

This sampler file contains various sample pages from the product.

Sample pages will often include: the title page, an index, and other pages of interest.

This sample is fully searchable (read Search Tips) but is not FASTFIND enabled.



www.gould.com.au

- The widest range of Australian, English, Irish, Scottish and European resources
- 11000 products to help with your research
- A complete range of Genealogy software
- 5000 data CDs from numerous countries

Subscribe to our weekly email newsletter
FOLLOW US ON TWITTER AND FACEBOOK



www.familyphotobook.com.au

- Free software download to create professional looking personal photo books, calendars and more

*To view more samplers
click here*



www.unlockthepast.com.au

- Promoting History, Genealogy and Heritage in Australia and New Zealand
- A major events resource
 - regional and major roadshows, seminars, conferences, expos
- A major go-to site for resources
 - free information and content, newsletters and blogs, speaker biographies, topic details
- Includes a team of expert speakers, writers, organisations and commercial partners



www.archivecdbooks.com.au

- Over 1600 rare Australian and New Zealand books on fully searchable CD-ROM
- Over 3000 worldwide
- Including: Government and Police gazettes, Electoral Rolls, Post Office and Specialist Directories, War records, Regional histories etc.



www.worldvitalrecords.com.au

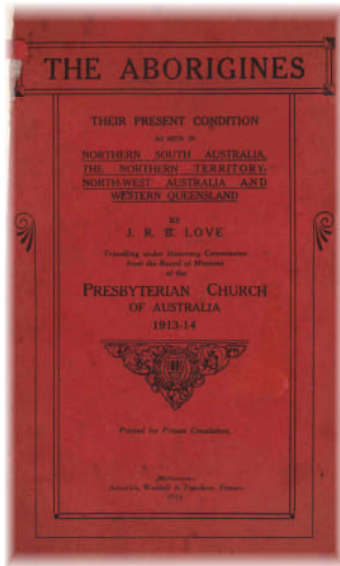
- 50 million Australasian records
- 1 billion records world wide
- low subscriptions
- FREE content daily and some permanently

The Aborigines Their Present Condition

Ref. AU0077

ISBN: 978 1 74222 653 8

This book was kindly loaned to Archive Digital Books Australasia by the University of Queensland Library www.library.uq.edu.au



Navigating this CD

To view the contents of this CD use the bookmarks and Adobe Reader's forward and back buttons to browse through the pages. Alternatively use any table of contents or book index to look for specific information and then use Adobe Reader's page navigation controls in the status bar at the bottom of the window to go to the relevant page.

Searching this CD

- This CD is searchable using Adobe Acrobat Reader 4 or later. It is also *FASTFIND* enabled, giving very fast searches of all files on the CD at once! The *FASTFIND* search enhancement only works with Adobe Reader 6 or later. Use the Binoculars/Search icon in Adobe Reader or "Search" under the Edit menu to initiate all searches.
- For more information on advanced searching and other tips for the best search results [click here](#)
- Generally 95% - 99% of the words can be searched. Where the original type was poor the words may not be recognised for searching.

The technical advancements that allow this searching bring a wonderful finding aid but there is still no substitute for reading the book!

This is one of over 1500 products published by Archive Digital Books Australasia and over 3000 internationally from the international Archive CD Books project

Click on this box for the full online catalogue

www.archivecdbooks.com.au

FREE download samplers available for most Australian and New Zealand products

Archive Digital Books Australasia exists to make reproductions of old books, documents and maps available in digital form, and to co-operate with family and local history societies, libraries, museums and record offices to digitise their collections in return for other benefits.

Copyright © 2009 Archive Digital Books Australasia All Rights Reserved



The Aborigines

THEIR PRESENT CONDITION

AS SEEN IN

NORTHERN SOUTH AUSTRALIA,
THE NORTHERN TERRITORY,
NORTH-WEST AUSTRALIA AND
WESTERN QUEENSLAND

BY

J. R. B. LOVE

*Travelling under Honorary Commission
from the Board of Missions
of the*

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF AUSTRALIA

1913-14




Helbourne

Arbuckle, Waddell & Fawckner, Printers

1915

Foreword

HE Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church of Australia has sincere pleasure in issuing this Report, and is convinced that it will do much to arouse interest in the cause of our aboriginal tribes in Australia, and to deepen that interest among those who already have the welfare of the aborigines at heart. It embodies the results of two years of travel and investigation into the condition of the natives of unfrequented regions, by Mr. J. R. B. Love, a son of the manse and student from South Australia. Mr. Love carried his helpful work through without financial aid of any kind from the Church. The cost of printing the Report has been generously borne by R. Barr Smith, Esq., of South Australia. To him and to Mr. Love the Board of Missions tenders hearty thanks on behalf of the Church.

ALEX. STEWART
Convener

T. W. LEGGATT
Secretary

To the Board of Missions

Presbyterian Church of Australia

Gentlemen,—

On September 24th, 1912, you favoured me with an honorary commission to enquire into and report to you upon--

1. The present conditions of life among the aborigines of the settled and unsettled parts of Australia.
2. The approximate numbers at various localities.
3. The suitability of various places as centres for the mission work of the Church among the aborigines.

I forwarded letters from Alice Springs, from Darwin and from Borroloola.

I now venture to submit to your consideration the appended report, in which I have tried, to the best of my ability, to give a fair and unprejudiced representation of the present condition of the aboriginal people as I have seen them, with such suggestions as I believe will aid in the uplifting of this extremely interesting and most neglected race.

I would not wantonly offend any, but, in speaking of a people such as these, who are subject to much indifferent neglect and a certain amount of deliberate wrong, no less than well-intentioned folly, it is apparent that the truth must inevitably hurt some. I can only say that I have endeavoured to avoid a narrow-minded sympathy with, or hostility towards, the missionary, the stockman, and the travelling "bushwhacker," the three parties most concerned with the aborigines in their daily life.

II.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

1.—Alice Springs District: Charlotte Waters to Barrow Creek.

Excepting those tribes living in the western part of the MacDonnell Ranges, and beyond to the west and north-west, the blacks of the southern part of the Northern Territory may be described as semi-civilised. Most can speak a few words of English, though few can speak more than a halting "pidgin" English.

On the cattle stations, as far north as the MacDonnell Ranges, the usual custom is for the blacks' camp to be placed near the station homestead, within a quarter of a mile. The station managers insist that the blacks shall camp near the homestead, and forbid them to camp at their pleasure on any part of the run. With the blacks near the station, the manager knows that the cattle are fairly safe. If the blacks were scattered about on the run, they would, of course, help themselves to beef at their pleasure. Apart from the actual amount of beef consumed, the stations would suffer chiefly from the wildness of cattle that were being constantly hunted, and also from the loss of wounded beasts, as the spear seldom kills outright.

When they wish to hunt for kangaroos, goannas, roots, seeds or any other edible commodity, they will inform the manager as to the direction they propose to take. He will then make it his business to ride that way, and see that cattle are not molested.

The camps are much the same at each station: a dozen or more of the shabby and dirty little "humpies." At two places, however—Alice Springs and Henbury Station—the huts are quite respectable affairs, built with

III.

NORTH-WEST AUSTRALIA

The aborigines of this part are in practically the same condition as between Darwin and the Western Australian border, being in their primitive condition near the coast, and partly civilised on the cattle stations, where they have come into contact with the whites.

The Roman Catholic Church has for some years maintained a mission station at Beagle Bay, which is described as an industrial success, and has recently inaugurated a new station on the Drysdale River, west of Wyndham.

The Presbyterian Church has lately established, under the charge of Mr. R. H. Wilson, a mission station at Port George IV., between Wyndham and Derby.

The Western Australian Government has, for a considerable time, maintained an aboriginal station near Hall's Creek. This I have not visited. I understand that this station is an industrial success, but no religious instruction is undertaken. To members of the Christian Church the question arises: What is the purpose of such industry? If certain missions have been criticised as laying too much stress on religion, while not being practical enough, it might be answered that a purely industrial institution fails in the opposite extreme.

Along the entire north coast there is ample scope for mission enterprise. As men and means are forthcoming doubtless more stations will be established. But, fascinating though these untouched areas are, the tribes who have already come into contact with our race have first claim. Where the white man has not penetrated, at least the blacks are no worse off than formerly. Where the white man's influence has already been felt, there is our first duty.

IV.

WESTERN QUEENSLAND

Here the aborigines problem has already been solved to a great extent by the process of extinction. Such few blacks as remain are mostly employed on the stations.

Amongst those that remain it is instructive to notice how they are received amongst white people. The black man remains utterly an inferior. The half-caste, however, is on a level with the white stockman, receiving the same wages, eating at the same table, and sleeping in the same hut.

I was considerably astonished to witness, at a dance in a western town, a half-caste man dancing in one of the square dances with one white woman after another, according to figures of the dance, without any embarrassment on either side. Such a thing is unheard of in the Northern Territory. At the same dance, however, none danced with the half-caste woman, who sat aside throughout the evening.



V.

CHILD LIFE AND PLAY

The attitude of the black gin towards her child is incomprehensible. Frequently she does not seem to care particularly whether she keeps her baby or not, and will quite coolly discuss the matter with a white man. "Might be me kill 'em; piccaninny no good."

Should the child be saved it is treated with lavish kindness. The aboriginal child is never struck. The parents nurse it and carry it, and it is a common sight to see a hardened warrior of the tribe amusing a tiny black baby, going through the most ridiculous antics in play, or to see an old man patiently carving a toy for a small grandson.

In the north-east of the Northern Territory the mothers plait very pretty grass bracelets, which they place on the babies' arms, between shoulder and elbow, replacing them with larger ones as the child grows, almost every adult wearing several bracelets on the upper arm.

While small, the children are totally naked. As they become older they wear the usual dress of the tribe; among the less civilised solely a tassel of fur strings suspended from the waist. This tassel is now frequently replaced by a strip of rag, a few inches wide, worn as an apron by men and women.

Among the more civilised, the gins manifest the keenest desire for dress, very often securing a tattered man's shirt; at times a piece of cloth for an apron, or even a complete dress.

General Tips

for searching and getting more from Archive CD Books products

- update to version 6 or later of Adobe Reader at www.adobe.com for the best searching capability.
- enter the MINIMUM number of characters needed to bring up the search results required
- use Adobe Reader to do some trial searches to try to identify the characters that may be misread. These can show up in the extra text in the search results list. A few minutes trial will help you to avoid using characters that are more prone to being misread, e.g. try entering "rederi" if you want "Frederick", but find that the letters "F" "c" and "k" are sometimes misread.
- use the "Match whole word" option to eliminate unnecessary items in your results list, e.g. to eliminate all the blacksmiths and tinsmiths etc when you only want the name Smith
- use the "Match case" option when you want to eliminate all the occupations "smith" if you only want the name "Smith"
- Don't just search for names. Search the book for other names, places and subjects of interest:
 - look for others of the same name
 - look for others who lived in the same place or street
 - who was the postmaster or police officer in the town?
 - how often and at what time did the coach arrive in town?
 - what churches were there and what time were services held?
 - what other activities were there in the community?
 - look for others who had the same occupation or other interests

All of this and more may be available in a seemingly mundane book such as a directory. Learn much of the background of life at the time, even if your ancestor is not listed there.