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TWO EARLY REPORTS ON THE ABORIGINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Introduction by Robert Foster

In December 1841 a 'Report on the Aborigines of South Australia' was presented to the Statistical Society in Adelaide by Christian Teichelmann and Matthew Moorhouse. The report was published in the Register on the 8th of January 1842 and in the Southern Australian, three days later. The second report, published here for the first time, comprises "Annual Report of the Aborigines Department for the year ending 30th September 1843". The following transcription of the report is based on a surviving copy among the records of the Colonial Secretary's Office, in the Public Record Office of South Australia. In his preamble, Moorhouse writes:

In my last, I gave a general description of the Aborigines, - their physical appearance, manners, ceremonies, superstitions, and outlines of their language, and in this I purpose supplying such additional information, as I have been able to gather. At page 1, 2 and 3, I have arranged the contents of the report of last year in Columns 1 and 2, and in Column 3 are given the contents of the present.

The earlier report referred to in this passage cannot be found among the surviving records of the Colonial Secretary's Office although a comparison of the descriptive table of contents accompanying the Protector's Annual Report produced in 1843 with the actual contents of the Statistical Society report of 1841, strongly suggests that the Statistical Society report was the earlier report referred to, or a version of it. If this interpretation is correct, the Protector's Annual Report for the year ending 20th September 1843 can be read as a sequel to the Statistical Society report of 1841.

The authors of the earlier report are Christian Teichelmann and Matthew Moorhouse, the later report being produced by Moorhouse alone. Teichelmann, a product of the Dresden Mission Society, arrived in South Australia with his fellow missionary Clamor Schurmann in October 1838. During his first years in the colony, Teichelmann assisted at the Government-run 'Aborigines Location' in Adelaide as well as studying the language and culture of the Aborigines in the
region. In 1840 Teichelmann and Schurmann published the first book on the language of the Aborigines of South Australia and in the following year Teichelmann's pamphlet on the 'Manners and Customs' of the people was published.5 Besides submitting reports to his patron, George Fife Angas, and to his society in Dresden, he produced a number of articles about his evangelical efforts for local newspapers.6 Teichelmann had drifted away from his missionary calling by the mid-1840s, but his early efforts helped educate his contemporaries about Aboriginal culture and they constitute an important source of knowledge about the Aborigines of the Adelaide region.

Matthew Moorhouse was the colony's first full-time Protector of Aborigines. The manner in which his part-time predecessors, Captain Walter Bromley and Dr. William Wyatt, had conducted the office of Protector had been the subject of much controversy. Without going into the details of their terms in office, both men were criticised for not 'going among' the Aborigines and for failing to provide information to the public about their culture. Criticism of interim Protector Wyatt came to a head during a public meeting to discuss the first serious outbreak of racial violence in the colony. At this meeting, held on the 7th of May 1839, one speaker listed the instructions issued to Wyatt, emphasising those requiring him to live among the Aborigines and to "ascertain the strength and disposition of each tribe in the vicinity", before asking his audience "what more do we know now of the native tribes than we did in Augt., 1837?".7 Matthew Moorhouse, who had been appointed by the Imperial Government and who was already on his way to the colony, took over the office of Protector just six weeks after the public meeting.8 The pressure on Moorhouse, and the missionaries with whom he worked, to produce detailed descriptions of Aboriginal culture was intense. It is this background of controversy that, at least in part, accounts for the existence of the reports.
TRANSACTIONS OF THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY.
REPORT ON THE ABORIGINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
(Ordered by the Society to be printed, 29th Dec.)

(A.) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
(a.) The physical appearance of the South Australian natives presents little to
please, but much to call forth the attention of an observing mind. In the male there
is a tolerably well developed system, from five to six feet in height, with
extremities, arms and legs, bearing a fair proportion to the other parts of the body.
In the female the structure is considerably less, ranging from 4ft. 10 in. to 5ft 6 in.
with the extremities differing widely from those of the male, being attenuated and
slender, and imparting at once a subordinate appearance to the eye of a stranger.
the facial angle in these people is decidedly superior and to that which obtains in
some other black races, as may be instanced in the African Negroes. The forehead
is prominent but narrow, eyes slightly sunk in the sockets, iris black with
yellowish conjunctiva, nose flattened, mouth rather wide, lips somewhat
thickened, which, when opened, disclose a set of beautifully white and sound
teeth; chest ample, abdomen large, especially in the young, and the heel short,
exactly as in the European.

(b.) The skin is generally black or dark copper coloured, and hair curly or straight,
and black.

(B.) HABITS OF LIFE
(a.) Clothing. - The clothing in their natural state is exceedingly simple. In those
districts where the gum and peppermint trees are to be found, the skins of the
opossums are made into coverings; in other districts - as on the sea-coast, borders
of salt water rivers and lakes, where fish forms their principal food - seaweed and
rushes are manufactured into coverings.

(b.) Food. - These people are truly omniverous [sic], but the nature of their food
depends much upon the season of the year. In the spring vegetables and grubs are
their chief subsistence, either in a raw or cooked state; in the commencement of
the summer the eggs and young of birds, kangaroos, emus, fish, lizards, iguanas
&c. During the hotter months opossums and the gum of the wattle (Acacia
fragrans); in the autumn the tamma or honeysuckle blossom soaked in water, the
wandi and miranda, a small stone fruit, and the mantiri, an indigenous berry. In the winter a variety of roots, and opossums and other animals.

(c.) Mode of obtaining Food. - The larger animals, as the emu and kangaroo, are caught in nets or speared; the burrowing animals are either ensnared by nets at the mouth of their dens when coming out to feed, or are smoked and dug out, as circumstances require. The opossums are occasionally smoked, but more frequently drawn out by twisting a stick into the fur. Smaller animals, as birds, &c., are thrown at and killed by the wirri; and fish is hooked, speared, or netted, as may be most convenient.

(d.) Preparing Food. - Vegetable food is eaten in a raw or prepared state; different vegetables undergo different modes of preparation - some simply being warmed, others roasted, whilst others again are placed in the kanya-yappa or native oven, and regularly steamed. On the River Murray, a bulbous root, the size of an onion, named by them pililla, is roasted, and whilst hot is beaten between two stones and formed into a cake. All animals, with the exception of ants and some species of grubs, are roasted upon the fire or in the kanya-yappa. Ants and grubs are eaten in a raw state.

(e.) Food eaten at different Ages and by different Sexes. - After food is obtained, many peculiarities exist in partaking of it. As a general rule, vegetables are eaten by all, whereas animals, or some parts of them are denied either to the female or young men: the female kangaroo and fish are not eaten by young unmarried men; the wild dog and forearm of the kangaroo are eaten by the older men; girls, and women until the birth of the second child, are forbidden to eat opossums and emus.

(f.) Dwellings. - Being a wandering people, their dwellings are light and temporary, consisting in the warmer months of a few branches laid in a semicircular form upon each other, against which the head is placed, and in the centre is a small fire; in the colder months the same circular form is retained, the sides being elevated by branches and covered with bark, grass and earth, and meeting at the top so as to form a sort of arch. When completed, the construction represents the section of a dome, sufficiently large to protect their inmates from the weather. The huts are rude and simple in the extreme, not requiring man and
wife more than two hours to begin and complete a domicile; they are not required to be substantially built, as they are not intended to be used for a longer period than five or six weeks. The food in the neighbourhood at this time becoming scarce, and the immediate vicinity of the hut unclean, a change of locality forces itself imperatively upon them - hence their wandering habits.

(g.) Implements. - The implements are equal in simplicity to the clothing. Those of the men consist of the winda (largest spear), from eight to twelve feet in length, with a point plain, or barbed with flint or glass, or sometimes having hooks cut out on it, and is thrown by the hand a distance of five or ten yards; the kaiya (smaller spear), from five to six feet in length, occasionally barbed with glass, consisting of two parts, the pointed part made of heavy material, as the tea tree, and the posterior part, about two or three feet in length, of grass-tree or reed, fixed to the first by gum and tendons of animals; the weapon is thrown by the midla (propelling stick) a distance of sixty or eighty yards with considerable precision.

(h.) Preparing Implements - Tools. - They are the flint used either in a free state as a knife, or fastened by gum to a handle (the kandappi) as chisel or hatchet; in those parts where flint is scarce and shells abound, the latter are used. The needle is made from the fibula of the Kangaroo or Emu, which is pointed at one end by being rubbed upon a stone. Their nets, used for fishing, ensnaring game, or constructing bags for carrying implements or food, are made from the tendons of animals or fibres of plants, the latter of which are prepared by chewing or rubbing with the fingers. The materials are made into string by being twisted with rubbing the hand upon the thigh; the string is then wrapped upon a needle, and the netting carried on without the aid of any other instrument. These nets vary much in size according to the purpose for which they are intended to be used. The kangaroo and emu net is about one hundred feet in length, and four in breadth, with meshes of three or four inches square; the fishing net is about 30 feet long, and terminates in a pouch capable of holding seven or eight cwt. of fish, with meshes depending upon the kind intended to be caught. Another kind of knitting or plaiting work is the taingyedli (or rush bag) used by some tribes as wikatya or tando, and the painkarni (a round mat) made of rushes or seaweed. The skins, when used for garments, are prepared in the following manner: as soon as removed from the animal they are laid upon the ground, stretched out, and pegged down until dry; cold ashes or dust are rubbed over the surface for the purpose of absorbing the fat
which may have exuded during the process of drying. The skin is then taken up and prepared for use; the larger have their inner layers shaved off by the katta, kandappi or wadna, and the smaller are rubbed lightly with stones, so as to make them loose and flexible. They are then stitched together, the wityo being the needle, and animal tendons being the thread. The needle is used like a shoe-maker's awl, being pushed through and withdrawn so as to make an aperture through which the thread is passed. The garment when finished is nearly square, is thrown over the left shoulder, and fastened round the right, so as to leave the right arm at liberty to use and carry the weapons. The females throw it over the back and left shoulder, bring it around under the right armpit, and the whole is fastened by a string thrown over the garment and back, and when tied in front, a pouch is left upon the back in which the child is always carried.

(i.) Social Habits. - They are truly a wandering people, seldom remaining many weeks upon one locality. They wander about generally in detached groups or separate families; frequently the whole tribe comes together and barter such commodities as each family may possess; in the evenings past occurrences are related, and by the male adults, future prospects and plans considered. In the morning, all implements being sharpened, the young and vigorous, male and female, start out in search of supplies - the male after animal, the female after vegetable food, whilst the sick and aged are left at home with one or two of the more healthy to protect them.

Occasionally whole tribes assemble for conviviality or war; if for the former, and any are strangers to each other, they undergo a formal introduction, their lineage and country are described by the older men, and in the evening different plays are performed by each tribe alternately; if for the latter, in the evening they first see each other, a play takes place, and at day-break on the following morning, the battle ensues. These contests are cold blooded and cruel; they occur apparently, not to avenge past injuries, but simply to manifest the activity of the young men belonging to the different tribes. During the action, which may last for three or four hours, scarcely a word is spoken, and little noise is heard, except that of a shrill cry when someone narrowly escapes a spear, although there are present hundreds of spectators, including men, women and children.
When friendly tribes come together, their huts are built as nearly as practicable together, each tribe locating themselves in the direction from whence they came; if they are eastern men they will occupy the eastern part of the encampment; if from the south, they will occupy the southern part &c. At these seasons one hut may contain two or three families, each family having a separate fire. These congregations are dispersed again, either by scarcity of food, or in consequence of discord and disagreement.

(C.) CEREMONIES.
Their ceremonies are numerous but, as yet, little understood. The males pass through three particular stages, and each is entered by its corresponding ceremony. The first stage from childhood to boyhood is called wilya kundart; taking place about the age of ten years, and consists of being covered in blood drawn from the arm of an adult; this seems to be introductory to the second step, which is that of circumcision, and takes place about the age of 13 or 14. The circumcised wear from this time the yudna (pubic covering), and are allowed the use of the wirri, the kadno marnutta (a toy); the head at this time is besmeared with grease and ochre, an opossum band is tied round, in which a tuft is fastened and worn until perfectly recovered from the effects of the operation.

In such tribes where circumcision is not practised, a corresponding rite is observed, namely besmearing the whole body from head to foot with grease and ochre. The third step is called wilyarru, and introduced by being tattooed upon the chests, shoulders and backs, and at the same time drenched with blood drawn from the arm of a burka (or senior). He receives the wimmorra (a toy), similar but larger than the kadno marnutta, the kadlotti (a girdle) of human hair worn around the waist, and is allowed the use of every implement and weapon. The corresponding rite to the wilgarru [sic] is performed, on the Murray and Lake Alexandrina, by covering the body with grease and ochre and plucking the hair from the pubis and chin; it is termed marniritti (the anointed).

(D.) SUPERSTITIONS
(a.) Creation. - These people have no conception of a Deity or great first cause; their ideas of creation are absurd and feeble; they believe that some things originated of themselves and had the property of creating others, or transforming themselves. They have therefore no kind of form of worship, but dread evil spirits
in the shape of men, as the Kuingo (death) who is said to be a thick, short
personage of ugly appearance and disagreeable smell. Their influence is
counteracted by magic evolutions, chiefly by the yammai ama or warra-warra
(sorcerors). These persons are possessed of extensive influence, such as making
rain, thunder, hailstones &c., producing or curing blindness and sickness
generally, enchanting rivers so as to render them mortiferous, and transforming
themselves into other beings.

(c.) Empirics. - These are almost numberless, but a few only are given. Internal
pains, inflammatory or otherwise, are attributed to paiyta (vermin in general) or
sorcery. The remedy consists in applying the mouth to the surface where the pain
is seated, and the paiyta or blood sucked out, and a bunch of gum leaves waved
over the surface. For head-ache, pains in the abdomen and extremities, other
modes are sometimes adopted - the sick person lies stretched on the ground,
whilst another presses with his feet or hands the aching part, or cold water is
sprinkled over, and gum leaves used as before. Blood-letting is occasionally
adopted to relieve weight and oppression in the system. The most rational system
obtains in the adjusting of fractured bones of the leg and in syphilitic diseases. In
the former cases, after the bones have been placed in proper apposition, splints
and bandages are applied in the European manner; and in the latter, wood-ashes,
or the astringent bark of the wattle, are applied to the surface of the sores.
Superficial wounds are left to themselves.

(C.) Celestial Bodies. - The celestial bodies are believed to have been inhabitants
of this earth, and have accidentally changed their residence and live in the same
state of society as men and animals do; the moon is said to be a male and the sun
his wife, some of the stars are dogs of the moon, having two heads and without
tail - the Pleiades are girls - Orion boys; the meteoric lights are said to be
orphans; two rainbows appearing at once are male and female. To the influence of
the stars are attributed malformations of the body inflicted chiefly for eating
forbidden food; the southern lights portend disease, and an eclipse causes death
and destruction.

(E.) NUMBERS.
Wandering people, having no mode of cultivating the ground, breeding or
domesticating animals, or any systematic manner of producing food, must, of
necessity, be thinly scattered across the country. This singularly happens among
the natives of our colony. In an area of 2,800 square miles, that is, a distance of 80
miles to the north, and 60 to the south of Adelaide, running parallel with the coast
20 miles, there are 650 natives; or one in every 4 1/2 square miles. The
proportions of the sexes gives a peculiar predominance to the males; out of the
number 650 there are 280 males, 182 females, and 188 children - it may be
observed that there is about one child to each female.

(a.) Reasons for so limited a Population. - The scarcity of population is
maintained, first, by the incessant wars, tumults, and differences which occur
from the most trivial circumstances; secondly, from polygamy, and illicit
intercourse, habits well known to check the progress of population; thirdly,
infanticide, which is by no means uncommon; fourthly, disease, as dysentery and
venereal, the latter of which is particularly fatal to children. There is much that
leads to the inference that the venereal has not been introduced by the white
population.

(b.) Contact with Europeans. - The question, does contact with the Europeans
tend to increase or decrease our native population may be answered by the
following statistics. In the first half-year from July 1st to December 31st 1839, the
number of births was five, and the deaths seven five in the neighbourhood of
Adelaide, and two about forty miles to the north. In the year 1840, the number of
births was six, the number of deaths, fifteen, nine natural and six premature; in
the last half-year, from January 1st to June 30th 1841, the number of births was
three, the number of deaths, fourteen, nine natural, and five premature.

(F.) CRIMES.
It has been already stated that in the settled districts there are six hundred and fifty
aborigines that are known. Out of these the following have been charged with
crime during the space of two years: -
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Before whom</th>
<th>No. discharged</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>By whom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Stealing potatoes</td>
<td>Resident Magistrate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 to 14 days' imprisonment</td>
<td>Resident Magistrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stealing melons</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Month's imprisonment</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 to a month's and 3 to 14 days' imprisonment</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sheep stealing</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Larceny</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 to 3 week's imprisonment</td>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attempt at murder</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would have been desirable here to compare the ratio of crime in the black and white population, but the writers of this chapter upon the Aborigines have no statistical return of crimes amongst the Europeans, and the comparison, to have been a fair one, must necessarily have embraced all the aggressions of the natives, which is not the case in the above table. The reason of this is, that the offenders implicated in crime have, in several instances, not been identified, therefore they could not be entered in a tabular form. The native who speared Master Hawson in the Port Lincoln District, those who took five thousand sheep from Mr Inman's party, on the Rufus, in April last, and those who murdered four Europeans in Mr Langhorne's party on the 20th of June, have not been, neither is it probable they ever will be, identified.

(G.) IMPROVEMENT PAST AND FUTURE.
The first step taken towards their improvement was to acquire a knowledge of their language, so as to gain an insight into their character, habits, laws and prejudices. The next step was to induce them, by example and persuasion, to adopt regular employment, and to erect fixed and more substantial habitations, in the neighbourhood of which land for cultivation was apportioned: and the success has been as follows: - They have assisted in erecting five cottages, and a sixth has been erected with but very little aid from Europeans. In 1839 and 1840 they had
one acre of ground under cultivation, and at the present time they have a plot of ground (three acres) cultivated by themselves, upon which potatoes, carrots, maize, and melons are now growing.

As the language became more generally known, and facilities afforded to conversation, they were spoken to from time to time upon moral and religious subjects. On the 23rd of December 1839 a school for the children was commenced, and since that period they have been assembled as regularly as practicable. In 1840, three hundred and sixty-six days, they were assembled two hundred and eighty-six, and out of forty one children that were in Adelaide, the average school attendance was eleven daily. In 1841, January 1st to June 30th, one hundred and eighty-one days, they were assembled one hundred and seventy-eight, and the average attendance was nineteen daily. At the end of the first year there were six that knew the alphabet, nine that could read monosyllables; seven that could read polysyllables; and four that could write upon the slate. At the end of June 1841 there were fourteen that knew the alphabet, thirteen that could read monosyllables, ten polysyllables, and write upon the slate or paper, six knew the rule of addition, and two that of multiplication. Since the 2nd of March, the girls have received sewing lessons from a number of ladies, chiefly Wesleyans, who felt interested in the improvement of these people. The progress made under the tuition of these zealous ladies has been satisfactory and encouraging. Eight of the children are able to repeat the commandments, and narrate the history of the Creation, fall of our first parents, Cain's fratricide, the deluge, portions of early Jewish history, the advent of our Lord, several of his miracles, the doctrine of resurrection and final judgement.

The adults are much more inaccessible for religious instruction than the children; they are naturally proud and wise in their own estimation, and express themselves perfectly satisfied with the traditions of their forefathers. They can scarcely be induced to accompany the children to the preaching of the Gospel on the Sabbath; on some Sabbaths a few attend, whilst on others not a single adult, male or female, appears. Out of the first twenty-six Sabbaths of this year, they have been assembled twelve, and the average attendance has been twenty-three adults.
(H.) LANGUAGE.
A knowledge of the language in an uncivilized nation displays more than any other information, their capabilities and mental powers. The following features of one dialect may give the reader some means of judging the powers of the South Australian Aborigines:

**PRONOUNS - 1ST PERSONAL.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom. &amp; Acc.</td>
<td><em>Ngau</em>, I, and me</td>
<td><em>Ngadli</em>, we two</td>
<td><em>Ngadlu</em>, we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act. Case</td>
<td><em>Ngatto</em>, I (the agent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2nd PERSONS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. &amp; Acc.</td>
<td><em>Ninna</em>, thou, thee</td>
<td><em>Niwa</em>, you two</td>
<td><em>Na</em>, you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act. Case</td>
<td><em>Nindo</em>, thou (agent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3rd PERSONS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. &amp; Acc.</td>
<td><em>Pa</em>, he, she, it</td>
<td><em>Purla</em>, they two</td>
<td><em>Parna</em>, they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act. Case</td>
<td><em>Padlo</em>, he (agent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the genitive of each person and number the possessive pronouns are derived.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. &amp; Gen.</td>
<td><em>Ngadliko</em>, our two</td>
<td><em>Ngadlikurla</em></td>
<td><em>Ngadlikurna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. &amp; Dat.</td>
<td><em>Ngadlikuna</em></td>
<td><em>Ngadlikurlako</em></td>
<td><em>Ngadlikuityua</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act. Case</td>
<td><em>Ngadlikurto</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The demonstratives are equally declinable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N. &amp; Acc.</td>
<td>1a, this here</td>
<td>Itto, these, here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. &amp; Dat.</td>
<td>Innako</td>
<td>Idlourlako</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act. Case.</td>
<td>Idlo</td>
<td>Ittukko</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOUN SUBSTANTIVE

The noun substantives form the chief basis, there being derived from them several other parts of speech, as -

NOUN SUBST.
Mado, fog, darkness

Kuinya, death

Worpo, bone, the hard parts of vegetables

ADJECTIVE.
Madlo madlo, dark, foggy

Kuinyunna, mortiferous, forbidden

Worpunna, hard, cruel

Warpullera, quarrelsome

Worpo warpurro, hastily

VERB.

Madlo madlonondi, to become dark

Kuinyannendi, to die

Worpunnendi, to become hard, meagre

Worpurleandi, to exert oneself

Worpo worpulendi, to hasten

VERB

The radical part of the verb occurs generally as a verbal noun, which, by affixing certain particles is made into verb (as is to be seen from the above) and forms thus the tenses, moods, and modifications.

Murka, lamentation
Murkandi, lamenting
Murki, lamented
Murketti, have lamented
Murkata, shall lament
Murkananna, having had lamented
Murka, lament thou
Murkaingwa, lament you two
Murkainga, lament you
Murkanintyerla, that lament
Mulkama, had lamented
Mulkettoa, lest lament
Mulkatti, do not lament
Mulkatitya, to lament

Mankondi, taking hold of now
Manki, was taking, &c.
Manketti, have been taking, &c.
Mankota, shall be taking, &c.
Mankananna, having had taken, &c.
Mankoaatto, I will now take hold of
Mannando, thou shalt, &c.
Mankungki, he, she, or it shall take, &c.
Mankoadli, let us two take hold
Manumaingwa, you two shall, &c.
Mankoadlu, let us take hold of
Manumainga, you shall take hold
Mankanintyerla, that if taking hold of
Mankoma, had taken hold of
Mankettoaii, lest take hold of
Mankati, do not take hold of
Manketitya, to take hold of.

MODIFICATION

Mankondi, taking hold of
Mankoko mankondi, taking repeatedly hold of - i.e., handling
Mankorendi, taking hold of himself; of each other; or for himself (middle voice); assembling
Mankorendi, taking repeatedly hold of himself, &c., &c.
Mankoriappendi, causing, permitting to take hold of each other, &c., &c.; surrounding, fencing, taking in.
Mankoarnendi, continuing to take hold of.
Mankoarniappendi, causing to continue to take hold of.
Mankulaendi, (spontaneous), fearing, being afraid.
Turlanendi, behaving angrily.
Turlalaendi, to become or grow angry of his own accord, spontaneously; expressing that the action is performed by the agent's internal activity, as - Biltendi, to cut off.
Biltendi, to fly off, as a fire spark.
Karkonendi, to be transformed, become, exist now, as a shea-oak.
Ngurratendi, to heal; properly to produce a ngurra i.e. a cicatrix.

It must be remembered that the verb is as yet not fully ascertained, therefore the proceeding will have an imperfect appearance.

Instead of prefixes, they have postfixa and postpositions, by which these relations are expressed, as -

Nindaitya, to thee (going)
Ngattaitya, to me, towards, against.
Mutyertilla, in the coat.
Pankarrilla, in, upon the territory.
Kurrungga, in the pot.
Tandungga, in the bag
Worlianna, to the house (going)
Yertanna, to the country.
- itya, - illa, - ngga, - anna,
Tutta wirrangga, in, amongst the grass
Ninko kartangga, above, over thee.
Mambarlakko wastinga, between the knees, &c.

The adverbal sense is partly expressed by affixa, partly by real adverbs, and nouns in an adverbal form, as -

(Budni) Budninda, just now it came
(Ninko) Ninkoadni, only yours
(Ngangko) Ngangkulya, whose is it?
(Ngannaitya) Ngannaityama, why then?
Wappeurti ngu, now do not do it!
Bakkindo bitti, first do out it [sic]

The numerals consist only of-
   Kumandi, one
   Purlaitya, two
   Marnkutye, a few; some
   Tauata, many

The multiple is expressed by the termination - lukko, as-
   Kurmarlukko, once
   Purlarlukko, twice, &c.

W. Watson, Chairman.
C. G. Teichelmann.
M. Moorhouse.
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT FOR THE
YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 1843

Food
In the list of foods eaten, one favorite and extensive repast was omitted, namely
the white ant, which in the spring is abundant and greatly sought-after. The females only are eaten, and at a time just before depositing their eggs.

Procuring Food
In searching for opossums every gum tree is examined as the native passes along;
if the animal have ascended the tree, the bark is scratched with its claws, and the
native at once perceives, whether the marks were made in the night or at a more
remote period. If recent, they are white, the color of the inner bark, but if old they
are brown like an apple that has been cut and exposed for some time to the
influence of the air. Opossums are sometimes hunted by moonlight assisted by the
wild dog. The animals occasionally feed on the ground, and as soon as scared by
the approach of enemies, ascend the trees. The dog is useful in scenting the
opossums and points out the trees which have been ascended. The native then
either brings it down with his waddy, or climbs the tree and drags the animal out
of its hole.

The manner in which a native climbs a tree may here be inserted. In the first place
all the garments are thrown off and with the wadna or climbing stick a notch is
made in the bark; the first is made about 2 feet from the ground, and the small
toes of the left foot are placed in; the left arm is employed in clasping the stem,
and the right arm employed in notching a second place for the right foot. As soon
as the second notch is made, the sharp end of the wadna is struck into the bark and
serves as a fixed means of support to raise the body, so as to make the second
step. The ball of the great toe of the right foot is placed in it, the wadna is
liberated in order to make a third notch for the left foot, and successively in this
manner until the tree is climbed. The descent is made just in the same order as the
ascent, and each foot is applied to the same place. In this process, the chief
principle is, to have three points of contact with the trunk of the tree, either two
arms and one leg, or one arm and two legs.
Birds are killed on the wing with the waddy, or whilst resting on the ground, or upon branches of trees. The eggs of birds are extensively eaten, but generally confined to those that leave the nest at birth, as the emu, duck, goose and swan &c, if the young remain in the nest for some time after being hatched, the eggs are allowed to remain, and the young taken before they are capable of flying. The larvae of insects are discovered in trees by the kudna (dung) being found at the aperture where the insect is lodged; sometimes however they enter at the earth and commence destruction at the very root, but even then, its presence is at once detected by the sickly appearance of the plant; the native then breaks down the plant and secures the food. Some species penetrate the bark and wood of the gum tree, and these are taken from their retreats by the kurriti or grub hook, a small twig about a foot long and hooked at the end. Other species are found in the earth and are dug out with the karko or small spade.

**Food eaten at different ages**
The young men and adults under 40 years are not allowed to eat the fore-arm of the large red kangaroo; it would produce premature old age.

**Dwellings**
In winter during the heaviest rains, their huts are covered with bark if it can be procured.

**Weapons**
The winda or large spear is made from the common scrub (Eucalyptus), the katta or fighting stick from the shea-oak (Casuarina); heavy part of the kaya and kulpi from common scrub or tea tree; and the light part from the grass tree (Xanthorrhoea) or reed; the midla or throwing stick from the peppermint (Eucalyptus); katta wirri or wooden sword from shea-oak and the Mulla Bakka or shield from the bark, or the most recently formed layer of wood of the gum tree (Eucalyptus).

**Preparing Implements**
The katta and wadna are chisel pointed and sharpened by being charred in the fire and afterwards rubbed down with a stone to the precise shape that may be required. The spears are generally irregular and cracked [?] when first gathered, but are straightened by placing them upon hot ashes and applying pressure.
Marriage
Wives are regarded as absolute property, and exchanged or bartered away at the wim [sic] of the husband. A husband is called yangarra martanya (owner or proprietor of a wife). If a native is asked why he is anxious to possess a wife, he invariably answers "to fetch my wood and water, and carry my mudlinna (furniture, as clothing, food, &c)". Chastity is scarcely recognized amongst them; an individual possessing a wife will prostitute her for the paltry consideration of a loaf of bread, and to this, I have even known a father subject his own daughter.

Natural Habits
The placenta is considered something too sacred to be trifled with. As soon as it is thrown off from the uterus, it is carefully put away from the reach of their animals, as dogs &c. They state that if eaten by any animal, the animal would certainly die.

Ceremonies
Circumcision is performed at the age of from 12 to 14 years and in the following manner. Early in the morning, the boys intended to be circumcised, are seized from behind, a bandage fastened over the eyes, and led away from the presence of the women and children, to a distance of about half a mile. They are then laid on the ground, and covered with a blanket or skin, so as not to see what is passing amongst the males. The ceremony is then commenced by the males; three of them receive the word of command and commence limping and making a peculiar groaning noise, until they arrive opposite some one, whom they seize. The seized individual sets off at full speed as if he intended to escape, and run away; the three, before being occupied in limping and groaning, run with him, to prevent his escape; after they have had several races, they run over the body intended for operation, and the individual who tried to escape, lapses into a state of apparent insensibility, is carried and laid down near to the boys, and covered over with dust. After remaining some time in this insensible state, they are lifted up by the ears, loud noises and shouts being made as if to awaken them. The men present, all who are not sick, form themselves into a single rank, and walk round as if walking round a circle. The first individual has a katta down his back and when they have made several circles, he gives it to another. The whole then arise, except the sick, the enchanted and those to be circumcised, and proceed to a short distance, the man with the katta down his back being leader. When assembled
they form themselves into a line, and a word of command is given, at which they commence a peculiar stamping and groaning, beginning at the distal end of the line and going gradually to the proximal end. They have several rounds of making this noise, and at each turn, they advance a little towards the boys. When arrived nearly at the boys, they (the boys) have their eyes uncovered and see the men approaching. The first man who holds the katta, fastens it in the ground, the whole train approach, take hold of the katta and fall upon each other in one heap. The boys are then thrown upon the heap, and the operation is performed by those previously enchanted.

Mode of burial
Every tribe differs in its mode of burial. Amongst the Adelaide tribe, as soon as a person dies, there is a general lamentation, consisting of a loud cry made by relatives and friends. The body is immediately wrapped up in the skins or clothing worn during life. In the course of a day or two it is placed upon the tirkatti or Bier, which is made of branches, crossed so as to form radii of a circle, and an examination entered upon, as to the cause of death. The bier is carried upon the shoulders of five or six persons over placed where the deceased had lately been living. One person is placed under the bier, professedly in conversation with the dead and asks "which person killed you - do you know him" - if the corpse says no-one, the inquest ceases, but if it states that some person has, the bier moves round; the corpse is said to produce the motion influenced by kuinyo (death). The alleged murderer may be present, if so the bier is carried round and one of the branches made to touch him, and a battle ensues either immediately, or in the course of a day or two. At the time of burial the body is removed from the bier and deposited in a grave of 4 or 5 feet deep.

Children under four years old are not buried for some months after death; they are carefully wrapped up and carried upon the back of the mother in the day and at night serve as a pillow, until they become quite dry and mummy like. They are then buried, but with what ceremony, I don't know, as I have not witnessed it.

The Murray tribes differ from the Adelaide in performing this ceremony. The body is carried from the hut, upon a bier, and placed near the grave. The mourners then crowd around it and the men, women and children weep and howl for about an hour; besides weeping and howling, the female relatives make numbers of
superficial incisions upon the thighs, from six to twelve inches long. The men proceed then to examine into the cause of death, whether the individual has been killed or he has died a natural death. The abdomen of the dead body is uncovered, and an incision from three to four inches long, made in the right hypogastric region; the bowels and omentum are turned out, and a portion of the latter cut away and placed in a bunch of green leaves. If the individual has been killed by an adverse tribe, they state that a cicatrix is found in the omentum, but if he has died a natural death, the omentum presents a normal appearance. The intestines are replaced and the body deposited in the grave, with the head lying to the west. Two relatives then jump upon the body, and as if in a paroxysm of frenzy, seize each other by the hair of the head and unmercifully drag, shake and pull each other about. The grave is filled up with branches and earth and a tumulus left to remind the living where their relatives and friends are laid. Upon these tumuli clothings and branches are put from time to time; they are visited occasionally by the women for several months after, and the lamentations performed, and weeping, making incisions across the thighs &c as at the time of burial.

In the neighbourhood of Encounter Bay, four modes of disposing of the dead obtain. "Old persons are buried. The middle-aged are placed in a tree, the hands and knees being brought nearly to the chin, all the openings of the body, as mouth, nose and ears being sewn up and the corpse covered with mats, pieces of net or old clothing. The corpse being placed in a tree, a fire is made underneath around which the friends and relatives of the deceased sit and make a lamentation. In this situation the body remains, unless removed by some hostile tribe, until the flesh is completely wasted away, after which the skull is taken by the nearest relative for a drinking vessel. The third mode is to place the corpse in a sitting posture, without any covering, the face turned towards the east, until dried by the sun, after which it is placed in a tree. This plan is adopted with those to whom they wish to show their respect. The last mode is to burn the body, which is practised only in the case of still-born infants, as those which die shortly after birth."

**Mourning**

Mourning is indicated by the hair and beard of the men being cut off and the hair of the women. In some instances they put hot ashes upon the head so as to singe the hair to its very roots; they weep literally in "dust and ashes". On the Rufus the
females wear another indication of mourning; they have a covering for the head made of carbonate of lime, from an inch and a half to two inches thick; it is put on in a soft state like plaster of Paris when used for taking casts etc.

Superstitions
The Puingurru is a scared piece of bone used sometimes for bleeding. If placed in the fire, and burnt to ashes, it possesses mortiferous influence over enemies. If two tribes are at enmity and one individual happens to fall sick, it is affirmed, and as certainly believed, that the sickness has been produced by a sorcerer of the opposing tribe, and if Puingurru had been burnt, they are certain that death will follow.

They believe in the existence of a being whom they designate Kuinyo, a monster having the appearance of a black. He is said to have the power of flying through air, of passing subterraneously from one place to another. His approach is most frequent in the night, when the fires have gone out, and to guard against him they are frequently stirred to cause them to burn brightly.

Empirics
Besides the Blood sometimes extracted by sucking from the gums of the sorcerer, a bone will sometimes be put out of the mouth and be declared to have been procured from the diseased part. In other instances, the disease is drawn out in an invisible form, placed in the fire and burnt.

Numbers
The Europeans are now in contact with about 1600 Aborigines, but the number might be subdivided into those in regular contact, and those in irregular contact. Those in regular may be represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide District</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounter Bay</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorunde</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Lincoln</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutt River</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those in irregular -

Adelaide District  [700]
Encounter Bay     100
Moorunde         200
Port Lincoln     340
Hutt River        40
Total             680
**Grand Total**   **1600**

Adelaide continues to be a great source of attraction, and the numbers visiting it are annually increasing, as will be seen from the annual returns of the numbers present at the distribution of food and clothing on Her Majesty's birthday.

In 1840 there were present 283 including men, women and children.
In 1841 present 374
In 1842 present 400
In 1843 present 450

**Disease**
I have not seen a case of those diseases which are induced by artificial living as Gout, Rheumatism, diseased breasts of females and decayed teeth. The last disease is beginning to show itself in those who have lived six or seven years on European diet, but in a native coming to Adelaide for the first time, I have not seen a decayed tooth.

**Language**
This branch has not been neglected during the past year, and a vocabulary of the Murray dialect, accompanied by some sketches of a grammar should now have been forwarded, had not those who are able to instruct in the language been absent in the bush. I hope to forward it with my next quarterly report with such remarks upon the dialects as present observation will allow.

**Crimes**
The following is a tabular arrangement of convictions during the year ending September 30th
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supreme Court</th>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Magistrate's Court</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep Stealing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Stealing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be observed that with the exception of one case of sheep stealing, the crimes brought before the Supreme Court, were committed in the year ending September 1842.

**Attempts at improving their Condition**

The same plans are in operation as given in my last annual report. The school has been a subject of considerable improvement, and given in detail in the report for the quarter ending 30th of June.

During the quarter ending 30th of September the children were assembled in school 92 days, and the average daily attendance was 10. During the twelve months they were assembled 235 days, and average attendance was 11 1/4 daily. The adults during the year were assembled 23 Sabbaths for public worship and addressed by one of the Missionaries in their native tongue; the average daily attendance of each Sabbath has been 18 20/23

The children that have attended the school have made satisfactory progress. The average of 10 (ten) has been from a number of 16, that were taken into the boarding school in June. The attainments of the 16 are as follows -

- 14 able to read polysyllables
- 2 " monosyllables only
- 3 write on the slate only
- 11 " paper
- 2 repeat cardinal numbers only
- 14 acquainted with addition
- 9 " multiplication
- 3 " subtraction
- 2 " division
In Geography they all know the general divisions of the earth, its shape, diameter circumference and the names of continents, oceans, seas and gulphs, also the general character of the inhabitants of each part, as colour &c. The Scriptures are read daily to them in English, and such parts that are not understood are expressed in their language. The Rev. Mr Klose had gone through a complete course of Scriptural history during the twelve months.

Two girls from 12 to 13 years old have left the School and are living with their husbands.

There have been during the year 9 births and 14 deaths.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

M. Moorhouse
Protector of Aborigines.
Endnotes

1. The three signatories to the report are W. Watson, Chairman, C.G. Teichelmann and M. Moorhouse. I have assumed that W. Watson simply chaired the meeting at which the report was presented and was not one of the authors.

2. GRG 24/6/1843/1234 (SPRO)

3. ibid.


5. C.G. Teichelmann and C.W. Schurmann, Outlines of a grammar, vocabulary, and phraseology of the Aboriginal language of South Australia... (Adelaide 1841)

6. Southern Australian, 26 Jan 1841 & 7 Jun 1842

7. ibid., 10 May 1839. See also Southern Australian, 27 Mar 1839 for earlier criticism of Wyatt.


9. Transcription from the version published in the Register, 8 Jan 1842.

10. Transcription from microfilm copy of manuscript in the South Australian Public Record Office, GRG 24/6/1843/1234.