

1883.

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**  
**NEW SOUTH WALES.**

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**ABORIGINAL MISSION STATIONS AT WARANGESDA AND MALOGA.**  
 (REPORT ON WORKING OF.)

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*Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 18 January, 1883.*

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**No. 1.**

**The Principal Under-Secretary to The Honorable Philip Gidley King, M.L.C.**

Sir,

Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 23 June, 1882.

It being considered desirable to have an inquiry into and to be furnished with a full and comprehensive report of the working of the stations for aborigines in the Murrumbidgee District, which are under Mr. Matthews and the Reverend Mr. Gribble respectively, I am directed to inform you that the Colonial Secretary approves of the duties of such inquiry being performed by yourself and Edmund Fosbery, Esquire, Inspector-General of Police, in place of the Honorable Messrs. Thornton and Marks.

2. I am desired to state that the Protector of the Aborigines has been requested to aid in every way the holding of the inquiry, and that the Minister of Public Instruction and the Minister of Justice have been invited to cause to be supplied any information that can be furnished by their respective Departments.

3. I am to add that the services of Mr. E. Palmer, as Secretary, will be placed at the disposal of yourself and your colleague, and that the necessary expenses will be paid by the Government.

I have, &c.,

CRITCHETT WALKER.

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**No. 2.**

**The Principal Under-Secretary to The Inspector-General of Police.**

[Similar to and of same date as No. 1, substituting "The Honorable Philip Gidley King" for "Edmund Fosbery, Esquire, Inspector-General of Police."]

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## No. 3.

Messrs. P. G. King and E. Fosbery to The Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Sydney, 8 August, 1882.

In compliance with the commission entrusted to us, conveyed by letter from the Principal Under-Secretary, dated the 23rd of June last, we do ourselves the honor to report, for your information, that we have visited, inspected, and carefully inquired into the working of the Aboriginal Mission Stations at Warangesda and Maloga.

The former is situated on the Murrumbidgee River, about 12 miles from the Darlington railway station; and since its formation, two years ago, it has been under the charge of the Rev. J. B. Gribble, an ordained minister of the Church of England; Mr. Carpenter being the teacher of the Public School established by the Government.

The station is built on a reserved area of about 1,600 acres, of which 600 acres have been specially appropriated for the mission, and we are informed that application has been made for an additional 400 acres.

The site of the station is not in all respects well chosen. There is a township only 3 miles distant. This we think objectionable, as the public-house thereat must be a demoralising attraction to the blacks. The township should be far enough away to prevent frequent running to and fro, yet not too remote for convenient communication.

In Appendix A we give a statement in detail of the number of persons we found at the Warangesda station—aborigines, half-castes, and quadroons—together with a statement of their ages and sexes.

The huts have been erected, as we were informed, by the aborigines (by which term we intend to include, here and elsewhere, also half-castes and quadroons). The dwellings were tidy, weatherproof, apparently cleanly, and suitable for the accommodation of the married people. Some additional huts were in course of erection when we visited the station.

The schoolroom, which, in common with all the other buildings, had only an earthen floor, was in an indifferent state of repair, inadequate in space for teaching purposes, and deficient in school requisites. We learnt that a school tent for temporary use had been supplied by the Department of Public Instruction, and its arrival was daily expected. Also, that a brick schoolhouse was to be built upon a site already selected, but we venture to suggest that before this expenditure is finally decided upon, further consideration should be given to the subject.

We examined some of the children in reading, but the results were not satisfactory, owing probably to some extent to the timidity of the scholars in the presence of strangers. We saw also some copy-books in which the writing was fairly good, but the proportion of children who can read or write is small. They all heartily joined in singing to the accompaniment of a harmonium played by the teacher.

A chapel is being built of pine saplings and other bush materials. Mr. Gribble resides in an indifferent cottage inadequate for the accommodation of his family, and the Public School teacher has erected a small two-roomed bush hut, which certainly is not suitable for a teacher's residence.

There is also a house for the single women and children to sleep in, one part of it being partitioned off for meals; but the whole building is quite insufficient for its intended use, apart from the strong objection to it on the ground of deficiency in the means of classification at night; or rather separation between the elder females and the children.

Mr. and Mrs. Von Hagen were also residing at Warangesda, and assisting Mr. Gribble in the general management of the mission; we were informed that they had received some training at Dr. Bernardo's Missionary College.

The aborigines at the station, both children and adult, were sufficiently clothed, and as far as we could judge they were also fairly fed.

There was only a small garden imperfectly cultivated; the drought had destroyed the last crop. 100 acres have been enclosed for a cultivation paddock, 10 acres of which had been sown with wheat. Water is obtained from a well which had been sunk by Mr. Gribble, with some assistance from the blacks.

We now proceed to describe the Maloga station.

Maloga is situated about 15 miles from Moama, on the banks of the Murray River, and on the edge of an extensive forest reserve. The station improvements are on a freehold of 121 acres, charted in the names of W. and D. Matthews, adjoining a section of 320 acres in the name of W. Matthews, and another selection of like size in the name of Mr. D. Matthews, who is now in charge of the mission. The freehold and selections are well chosen, being on pine sand-hills of fairly fertile character, and forming a cheerful contrast to the adjacent forest reserve, which is heavily covered in great measure with comparatively useless timber. This, if cleared away, would add greatly to the value of the good timber to be left standing, and the grazing quality of the land would be also much improved. On the whole, we consider the situation a very eligible one.

Mr. Matthews has a small and indifferently cultivated garden; also a cleared paddock, with a few head of live stock.

The buildings on the station are somewhat similar to those at Warangesda, but in some respects inferior and older—the station having been formed some eight years ago. They were certainly not in such good order. The schoolroom is large enough; it is also used for meals.

Mr. Matthews is a duly-appointed Public School teacher, with a salary of £168 per annum, but he was almost without school requisites; indeed, when asked for them, he could not find two primary reading-lesson books alike. However, the result of the examination conducted by us (the pupils being selected indiscriminately) was more satisfactory than at Warangesda, owing probably to the school having been so much longer in action.

Appendix B affords information as to the population at the mission, distinguishing adults, children, full blacks, half-castes, &c.

We caused notices to be inserted in the newspapers of both districts, notifying the object of our visit, the days on which we proposed to be at each station, and inviting any persons who had evidence to tender, or information to give, to be in attendance; there was, however, no response. We had, therefore, to content ourselves with questioning persons at the stations, and reliable neighbouring residents in an unofficial manner.

We

We have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that some further aid ought to be extended the aborigines generally, and we will endeavour to lay down lines within which we consider such assistance should be afforded, and which it may be found necessary and proper to extend to other districts of the Colony.

We strongly deprecate the practice which has obtained at both the mission stations of keeping thereat children beyond the age of infancy, chiefly half-castes or quadroons, some of whom are so fair as to be indistinguishable from Europeans. Some of the children referred to are with their half-caste mothers, who would, we believe, willingly part with them, if assured that it would be for their benefit. Others, however, of the children have no such ties. It is only necessary for us to state, in connection with this subject, that some of the women have been of depraved habits, and though hopes were expressed of their reformation, it is painfully obvious that they should not be the constant companions of the younger half-caste and quadroon girls to whom we have made reference.

We disapprove of the system adopted at both stations of expelling inmates for any contravention of the rules of the establishment. It would seem that to expel anyone would only be to force them back to and within the reach of those vices from which it is the object of the supporters of the missions to withdraw them. Doubtless some discipline is necessary, but it should be in the nature of curtailment of indulgences and privileges, expulsion being reserved for persons guilty of wilful misconduct of a serious nature.

We endeavoured to elicit from Mr. Gribble and Mr. Matthews what might be the ulterior benefit they were devoting themselves to achieve on behalf of the children; but beyond the prospective result of their present moral training and education, neither of these gentlemen was able to explain his views satisfactorily to us as to any future advantages to be derived by the children by retaining them in an aboriginal asylum. We fail to see any. On the contrary, we think they should be so further trained as to fit them to take their places as domestic servants, or amongst the industrial classes; and this, we conceive, would be best attained by "boarding out" the young of both sexes, chiefly the half-castes, but including even those also of full aboriginal blood, when practicable.

The indisposition of the aborigines to manual labour is well known; but as they can obtain work of various kinds in the country they should not only be induced to take it, but they should be discouraged from remaining in comparative idleness at mission stations, where they will certainly abide so long as they are provided with food and clothing, without some corresponding demand being made upon their labour.

Many of the men, however, do at certain seasons leave the mission stations to earn wages at shearing-sheds, kangaroo-hunting, &c., and they generally bring back their wages to assist in the support of their families. At Maloga they complain that the horses they use on these journeys are not allowed to graze on Mr. Matthews' selections, and they have therefore to turn them adrift on the adjoining runs; neither are they allowed to keep poultry.

With reference to the present management of the mission stations, we should do injustice to Messrs. Gribble and Matthews were we to discredit their devotion to the work to which they have applied themselves, apparently to the impoverishment of their families; nor have we any desire to detract from the measure of success which has attended their labours, or to question the personal influence they have gained over the blacks. We think, however, it will be advisable, if aboriginal stations are to be formed and conducted under the control of the Government, that the services of persons should be obtained with such qualifications as will in all respects ensure the goodwill and co-operation of the neighbouring population and the confidence of the public.

It would be an advantage if a synopsis of the result of the information recently collected for the protection of aborigines, respecting the race throughout the Colony, could be appended to this Report for consideration in connection therewith.

We now desire to recapitulate some of the recommendations contained in the preceding pages, and to add some further suggestions for your consideration, and we do so because we are under the impression that our report of the working of these stations would be incomplete unless accompanied by some such additional recommendations relative to them specially, and generally to the protection of the aborigines throughout the Colony.

Our inquiry naturally divided itself into two objects. First, to enable us to judge of the necessity for such establishments at all; and secondly, to qualify us to give an opinion to the Government, whether or not the principles of the present management were so sound and efficient as to warrant the grant of substantial aid from the public purse.

1. Although Maloga and Warangesda are not in all respects what homes for the aborigines could and ought to be, we are by no means in favour of their abandonment. We think if our suggestions are generally carried out at these places, and if new stations are formed on the principles on which these suggestions are based, the condition of the race would be very materially ameliorated.

2. We recommend that at Maloga about 2,000 acres of the forest reserve be appropriated, to comprise also the two selections of the Messrs. Matthews, long since liable to forfeiture by non-payment of interest; the Government would no doubt deal liberally by paying them for their improvements on the selections; and further, to purchase from them the 121 acres which they hold in fee-simple, and on which are erected all the buildings now used by the mission, with a view to consolidating the station reserve.

3. That at Warangesda the present reserve be extended in respect to the 400 acres applied for; and that in other parts of the Colony reserves be made for future aboriginal stations, as necessity may arise.

We have made these recommendations as to reserves not without some doubt whether the two stations referred to are not too near to each other in view of the small number of blacks in the district.

4. That Maloga, Warangesda, and all such other stations as may be formed, be under the control of a public officer acting in the capacity of schoolmaster, storekeeper, and overseer, with an assistant if necessary.

5. That the Government erect (with aboriginal labour as far as practicable) suitable buildings; the dwelling-houses to be sufficiently separated to prevent confusion of interests, yet near enough to afford mutual protection, each family being permitted to have an enclosure of reasonable dimensions to afford room for gardening, poultry-rearing, &c. The allotments to be marked out and the occupants placed in possession, so that they may feel a reasonable security in their holdings.

6.

6. We do not think it necessary that lands reserved for aboriginal stations should be vested in trustees, so long as the Government, acting through the protectorate of aborigines, undertakes their management.

7. That aid from the public funds be afforded in the shape of food and clothing for the infirm, and such women and children as cannot be provided for by husbands or fathers; for tools for the men for building, gardening, and field work; and for medical attendance for the stations generally. Blankets would of course be issued in accordance with the usual practice; also on coast stations fishing-boats would be provided as heretofore. The men and boys over twelve years of age should be expected to maintain themselves by labour on the station, or at neighbouring homesteads. It is assumed that at shearing time, and under the provisions of the Pastures and Stock Protection Act, they will earn enough to keep themselves and their families whilst out of other employment. During sickness, or unforeseen difficulties, it would be reasonable that they should be supplied with food at the discretion of the overseer.

8. That the overseer be expected to interest himself in training the aborigines in habits of industry, such as bush carpentering, gardening, farming, cutting firewood, &c., and in disposing of the products of their industry to the best advantage for their benefit. It would be unnecessary to point out to any intelligent person acting in the capacity of overseer the numerous ways in which their industry could be turned to account.

9. In view of the possible temporary failure of the funds of the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Association and of other contributions towards the support of the missions at Maloga and Warangesda, and also of the paucity of stores now in hand, we recommend that the Government shall at once supply these stations with assistance in the shape of food and clothing. The purchase of a few sheep should also be authorized. The expenditure of the necessary funds to be under the direction of the nearest responsible Government official, subject to the control of the Protector of the Aborigines.

10. With a few stations in the country for the location of the adult aborigines and their young children, under the charge of properly qualified persons, and supported to a reasonable extent by the Government, we think the unsatisfactory condition of the race may be greatly improved. It is only reasonable that the aborigines should be allowed to remain on their native soil and in their tribal districts in due security and comfort; but it appears to be equally reasonable and important that the younger half-castes should be withdrawn from their midst and gradually absorbed into the general community, young quadroon and half-caste children who are without parents being first removed, with a view to being placed in an institution or boarded out. Subsequently, other children might be withdrawn with the consent of their parents, and others of useful ages may be selected from time to time by persons who, after due inquiry, may be found eligible and willing to avail themselves of their services—the girls for domestic work, and the lads for farm or station employment. Regard will, doubtless, be paid to the feelings of the parents or other adults interested in the children's welfare.

11. We would recommend that rules be framed for administration and discipline of the proposed establishments and for the protection of the rights and property of aborigines thereat, as well as for their general care. That instructions be given to the police generally to afford prompt and practical assistance when required for the furtherance of the above objects.

12. The present system of allowing blacks free passages in the railways should be discontinued, so as to restrict them from idly wandering about from place to place. Special passes might be granted on the authority of the officer in charge of their respective stations, or such other officer as may be authorized in that behalf by the Government.

We do not desire to undervalue, but rather to express our full appreciation of the work which has so far been performed by the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Association. We think, however, that the time has arrived when the Government should take upon itself the responsibilities and duties which the society may not always be able, and possibly cannot be expected adequately to meet and provide for. The philanthropic intentions of its members will no doubt find full scope in the furtherance of the amelioration of the present condition of the original native race, especially in objects relative thereto which may be beyond the province of the Government to deal with.

We have, &c.,

PHILIP GIDLEY KING, M.L.C.

EDMUND FOSBERY,

Inspector-General of Police.

#### APPENDIX A.

Number of blacks receiving supplies and instruction at Warangesda for the year 1882, as per return furnished by the Rev. J. B. Gribble:—Blacks: Adults, 45; children, 10. Half-castes: Adults, 15; children, 30. Quadroons: Adults, 2; children, 8. Total: Adults, 62; children, 48. Of these only 40 adults and 40 children were at Warangesda at the time of inspection.

#### APPENDIX B.

Number of blacks receiving supplies and instruction at Maloga for the year 1882, as per return furnished by Mr. D. Matthews:—Blacks: Adults, 28; children, 14. Half-castes: Adults, 31; children, 31. Quadroons: Children, 6. Total: Adults, 59; children, 51. Of these only 51 children and 17 adults were at Maloga at time of inspection.

#### APPENDIX C.

Government aid has been afforded to the Aboriginal Mission Stations at Maloga and Warangesda, as under:—

The salaries of the teachers at both missions have been paid by the Department of Public Instruction, and school requisites have been supplied.

Blankets have been issued to all aborigines on the stations.

A reserve of 600 acres of land has been made at Warangesda.

The sum of £828 7s. has been expended for rations at Maloga from March, 1877, to July 4, 1882.

The police have afforded constant practical assistance and protection to both stations.

Facilities have been afforded for the carriage of supplies by the Railway Department.

*Minute*

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*Minute of the Colonial Secretary.*

Send to the Departments to which allusion is herein made for consideration of its Minister.—  
JOHN R., 12/8/82.

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## No. 4.

The Principal Under-Secretary to The Protector of the Aborigines.

Sir, Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 16 August, 1882.  
I am directed by the Colonial Secretary to transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of the Report of Messrs. P. G. King, M.L.C., and Edmund Fosbery, Inspector-General of Police, on the 8 August, 1882 Aboriginal Mission Stations at Warangesda and Malaga. I have, &c.,  
CRITCHETT WALKER.

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## No. 5.

The Principal Under-Secretary to The Under-Secretary for Lands.

Sir, Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 16 August, 1882.  
I am directed by the Colonial Secretary to transmit herewith, for the consideration of the Secretary for Lands, a copy of the Report of Messrs. P. G. King, M.L.C., and Edmund Fosbery, 8 August, 1882 Inspector-General of Police, on the Aboriginal Missions Stations at Warangesda and Malaga. I have, &c.,  
CRITCHETT WALKER.

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## No. 6.

The Principal Under-Secretary to The Under-Secretary for Public Works.

[Similar to and of same date as No. 5.]

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## No. 7.

The Principal Under-Secretary to The Under-Secretary, Public Instruction.

[Similar to and of same date as No. 5.]

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## No. 8.

The Principal Under-Secretary to The Under-Secretary for Mines.

[Similar to and of same date as No. 5.]

[6d.]

Sydney : Thomas Richards, Government Printer.—1883.