper, Elizabeth Ann (European)
Napper, William (European)
Newnham, William (European)
Norman, Alma Janet (European)
Nott, (European)
Nott, William (European)
Pens, William John (European)
Perry, (Protector)
Petch, (Soldier)
Read, Charles (European)
Richardson, O.K. (European)
Robertson, John H. (European)
Robertson, William (European)
Ross, William (European)
Roy, Hugh (European)
Schell, John Theodore (European)
Scott, John (European)
Shaughnessy, Thomas (European)
Shaughnessy, Thomas Jr (European)
Stone, William (European)
Sturt, Charles, Captain (European)
Tothill, (European)
Trussell, James (European)
Valentie, D. (European)
Vinecombe, William (European)
Walker, Frederick (European)
Walker, R.J. (European)
Warland (European)
Warrener, (European)
Weatherstone, John (European)
Wildman, E. (European)

Eyre, Edward John (Protector)
Hamilton, E.L. (Protector)
Melville, D. (Protector)
Moorhouse, Matthew (Protector)
Nation, William (Protector)
Scott, Edward Bate (Protector)
Walker, John (Protector)

Bentley, (Police)
Besley, Brian (Police)
Bleechmore, A.S. (Police)
Burte, Alfred (Police)
Coles, (Police)
Coward, (Police)
Crofton, (Police)
Dashwood, George (Police)
Drought, Frederick (Police)
Ewens, J.R. (Police)
Gordon, (Police)
Hamilton, George (Police)
Harvey, Thomas (Police)
Hogdell, (Police)

Hooker, (Police)
Lawrence, Alfred (Police)
Nixon, (Police)
Philips, (Police)
Richards, (Police)
Rickaby, (Police)
Schmidt, J.T. (Police)
Shanks, John (Police)
Shaw, John (Police)
Sullivan, Richard (Police)
Teate, David (Police)
Tolmer, Alexander (Police)
Warburton, Peter Egerton (Police)
Wilson, (Police)

Appendix 4: Ration data

Year/Month/Day	Source	Male	Female	Children Male	Children Female	Infants	TOTAL
1842/01/26	GRG24/6/1843/193	37	41	26	20	6	130
1842/02/25	GRG24/6/1843/193	24	21	21	11	5	82
1842/03/26	GRG24/6/1843/193	14	20	15	9	3	61
1842/04/25	GRG24/6/1843/193	20	28	22	13		83
1842/05/23	GRG24/6/1843/193	35	25	25	22		107
1842/06/19	GRG24/6/1843/193	60	45	51	25	4	185
1842/07/22	GRG24/6/1843/193	7	11	5	6		29
1842/08/21	GRG24/6/1843/193						53
1842/09/20	GRG24/6/1843/193	25	23	13	12		73
1842/10/18	GRG24/6/1843/193	37	35	31	14		117
1842/11/18	GRG24/6/1843/193	30	39	30	18	4	121
1842/12/18	GRG24/6/1843/193	31	34	27	16	5	113
1843/03	GRG24/6/1843/515						346
1844/06/20	Hawker 1845						191
1844/07/21	Hawker 1845						252
1844/12	GRG24/6/1845/752						49
1845/01	GRG24/6/1845/752						179
1845/02	GRG24/6/1845/752						113
1845/03	GRG24/6/1845/752						346
1845/04	GRG24/6/1845/752						403
1845/05	GRG24/6/1845/752						104
1845/06	GRG24/6/1845/752						191
1845/07	GRG24/6/1845/894	103	90	61			254
1846/01	GRG24/6/1846/236	60	46	17			123
1846/02	GRG24/6/1846/236	231	183	190			604
1846/03	GRG24/6/1846/497	46	51	37			134
1846/04	GRG24/6/1846/497	53	36	45			134
1848/04/18	GRG24/6/1849/242	151	133	60	48		392
1848/05/18	GRG24/6/1849/242	113	119	37	36		305
1848/06/20	GRG24/6/1849/242	81	67	22	22		192
1848/07/27	GRG24/6/1849/242	22					22
1848/08/15	GRG24/6/1849/242	29	28	15	2		74
1848/09/16	GRG24/6/1849/242	18	21	6	5		50
1849/01	SAGG	65	51	7	11		134
1849/02	SAGG	66	59	12	17		154
1849/03	SAGG	46	50	17	5		118
1849/04	SAGG	55	45	7	4		111
1849/05	SAGG	71	71	19	12		173
1849/06	SAGG	103	106	12	25		246
1849/07	SAGG	49	49	9	14		121
1849/08	SAGG	16	15	1	4		36
1849/09	SAGG	23	33	6	7		69
1849/10	SAGG	18	18	9	2		47
1849/11	SAGG	14	11	1	1		27
1849/12	SAGG	44	45	7	10		106
1850/01	SAGG	40	38	9	6		93
1850/02	SAGG	94	67	19	12		192
1850/04	SAGG	80	57	16	8		161
1850/05	SAGG	74	77	11	6		168
1850/06	SAGG	103	101	8	11		223
1850/07/27	SAGG	85	100	22	20		227
1850/08/23	SAGG	9	18	3	3		33
1850/09/22	SAGG	89	86	20	19		214
1850/10/22	SAGG	108	111	16	19		254

Year/Month/Day	Source	Male	Female	Children Male	Children Female	Infants	TOTAL
1850/11/22	*SAGG*	81	72	23	17		193
1850/12/21	*SAGG*	94	66	4	8		172
1851/01/21	*SAGG*	60	55	9	9		133
1851/02/20	*SAGG*	34	27	2	3		66
1851/03/18	*SAGG*	59	33	3	1		96
1851/04/16	*SAGG*	29	43	3	7		82
1851/05/16	*SAGG*	20	21	9	5		55
1851/06/09	*SAGG*	94	96	18	20		228
1851/07/14	*SAGG*	14	15	-	1		30
1851/08/13	*SAGG*	4	5	1	-		10
1851/09/10	*SAGG*	10	11	4	1		26
1851/10/11	*SAGG*	29	28	11	13		81
1851/11/10	*SAGG*	12	16	8	5		41
1851/12/13	*SAGG*	17	14	5	4		40
1852/01/07	*SAGG*	63	46	9	14		132
1852/02/13	*SAGG*	30	26	4	4		64
1852/03/10	*SAGG*	27	19	8	5		59
1852/04/10	*SAGG*	19	16	4	5		44
1852/05/06	*SAGG*	93	92	10	9		204
1852/06	*SAGG*	66	10	-	-		76
1852 Sept, Oct, Nov	*SAGG*	-	-	-	-		0
1853/02/05	*SAGG*	15	10	2	2		29
1853/02/28	*SAGG*	38	24	4	6		72
1853/06/30	*SAGG*	31	20	3	5		59
1853/07/24	*SAGG*	17	11	2	2		32
1853/08/29	*SAGG*	4	3	-	2		9
1853/09/24	*SAGG*	6	2	1	2		11
1853/10/14	*SAGG*	24	14	6	1		45
1853/11/25	*SAGG*	6	4	-	3		13
1853/12/14	*SAGG*	10	7	1	1		19
1854/01/13	*SAGG*	15	11	1	3		30
1854/02/18	*SAGG*	18	11	2	5		36
1854/03	*SAGG*	21	14	-	3		38
1854/04	*SAGG*	25	19	-	4		48
1854/05	*SAGG*	19	10	-	5		34
1854/06/09	*SAGG*	50	32	2	7		91
1854/07/05	*SAGG*	112	76	6	19		213
1854/08/30	*SAGG*	13	3	-	-		16
1854/09/01	*SAGG*	37	31	2	5		75
1854/10/14	*SAGG*	4	6	-	3		13
1854/11/01	*SAGG*	12	10	-	4		26
1854/12/17	*SAGG*	23	14	4	2		43
1855/01/09	*SAGG*	26	18	1	4		49
1855/02/14	*SAGG*	40	15	1	3		59
1855/03/05	*SAGG*	13	6	1	1		21
1855/04/04	*SAGG*	25	18	3	3		49
1855/05/03	*SAGG*	53	19	1	3		76
1855/06	*SAGG*	100	64	22	6		192
1855/07	*SAGG*	16	16	3	-		35
1855/08	*SAGG*	9	3	2	1		15

Number of individuals attending ration distribution at Moorunde 1842–1855, derived from Protector's reports.

Where figures are missing, no data was recorded; dashes appear as in source data.

Single record for Paringa for 28/11/1853 has been omitted from above: 33 males, 30 females, 3 male children, 5 female children.

Period	Births	Deaths
April – September 1848		3
January – May 1849		3
August – September 1849	1	3
December 1849 – February 1850		7
April – June 1850		6
July 1850		4
October 1850		1
November 1850		1
January – February 1851	2	2
March – May 1851		10
June – August 1851	1	13
March – May 1852		2
February 1853		2
June – August 1853		2
September – November 1853		3
December 1853 – February 1854		2
March – May 1854		1
June – August 1854		1
September – November 1854		4
December 1854 – February 1855		5
March – May 1855		5
June – August 1855		1
TOTAL	**4**	**81**

Number of births and deaths at Moorunde 1842–1855, derived from Protector's reports.