

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

[Page 1]

[In margin] Published in my this monograph Series No III
By George Augustus Robinson and in his holograph

New South Wales

1

Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interiors during the Year 1844 by G. A. Robinson Esq. C.P.A.

Left Melbourne attended by two Natives (mounted) and on the 13th April visited the Agricultural Establishment Nerre Nerre Warren and arrived on the 19th at Mr Jamiesons Station Western Port reached the Tarwin on the 29th accompanied by Mr Tyers dray, two working hands, a border Trooper and small party of Native Police and was detained five days in opening a Road and crossing, two clear days being occupied in cutting through sixteen hundred yards of dense Forest.

The Tarwin is the largest River of Wilsons Promontory and empties itself into a broad Inlet having a Bar at its confluence with the Lea.

Swans (*Cygnus atratus*) and other wild fowl were abundant. The western bank of the River (an alluvial deposit) had to be laid with timbers ere the Oxen and horses could be swam over. The Tarwin sweeps in its course to the last North East up a broad Valley of Epacridea (Heath) of Settlers, and where it is possible good patches of Country will be met with. On the 11th I arrived at Lung Lung Praren emptying itself into Corner Inlet and the largest River between Alberton and Wilsons Promontory. A bridge if not

[In margin] (May) The River is about 25 yards wide 10 feet deep with 6 feet rise of Tide and may be crossed at low water on fallen timbers the horses and horned cattle swim over at high tide.

[Page 2]

2

already done might easily be made by felling the Eucalyptus which grows abundantly along the verge of the Stream. Finding several miles of wooded country before me, and but one old axe remaining, and being destitute of all supplies I resolved on the 16th when within thirty miles of Port Albert to proceed and accompanied by two Natives (mounted) arrived at Port Albert on the 19th when immediate arrangements were made by Mr Tyers for sending off supplies.

The Extensive Region between Alberton and Western Port is principally covered with Forest and large masses of dense Scrub (*Leptos Permum*) with occasional patches of heath (Epacridea) and is excepting some low hills at Capes Liptrap and Patterson tolerably level. West of Wilsons Promontory or Wommum as called by the Natives is the country of the Yowenjerie (now extinct) a powerful Section of the Boonwerong Nation at Western Port who have (with the exception of two Individuals been exterminated by their Neighbours the Gipps Land Aborigines. A

few trees barked for Canoes at the Tarwin Inlet during the egging season by Blacks from the East of Wommum were the only indications of Natives met with. The Forest animals have vastly increased since the destruction of the local Inhabitants. The Phascolarctus Fuscus, Carbora of natives, Bear or Monkey of Settlers, and the Lyretail Pheasant (Menura Superba) Torope and Bullen Bullen of Natives were in places abundant and proved acceptable in the way of food. The larger species

[Page 3]

3

of Kangaroo (Macropus Major) and Emu were seen on the Range near the Albert and recent indications of the Aborigines were also observed.

Wilson's Promontory is of granite and detached from the Main Land by a broad and deep Inlet, the tide flowing at high water round it. Sandstone however is the general formation but good Coal is found at Cape Patterson. The time (five weeks occupied in opening this first Route from Melbourne to Alberton for wheeled Carriages was greater than might have been anticipated but considering the difficulties of the Country, the heavy timber to be overcome, the dense masses of Scrub to penetrate but with two working hands and the foramanous, and in some places soft nature of the Soil it is rather matter of surprise it was accomplished so soon and which was mainly attributable to the extraordinary exertions and good conduct of the two Men named in the Margin. Much of this Country however might easily be rendered pervious (in the dry season) by ignition, a small party of Men under the direction of Mr Tyers or any other competent person would soon open out an Excellent line of communication between the Capital of the Province and the fertile District of Gipps Land. From Melbourne the usual route of Settlers to Chisholms the last Station at Cape Patterson in the Western Port District was followed, and from thence between the Coast Range and the line of Coast to Wilson's Promontory round the Great Inlet to the Government Township Alberton.

A few weeks anterior to my arrival the Blacks had murdered a Mr M^cAlister within a short distance of the Port, and as might have

[In margin] Campbell & William Farley

[Page 4]

4

been anticipated were completely dispersed. In the previous year the Aborigines were living peaceably with the Settlers and I was at a loss therefore to account for this unprovoked Murder. Subsequently (when over the dividing ranges) I learnt by accident that some depraved White Men had in a fit of drunkenness shot at and killed some friendly natives. Mr McAlister being the first European met after the perpetration of this revolting barbarity was in accordance with their usages murdered. The circumstances attending the death of the Gentleman was of painful consideration. Happily however these hostile collisions at the time of my visit had been suppressed by Mr Tyers the newly appointed Commissioner and I am of opinion that a more talented or fit officer could not have been selected. There is however reason to fear that before the arrival of the Commissioner a large amount of mischief had been inflicted upon the original Inhabitants by the lawless and depraved who had infested the Port from Van Diemens Land and the Middle Districts and that the instance recorded (if reports be true) is not the only one in which the Blacks have suffered –

The length of time occupied in opening this first road from Melbourne for wheeled carriages had brought me to the beginning of Winter and as the original design of the Expedition was to visit the Tribes in the Eastern Interior and of the Mountains as well as Gipps Land my stay (as the Snow was on the Summit

[Page 5]

5

of the Alps) had necessarily to be brief.

I had wished to have communicated ~~with the~~ with the Gipps land Natives but as neither my Melbourne blacks the Omio or any other living among the Settlers could speak their language I was the less anxious to waste time by any automaton display that might have been expected especially as I felt assured a communication (could I but cross the Alps before the Commencement of the Snow) might readily be effected through the Twofold Bay Natives with whom the Gipps Land Aborigines were in communication.

[In margin] and which proved the better case

The Lake the chief rendezvous of the Natives contiguous to the Coast are unsurpassed by any in the Colony. Of the five Rivers flowing into them the La Trobe * [In margin] * The Tangil of the Melbourne Aborigines. is preeminent. Wellington, Victoria and King are united by a Strait fifteen miles in length, fish are abundant and the Aborigines may be termed Ichthyophagist.

The Country on the Seaward side of the lakes is unavailable and the original Inhabitants remain in undisturbed possession. Their Mode of taking fish is by net, spearing and line and hook the latter ingeniously made from bone their Canoe a sheet of bark from the straight part of a tree folded at the end. Bark from the convex part is the simple form used by the Natives of the Murray and other parts of the Interior.

The scenery of the Lakes and the Mountains from some points of view and with some effects is exceedingly beautiful. In the disposal of their

[Page 6]

6

dead the Natives place the corpse in the hollow of a tree and sometimes horizontally on the branches on a piece of bark. A Skeleton thrust into the Cavity of a broken Eucalyptus was observed: it was large and perfect and supposed to have belonged to a Male Aborigine. The Tribes of the Mountains excepting the lower Ranges are distinct from those of the Coast. On the northern crest of the Dividing range by the sources of the Goulburn, the Yowenilliem the last section of the Tarounwarony (South) have their Country. On the top of the Mountains by the Deberer plains are the Mokalumbeet and next along the Dividing Range the Dodoras Yatemitong Tinnemitong, Worarener Mittong and other Tribes Eastward. The lofty dividing Range the Alps to the Northward bound the District of Gipps Land, and protects it also from the hot winds and summer frosts so fatal in other parts to Cultivation.

No Volcanic appearance was observed but the land in some places bore evident indication of its having been submerged. The Soil by the Lakes is chiefly alluvial and level, absence of stone is the striking characteristic of the Plains. Several intelligent Natives from the Middle Districts were living in the hired service of Settlers. Hamilton an Aborigine not only equalled but in some instances surpassed the

[Page 7]

7

Europeans, he spoke English fluently, received the same wages as the Whites and was treated in every respect the same by his Master, he was powerfully made and a pugilist yet the quietest man on the Station.

[In margin] June.

On the 13th left Gipps land and ascended the Mountains my party consisting of two Natives from the Melbourne Police with one pack horse. The Lakes, the flat country of Gipps Land and the line of Coast were distinctly visible. Reached Numbertimunge and Tongio Munje south of the dividing Range on the 21st and coming to the Northward entered Omeo. The Mitte Mitte the great drain of this Country is twenty nine yards wide and flows to the Murray: Iron bark and other varieties of the Eucalypte are the chief forest timber. Sandstone, Granite and Sienite is the principal formation but Quartz and limestone were observed. The five Stations of the Omeo District are completely isolated the nearest Settler being at least from Eighty to one hundred miles distant. Lake Omeo was dry and covered with grass, herds of Cattle were grazing there and also on the rich herbage of the plains so well adapted from its Salinous property for fattening Cattle. Wheat Cabbages Turnips Melons and other esculents grow in these Altitudes to perfection. Perch Cod (Gristes)

[Page 8]

8

Pelii) weighing from Eight to ten pounds are found in the Rivers. The Yatemittongs are the original Inhabitants with whom the Mountain Tribes as far East as Maneroo Downs are in Amity. A deadly animosity exists between them and the natives of the coast. A whole Tribe having been destroyed by the Yatemittongs and their allies a short time previous, blackened human bones strewed the surface and marked the spot where the slaughter happened. I was led thither by an Aborigine and all the circumstances minutely detailed.

A loathsome disease (Syphilis) among the Natives imparted by Europeans is making ravages. They speak English fluently but depraved Stockmen have taught them to blaspheme. There is no instance of them having killed a White Man and in general they are well spoken of. Anxious to proceed I engaged an Aborigine to guide me through the intricacies of these Snowy Regions and on the 25th left Omeo, the Weather was dark and cloudy and the snow soon after leaving fell in broad flakes which increased to a storm we pressed onwards for twenty miles and then bivouac'd under a blanket. The Storm continued during the night without intermission, the Cold was intense the horses had scarcely [indecipherable] and a fringe of icicles hung on their manes. The

[Page 9]

9

Melbourne Blacks were in great trepidation and my Aborigine Guide refused to proceed: under the circumstances and especially as higher Ranges were before me I retraced my steps. The Snow had commenced earlier and was more severe than had been known for several years previous.

The Weather on the 1st of July cleared up and I recommenced my Journey without a Guide although the Snow had not diminished, after much exertion I reached on the Evening of the 26th the Dividing Range (said to be) Five thousand feet above the Sea at "Junerow" 40 miles from Omeo and by Moonlight descended to the foot of the sand stone Range. The effect of a fine and extensive view from the scrubby Range of these vast Regions of Snow was truly sublime. The Limestone Rivulet (so

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

called from its formation) twenty miles east of Omeo is the nearest source of the Murray to Cape Howe and the Boundary of the Province.

[In margin] July

On the 3^d I reached the Snowy River gently flowing to the South, and at least One hundred yards wide, in places the Banks were precipitous and large boulders of Granite protruded the Surface. Callitris (Pyramidalus) from four to five feet in circumference grew amid shrubs of every variety of tint. The Country is well grassed

[Page 10]

10.

and abounds with cattle, the soil varies from a rich black mould to a chocolate. On the 6th I found the Snowy Rim and reached the Murrumbidgee north of Maneroo Downs. Of the mountains traversed, 80 miles at least had been through snow in places three feet in depth, and of the numerous steeps passed the most remarkable for length and abruptness were the sandstone Range, the nine mile Punch, Jacobs Point and the Gulph: the latter a sideling so precipitous as to require the removal of a wheel and the introduction of a false nave ere drays can descend and yet it frequently happens that teams are precipitated and Oxen killed. The Snowy River is the largest drain of the Alps South and a rolling torrent during the melting of the Snow.

It was a fine clear day in July when I first saw the Maneroo County. The immense Downs with their undulating grassy surface stretching out before me as far as the eye can see, a park of great magnitude and beauty studded with copses of Banksia, Casuarina, Mimosa, shrubs and small belts of Eucalyptus with bare and isolated mamillary shapes and flat topped hills the Tout ensemble of which compares with the Country I had passed through was exceedingly enchanting.

[Page 11]

11

The large isolated Granite Boulders (common on the Downs) have a singular effect. The country is well watered and in places the soil is impregnated with munate of Soda. The Grass grows in tufts, and Sheep and Cattle thrive amazingly. Catarrh a fatal disease among sheep has occasionally broken out within the last seven years; prior it was unknown. Coldness of climate is the cause assigned. The wheat crops have in general failed. The Altitude of Maneroo is from three to four thousand feet, its length from North to South, seventy to 80 miles and from East to West forty. The Bimmer mittong are the original inhabitants, they are a fine race of people well spoken of and have never been troublesome: by the Coast natives they are called Bimmeringal from Bimmering to the North. Syphilitic and other European disease among the Natives is prevalent and their numbers are rapidly decreasing: they are in general useful and frequently employed by Settlers. At the time of my visit there had been no rain for seven weeks. I visited a primitive and singular sepulchre of the Natives a large hollow tree having its entrance

[Page 12]

12.

(a Gothic aperture) eight feet from the ground a body bound with ligatures of bark had been recently introduced. The Natives of the Low Country and the Mountains assemble in large numbers in the fine Season to collect the Boogong fly a species of month found in myriads in the higher altitudes of the Mountains. They are extremely

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

nutritious and the Natives subsist during the Season entirely upon them they are called Cori by the Omeo and Boogong by the Yass Blacks. I traced the western portion of Maneroo, communicated with the Natives, made them trifling presents and on the 13th descended from the heights and the following morning arrived at Twofold Bay and was kindly received by Mr. Campbell and the other Gentleman in charge of Mr. Boyd's Establishment.

Sir Richard Bourke I was informed had visited Maneroo from Twofold Bay. On the Ranges good Petrifications are found and Snakes from eight to nine feet not uncommon. The Whaling season had commenced, and the Natives are congregating in large numbers. A drought of eight weeks had happened and I was anxious as a change in weather was indicated to complete my journey westward. By the assistance of the Gentlemen at

[Page 13]

13

[In margin] July

Mr. Boyd's I was enabled to leave the second day after my arrival. I was fortunate also in meeting with an intelligent Aborigine of the Cape Howe Tribe who spoke English fluently and who along with a white servant I engaged for the occasion. Two horses unfit from weakness and some of my baggage I left in charge of one of my Melbourne Blacks and on the 17th forded the Kiah,

[In margin] July. one hundred and fifty feet wide and accompanied by two Natives a white Servant, one pack and one saddle horse proceeded by the Coast to Cape Howe, Ram Head and Great Beach * to about twenty miles North of the Cape. Being short of provisions and for some time on short allowance for my horses * in a weak state and the rainy season having commenced I was compelled though reluctantly to return.

From the coast I struck Inland to Karma, distance of thirty miles of a Country about to be occupied. I then crossed the Bunketter Mountains to [indecipherable], (a small station thirty miles North of Cape Howe) passing through wooded ranges to Wategerai, Timbulliker and Nerribarber. I returned on the 11th August to Twofold Bay having during my absence completed a journey mostly on foot of three hundred and fifty miles and twelve hundred with the same horses since leaving Head Quarters 13th April.

[In margin]

*Commonly called 90 Mile Beach

*Two in number

[Page 14]

14

Ranges of Mountains covered with scrub and thickly timbered, is the general characteristic of the Country between Gippsland and Twofold Bay the formation is chiefly of Granite and Quartz and Sandstone, Stringy Bark (*Eucalyptus Robusta*) and Mountain Ash are the prevailing Timbers. Gum, Iron Bark and the Appletree of Settlers were seen.

The Coast West of Cape Howe called the Long or great Beach * is not of that uniform character as represented, for Sixty miles I found it indented with rocky Granite points projecting into the Sea *.

Breakers a Mile or more South and breakers half a mile South East of Toluryarry, a double pointed and rather bold projection, thirty miles W.S.W. of Cape Howe were distinctly visible. Several crews with their passengers have perished off this Coast among which the schooner Elizabeth, and the vessel proceeding with Mr. Howey and Family to Port Philip, not a single vestige of wreck with the exception of the [Zar ?] lost near Ram Head was seen accounted for by the strong current setting to Seaward. Between Cape Howe and Twofold Bay the Coast with the exception of the sandy beach bottom of False Bay and Granite at the indecipherable River consists chiefly of abrupt cliffs of red and grey sandstone known to Mariners as the Iron bound Coast. Cape Howe or Werreganno as called by the Natives is an island of Red Granite a mile and a half

[In margin]

* The long or North beach commences at Corner Inlet: and extends in a Concave sweep upwards of sixty leagues to Cape Howe without meeting more than very slight interruption in its long and uniform Progress. Australian Directory P. 150

* These dangerous rocks are seldom visible.

* The wind blows from opposite points of the Compass off Cape Howe and frequently contend.

[Page 15]

15

North and South and half a mile East and West with rather high Land having good water and grass upon it. A low Island of loam and sand a quarter of a mile round and inhabited by Mutton Birds is contiguous to the extreme point.

Malleekooter a Lake fourteen Miles by Eleven communicates with the Sea about ten Miles W.S.W. of the Cape. The Tinnor and Tooronoo empty themselves into the Lake the former takes a North West and the latter a North East course, these with their tributaries are the drains to an extensive Region of Mountainous Country. For twenty Miles the average width of the Tooronoo is one hundred yards and the Tinnor fifty to One hundred and fifty. Vessels of twenty five Tons burthen can cross the Bar at high Water. The Lake and Tooronoo I visited in a boat, fish and wild fowl were abundant. The Wingin River is twenty five Miles W.S.W. of Mallekotar. The Turrer thirty six, The Tombun fifty six, and the Snowy River about seventy six Miles. The Tombun is a favourite resort of the Natives having a Lake at its junction with the Sea several other small Lakes and Rivers were observed.

The Gipps Land Natives as I had anticipated were in communication with the other Tribes of the Coast east to Twofold Bay; Tomahawks with Dr Imlays mark were in use among them. I despatched lummermine a Chief of the Buckan

[Page 16]

16

Tribe with a blanket and trifling presents to those Natives who were out on a predatory Excursion to Gipps Land and who were to meet me at Karn. The breaking up however of the fine Season compelled me after a stay of three days to hasten my departure. The Interior Country through which I had to travel was said to be impassable during the rains, especially for horses being densely wooded, mountainous and boggy and in places covered with Scrub and as immense number of large Vines – By the Coast we had found it dangerous from shifting Sands and currents to cross the Rivers: one of the party at the Turrer narrowly escaped being drowned.

Some well executed sketches of Men and animals done with charred wood on the inner side of Sheets of bark were seen. Bridges of boughs and Timber had to be constructed over several bogs. In the Mountains and neighbourhood of Rivers birds were innumerable, at the earliest dawn we were frequently disturbed by the loud chattering and chirping of the Pie and Parrot Tribes. The plumage of the Mountain Parrot and Paraquets were exceedingly beautiful. The Manura Superba and Phascolarctus Fuscus were inhabitants. The Stalk of the Rope Vine measured from fifteen to Eighteen inches in circumference and hung in festoons, my Native Companions compared them to Ship Ropes (ie Cables) Trees covered with this Vine had the Semblance of decayed Castles and other Ruins

“To human Art a sportive semblance bore”

“Like Moonlight Battlements and Towers decayd by Time”

The Casurina Paludora (Swampy Oak) grew along the Banks of the Rivers. The Termite (White Ant)

[Page 17]

17.

hills were large in the Ranges, measuring in height seven feet, and from four to five feet wide. The Mallekotang* Mittong are the Original Inhabitants of the country at Cape Howe of whom Moko Moko is chief. Konite is chief of the Benmitten forty Miles West of the Cape. The Tinnon, Kyserkong, Ponedyang and Worarer Mitten are tribes inland. The Extensive tract of Country between Buckan and Twofold Bay is very thinly inhabited by Aborigines.

An Exterminating warfare by the Twofold Bay Natives and their allies has nearly depopulated the Country, happily these feuds have ceased and the few that remain live in peace. The Twofold Bay on Nulliker Blacks are an industrious and intelligent race but diminutive compared with the Aborigines of the Interior. Their huts like the other Natives of the Coast are simple and rude being a mere sheet of Bark in a trigonal Shape with barely sufficient room to sit under. Their Canoes like the Gipps Land Natives are folded at the Ends and though buoyant are very frail. The natives occupy a kneeling posture in their Mudjerre or Canoes, and may be seen like floating Specks off the Coast spearing salmon; they are expert Fishers. Three boats manned entirely with Aborigines were employed on the Whaling Station at the time of my visit: they are among the first for quickness of vision and expertness. Eight Whales in one Season had been killed by

[In margin]

* From Mallekuter the large Lake near Cape Howe

[Page 18]

18.

them and were (I was informed) worth from three to four hundred pounds Sterling. European Disease is spreading rapidly among these Natives two Men died from Syphilis whilst I was at the Bay. Much interesting ceremony in the disposal of their dead was observed; the Corpse stretched at length was wrapped in flexible Sheets of bark in the shape of a Mummy and bound with Bark ligature it was then removed to a Hut and Watched for three days and nights, and when in an extremely offensive and foetid state, buried in a grave four feet deep in a sequestered part of the forest sheets of bark were laid on the body in the grave and small articles as presents thrown in. A Chief Man of a neighbouring Tribe delivered an harangue in favour of the deceased and two Warriors brandished their spears and with much gesticulation challenged any person to impugn the character of the deceased, their lamentations

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

were exceedingly violent, the Women beat and cut their heads with stone and the Men theirs with Tomahawks till the blood oozed out. The Ceremony which was interesting occupied about two hours, a large assemblage of Natives were present. In some instances especially when a chief man dies, the body is frequently kept Eight or ten days, and carried by the Tribe to the favourite resort of the deceased; the bodies children are at times kept for an indefinite period. To appearance their

[Page 19]

19.

grief was sincere and poignant, and yet I could not help thinking that with some of it was merely done for the occasion as in the case of the mourning Women of India and customary among the Australian Aborigines, and also of the highest antiquity "Call the husbandmen to mourning and such as are skilful of Lamentation to wailing. Amos 5th Chap 16th verse -

[In margin] Jeremiah, Chap 9th 16.17. V

I was forcibly struck with the mode in which some of the Male Aborigines dressed their hair bedaubed with pigment of Ochre and grease, it was spun out into innumerable small ringlets hanging round their heads like the thrums of a Mop, and covering half the face. A Similar custom * existed among the Natives of Van Diemens Land on the North Coast and in the Interior. Upwards of four hundred Natives during my sojourn visited the Bay among whom were eight fine half Cast Children. Much useful information was obtained. Of the different Amulets or charms in use among the natives the Crystal of Felspar is most Common they are concealed by the men in a small bag and worn round the neck, the Women on no account are permitted to possess or see them; in their preparation the top of the Prism is ground or broken off.

A road has been opened to Maneroo and

[Page 20]

20

a good line to Gipps Land is also practicable. Sledges drawn by Oxen and Pack Bullocks are the chief modes of conveyance of the Small settlers in the Mountains. A Scarcity of Fresh water is felt at the Bay, in general it is obtained by digging; A large Reservoir for rain had been constructed. The County in the immediate vicinity is mountainous and wooded. Guanos from four to five feet are met with. Every assistance was rendered during my stay by the Gentleman in charge of Mr Boyds Establishment.

On the 28th I proceeded northward and conferred with a large party of Brogo and Biggah Tribes; they are tall (some upwards of six feet) and well made and in this respect superior to the piscatory people of the Coast. Half Caste Children were among them. Proceeded over wooded sandstone Ranges to Pambuller * a fine Alluvial Tract and well adapted from its soil and climate for the purpose of Agriculture: the River which is navigable for small Craft passes through a Lake in its course to the Sea. On the ranges the first plant of the Zamia was observed.

On the 29th crossed a succession of wooded Ranges of granite and sandstone and entered Biggahs + singularly situated in an Amphitheatre of the Dividing range about thirty miles from the Coast and nearly encircled by the spires of the Mountains. Corn Vegetables and fruits grow to

* Pambuller. Twofold Bay and the Country adjacent are now included in Auckland and the twentieth County of the Middle District

[In margin]

+ An Aboriginal word signifying Plain

[Page 21]

21

perfection and sheep and Cattle on the rich Downs (the largest portion of the Surface) thrive amazingly.

The Country bore evident indication of its having been submerged. Granite and Sandstone is the chief Formation. The average width of the River for Eight miles from the Coast is one hundred and fifty yards: the Casurina Paludora (swampy Oak) is almost exclusively in belts along the banks of the stream, some of them measuring from twelve to fifteen feet in circumference. The most gentle breeze passing through the boughs (as through the Acerose leaf of the Pine) causes a buzzing or sighing and Music strange.

“Like Symphonies unearthly heard in Sleep”.

But when the wind is strong or violent, sounds like the murmuring of the Ocean or the Billows among ~~the~~ Rocks are produced.

I have no recollection of (excepting at Karma) of having met with this species in the Port Phillip District.

The Dendeobium was common on the Rocks and the Zinnia on the Ranges; the nuts of the latter hang in clusters and are deleterious if Eaten in a raw state: in preparing them for food the Natives bruise the Kernel to a pulp and soak them in water; the nuts are collected in large quantities and by the Blacks called Bunggow. The cabbage Palm unknown in the Port Phillip District is another article of sustenance, the largest near the coast

[Page 22]

22

measured forty feet in height and four feet in circumference. The Biggah River is the farthest south they have been seen. The Tribes of the Country have been greatly reduced by the Yass Blacks and others of the Interior who are constantly making incursions upon them. I visited a small Island where for several days they had defended themselves against a much superior force.

Forty Miles by the Coast North of Twofold Bay was the farthest point reached. Some of the Huts in the locality resembled a beehive and others the half of a Cupola - The Mess^{rs} Imlay were the first and for some years the Exclusive Settlers at Twofold Bay and much to their credit lived on peaceable terms with the Aborigines.

The Natives at their Establishments were encouraged to habits of Industry and employed in Whaling, Stockkeeping, Shepherding, Bullock driving and other useful pursuits. D^r Imlay from whom I received every requisite assistance and attention spoke in commendable terms of the Natives and I was happy to find that the other Aborigines along the Coast were equally well spoken of, several persons by their instrumentality had been saved. The most striking instance (brought under notice) was the Wreck of a Steamer in a Storm at [indecipherable] when all hopes of saving the white persons were given up, and when no Individual would venture, two Aboriginal

[Page 23]

23

natives at the imminent risk of their lives boldly plunged into the Breakers and rescued the sufferers who but for them, must have perished. For their humane and heroic conduct the Settlers in a Memorial to the Government recommended them for a consideration. Gratuitous medical assistance to the Natives is afforded at M^r Boyds Establishments and at the Mess^{rs} Imlay: the latter at present are the Sole occupants of the Biggah country *

[In margin] * Imlays Stock has since been purchased by Mess^{rs} Walkers of Sydney. The language of the Biggah Tribe is dissimilar to the Natives at Twofold Bay. The red Ant hills in places on the Downs and on the Feeding Ranges had the semblance of extensive Apiaries, they are in form of a Parabola measuring in height three feet, and nine feet in Circumference. The Phascomolys (Wombat) and fish are the chief support of the Natives, the latter are taken in Weirs, Eels and other fish in ponds are stupified by an infusion of Bark. Of the fruit eaten by the Coast natives the Solanum Laciniatum (Kangeroo Apple) Mesembryanthemum Equilaterale and Astrolama Humifusa (Native Cranberry) are the most Common.

[In margin] Sep^r

I succeeded on the 4th in getting the horses to the top of the dividing range the Nimmittybel said to be the highest land on the Maneroo. In Colonial phraseology a difficult ascent is significantly termed a Pinch but the Nimmittybel on

[Page 24]

24

account of its abrupt and precipitous character is aptly designated a Steep. Stockmen and others prefer the more circuitous Route by Hibberts) of twenty or thirty Miles rather than ascend or more properly speaking climb this difficult Mountain. The Country on Top of the dividing Range for miles is a jumble of

[In margin] Granite and Sandstone. Rocks Timber and Bog, and very difficult for horses to travel over, The Eumeralla a tributary of the Murrumbidgee the Panebooker and the Brogo Rivers have their sources in this mountain, the two latter running to the sea. The country on account of its coldness and humidity has been fitly designated by the Settlers Greenland, the Snow in Winter at times is upwards of two feet in depth. Hickory and some Cedars from Brogo had been obtained and Mountain Ash was prevalent. Several small Dairy Stations had been formed; A fine view of Biggah and the Coast may be had from Nimmittibel

[In margin] 6th Sep^r

Passed along the Eastern portion of Maneroo to the Rock Flat an isolated mass of Quartz situated on a small plain on the Downs; this spot is famous for its mineral spring the finest perhaps in the Colony but whether ferruginous acidulous or sulphurous I could not tell yet from its taste I should think the former.

The Cattle (although ponds are near) prefers the Mineral Waters, the Spring rises in a clay

[Page 25]

25

sand beside a Quartz Rock with innumerable air bubbles on which account it is called by the Shepherds Pot Boil

Travelled over the Downs onwards to the Alps intending to cross at Bolare and Yiyae the dividing Range. The prospect before me however was uncheering the Alps were really as termed by the Settlers the Snowy Mountains, that Extensive Region covered with deep Snow bounded the Horizon, so severe a season had not been known within the recollection of the Oldest Inhabitant numbers of Cattle perished, 160 head the property of one person had been lost in a Snowdrift.

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

On the 7th I reached Coomer the North Western extremity of Maneroo near the Murrumbidgee and here M^r Crown Commissioner Lambie from whom I received much civility had fixed his Station. To attempt the passage of the Alps even with fresh horses would have been the extreme of folly, for beside the Snow there are innumerable Bogs, difficult to pass in fine Weather; Under the Circumstances I had no alternative with my jaded animals but to pursue the more circuitous Route by Queenbeyan, Yass and then to the Northward and Westward of the Alps to Port Phillip, communicating with the numerous Tribes of Aborigines in that Section of Country.

Maneroo Downs is of Trap formation: Callitrix at Coomer is common. I would here remark that I have no where seen in any of the Mountains of this Country the powerful effects of Electricity and of

[Page 26]

26

whirlwinds as in Van Diemens Land, the only instances in this Colony in which the power of Electricity was observed to have had great effect was at Turerwait the Mount Macedon of Mitchell. I remember when riding through the Black Forest after a Thunder Storm observing Eight trees that had been struck by Lightning on that occasion the effect however up the mountain must have been considerable.

Metrological Phenomena in the Snowy Regions is met with. I saw by Moonlight a segment of a Circle beautifully formed between two hills with a base not less than half a Mile. The Maneroo District contains between one and two thousand Inhabitants: the Blacks have never been troublesome Passed a spot marked by a heap of stones (the custom of the Inhabitants) where an Individual had been accidentally killed. 10th reached Mittelago the Boundary of the Middle District, and from there passed over a fertile tract to Limestone Plains or rather Downs so called from its formation (a calcareous limestone Spar) The Yammoit Mittong are the original Inhabitants. Near the Limestone Plains on the Murrumbidgee are several interesting Caverns the Stalactitic and Stalagmitic formation in one representing what visitors have termed an Altar piece.

The Waters of the Main Branch of the Murrumbidgee sweeps round the Eastern and South Eastern extremity of the Alps, and leaves the base, and hence is the best natural Boundary for a District. Visited

[Page 27]

27

a Camp of natives near Walumbla the residence of M^r Murry the Member for the County among whom were a number of fine half Caste Children and was shocked to learn that the Yammoit and Molangler Tribes had deliberately and barbarously murdered Eight of their Children of different Sexes being half Castes whose ages averaged from three to five years. M^r Murry had instituted enquiry and ascertained the fact, but although a number of aborigines witnessed the transaction there was no legal evidence to Convict; the evidence of the Aborigines being it is said no Evidence at all. M^r Murry has been a long time in the District, is a large Stock proprietor and has had considerable experience with the Blacks, and I was therefore glad to find that this Gentleman not only did not complain but spoke in commendable terms of the Aborigines. Every assistance and attention was afforded me by M^r Murry. A Number of dry hollows filled in the rainy Season with Water were observed on Maneroo, the Bottom a decomposed Trap was herbless and full of Cracks these dark spots on the surface of the Landscape had a singular and novel appearance small moving columns of dust the effect of Whirlwinds were frequently seen – Arrived on

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca. 1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

the 15th on the Yass River where a large and unusual number of natives had assembled, fourteen half Castes of different Sexes were among them; some were married and had children, the Yass Natives are in general a fine race intelligent, Athletic and well proportioned: I remained

[Page 28]

28

three days with these People; three hundred natives at least were present: the language spoken is different from the Biggah and other Aborigines South; the virulent effects of Variola or Small Pox was apparent. The Yass Blacks are designated Onerwal and the Limestone Koromal. The Bolarer and Tinnie Mittong inhabit the Eastern and South Eastern extremity of the Mountains Konegaler is a term applied to the natives of the Alps Kudingal to those on the Coast and Pyender the natives of the Interior. The Yass and Bathurst Blacks in the early settling of the colony were said to have been troublesome, and that in consequence Commandoes had gone out against them. The Lachlan and other Rivers which had been dry for the last two years were filled by the late rains to overflowing.

M^r Hamilton Hume from whom I received much attention and civility is the Gentleman who twenty years ago in company with M^r Hovel made the first overland Journey to Geelong Port Phillip an undertaking in those days of no ordinary character; the Natives were exceedingly friendly and invited him to go to a White Man at Indented Head since ascertained to be Buckley the Individual who lived thirty years with the Natives.

M^r Hume said he never had occasion to pull a trigger in Self defence against a Black he always treated them kindly, this testimony from so old a Traveller was exceedingly

[Page 29]

29

gratifying. Captain Sturt is another instance in which kind treatment was successfully practiced. This gentleman was the first at Fort Bourke with M^r Hume and the first who explored the Murray to Lake Alexandrina, and returned through numerous tribes without coming in Collision with them. Mr Eyre adopted a similar practice and was always well received by the Aborigines.

The Country from Yass Downs to the crossing Place Murrumbidgee (sixty five Miles) consists chiefly of well grassed open Forest hills with a View no where extensive, some interesting spots were passed – Gundagai + (remarkable for its nomenclature) is a Township on the West Side of the River on flooded Land. The thawing of the immense quantity of Snow on the Mountains and late rains had filled the Rivers to overflowing and the Low Country in consequence was Inundated. The Township of Gundagai was for the most part under water, the flood in some houses was half way up the walls, considerable damage had been done. Some of the Inhabitants on the Tumut (a branch of the Murrumbidgee) were for three days and nights on the top of their huts.

On the second day after my arrival at

[In margin] + An Aboriginal word. Gundagai Township Plan appended.

[Page30]

30

the Murrumbidgee I succeeded in crossing the horses and baggage with the aid of the Aborigines over two rapid Streams and anxious to proceed attempted the Main River on the 23^d but unfortunately the Man who was swimming the pack horse was pulled by the force of the current almost out of his Canoe and the rope slackening the Animal was drowned.

Although the first accident during the Expedition I felt pained and annoyed at the circumstance especially as this poor brute had been with Sir Thomas Mitchell in all his Journeys and was a favourite with my Party: a more quiet and Sagacious creature could not have been found.

The weather continued unsettled and the rains frequent. I was anxious however to get forward for I felt assured the River would rise immediately the Snow began to Melt * The Gomebung Mittong are the Original Inhabitants at Gundagai with whom and the other natives I communicated five half Caste Children were among them. The Barumbuller Poyerong and Tarer-mittongs are Tribes on the North East side of the Murrumbidgee.

The Kolorer-mittong inhabit the Country at the Lachlan. The Boeger on the Mitte Mitte

[In margin]

* I have since received a communication from a Gentleman informing me that my prediction had been verified in that after I left the floods rose to a great height.

[Page 31]

31

The Gundungerer on the Tumut Mountain and the Bewengal near Manns. Many of the natives are strongly marked by small pox and numbers are suffering from Syphilis among whom were several bad cases. Ophthalmia of a virulent description was prevalent, three natives I accidentally met with had each lost an eye several others partially blind were observed. This Monoculous Tribe however was well disposed and intelligent and afforded me much useful information. The swampy Oak (Casurina Paludora) and Eucalyptus grew along the banks of the River. On the 24th I succeeded in Crossing without further accident and proceeded on my way. The Low Country was every where flooded; the horses had repeatedly to swim. The mail had stopped running, considerable property had been injured and was lost. So great and general a flood had not before happened.

On the 27th I crossed a small Rivulet at Bille Bong called by the Natives Yarra Yarra a singular circumstance as the Yarra Yarra at Melbourne is a misnomer, Parahran being the original name of that River. A large number of natives has congregated at the Hume it was a meeting of the Tribes and several half castes

[Page 32]

32

of different sexes and ages were present. I was immediately recognised having on a former Journey visited them: they were greatly suffering from syphilitic disease. A Medical Practitioner from Albury had occasionally afforded gratuitous relief bore testimony to by the respectable Settlers in a letter addressed to me on the subject.

The Wayradjerree are the original Inhabitants they are in general well conducted and are employed by settlers. The natives from the boisterous state of the weather had been prevented from procuring their daily food and were suffering want. I gave them a bullock and regretted had no blankets to bestow. I believe these Natives have never received clothing of any kind from the Government. All the Low Country near the Hume was inundated. The Township of Albury situated on low

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

ground was covered with water in some places half up the walls. At the New Inn (Browns) one room only was dry. The country from Albury to Wodonga a distance of three miles was deluged and intersected by deep running streams. Although at considerable risk I succeeded with the assistance of the Natives in getting to the opposite shore; my horse was swept away by the current, and swam the

[Page 33]

33

River three times before he got out. The same Natives conveyed over the mail which had for several weeks been detained.

[In margin] Octr 7th

The Ovens and the Low Country adjacent was completely flooded, the Creeks were running Rivers. I succeeded in wading and swimming in getting the horses through this aquatic Region of nearly a mile and a half without accident: the ground in places was exceedingly soft and boggy. I passed the spot where two men had been drowned and saw the remains of an Aboriginal who had been murdered by the Wayworoo Blacks. The floods at the Broken River had subsided and also on the Goulburn. The Township of Seymour situated on the low ground had been deluged the Water in some places being above the window Sills; considerable damage had been experienced. Having swam the horses I proceeded about forty miles down the river and arrived at the Protectorate Station on the 15th.

[In margin] October

I was happy to find the crops in a promising condition, having sustained but little damage by the late flood. The Goulburn District during the year had been in a perfectly tranquil state no European life had been sacrificed and no depredation of any kind committed on European

[Page 34]

34

property. The Natives of this district have greatly improved within the last eighteen months they have been usefully employed by Settlers in Stripping Back Sheep herding, Sheepwashing, Stock-keeping &c. They now constantly visit the Station and consider it their home and if sufficient food be supplied a large portion would remain. A great number of interesting Children are without instruction. The usual daily attendance of Natives of all ages and sexes about forty. A number of Cases have been medically treated and Prayers are read on the Sabbath by the Medical attendant. I was highly gratified to find One hundred and twenty Natives present and apparently happy and contented.

A Corrobbaree (Native Festival) on account of my visit and safe return from the interior was held. A large and substantial barn has been had been erected and during the year quarters for the Medical Officer in charge. The illconstructed dwelling built by the late officer in charge (on low ground) at an expense x to Government of between one and two pounds has been rendered useless, and nearly washed away.

[In margin] xThe entire expense may be estimated at nearer four hundred Pounds

The Crops consisting of thirty seven acres of Wheat, seven Acres of Potatoes, two Acres of

[Page 35]

35

Barley, one acre of Oats, half an acre of Turnips and other vegetables promised to yield an abundant harvest. The Station is centrally situated, and can be approached by the Murray Natives through a Country valueless to the Grazier and is far enough to the x Northward to ensure the growth of crops.

[In margin] x on account of the dryness of the climate.

The expense of this Establishment for the year will be two hundred and forty four pounds ten shillings and eight pence viz: For provisions and incidental expenses One hundred and twenty one pounds, Eighteen shillings and one penny. For Salaries including Medical Officer in charge (at three shillings per diem and a single Ration) One hundred and twenty two Pounds twelve Shillings and seven pence.

In 1842.3 the Cost of this Establishment per Annum whilst in charge of the previous officer was fifteen hundred and four pounds, eighteen Shillings and nine pence besides the assistance of Government Men. No live Stock is at present at this Establishment the provisions (excepting produce raised) are supplied by contract.

On the 20th October I returned to Melbourne and had the happiness after an absence of Six Months to meet my family and by the goodness of Providence in the enjoyment of health. Two thousand, two hundred miles of

[Page 36]

36

Country, a large proportion Mountainous and densely wooded had been traversed at a Season of great Severity and with the same horses. The first Road from Melbourne to Port Albert * for wheeled Carriages opened.

[In margin] * Gipps Land

The numerous Tribes conferred with: their Political and domestic relations ascertained their customs, manners and habits observed and large vocabularies of the different Languages acquired

Two Blacks from the Melbourne Police were my only attendants, I was tentless and without Equipment, my chief Shelter from the Weather a blanket or a Sheet of Bark. The expense of the Journey to Government excepting my own Salary including food and presents to the Natives and wages of a Man at Twofold Bay for a few weeks was thirty one pounds, eight Shillings and Eleven pence, and the only accident that happened was an old pack horse that had been with Sir Thomas Mitchell in all his Journeys.

The early season and late rains had for the last four hundred miles of my Journey clothed the hills and Meadows with herbs and flowers in profusion Wild. I had travelled a few years previous over two hundred Miles of this Country when it was parched and dried up the Creeks and Ponds empty and their beds full of Cracks. Clouds of dust and hot Winds

[Page 37]

37

were common and but for trees it would have been thought a desert. Now the Country verdant was rich in pasture, the Low Land flooded and the Roads (to use a Colonial phrase) filled with slop. The extensive pasture of Bille Bong in dry seasons abandoned was re-occupied and Mosquitoes in myriads covered the Swamps. In reflecting upon the moral desolation that exists I felt pained the so large and so fair a Portion of Earths surface extending from Port Phillip to forty or fifty miles north of Twofold Bay, thence along the Western Boundary of the Middle District to an indefinite distance North, so fertile and Inhabited a Country comprising 32,000 square Miles should have but one Solitary Clergyman * engaged in the sacred duties of his office. Nor was the "Schoolmaster abroad" at least no person of this Class

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

came under Notice. The Situation of Emigrant Families without the means of Instruction for their children was also exceedingly distressing Some of these poor people have with tears have

* The Superficial Extent of the District of Port Phillip is 139.500 Square miles. Van Diemens Land is 24.000 Square Miles. Jamaica the largest of the Colonial West Indies 6.400 Square Miles. New Brunswick 27.704 Square Miles. Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 18.742 Square Miles. Trinidad 2400 Square Miles Prince Edward Island 2.131 Square Miles. Of British Guinea 100.000 Square miles.

[Page 38]

38

deplored their situation and expressed determination to leave the Interior solely on this account.

The Border Trooper assigned to the Service of the Expedition was left with the Crown Commissioner in Gipps Land whose force was limited and which I afterwards regretted as the want of one white Servant occasioned me great hindrance and inconvenience. The two Melbourne Blacks (in Margin)

Poly-jarers Monene Monene

continued with me throughout the Journey, and their general Conduct (after leaving Gipps Land) merited my approbation, I have therefore much pleasure in recommending them to the Notice of the Government.

As a People the Aborigines are rapidly on the decay. They are greatly reduced. They are but Remnant Tribes. Sections are extinct. Their diminution is attributable to several Causes. In their petty feuds and intestine strifes several have been sacrificed but hundreds have fallen victims to the dire effects of European disease. Variola or Small Pox often of a Confluent description, Influenza, Febris and Syphilis have extended their baneful influence to the remotest parts of the Interior. The latter is now almost general throughout the Land

Ophthalmia in some parts is Indemic Cutaneous effection is peculiar to the Natives and

[Page 39]

39

prevalent. Temperance was steadily progressing among the Peasantry and other labouring Classes and but few cases of Intemperance came under observation. In some places the Spirit dealer had declined taking out Licenses and several houses had been vacated.

From all the respectable Settlers I received attention and Civility and was glad to find a sympathy evinced on behalf of the Aborigines and a desire for their general amelioration a feeling I felt it my duty to foster and encourage and I am happy to State that the Country generally as far as the Aboriginal and European Inhabitants were concerned was perfectly tranquil.

George Augustus Robinson

[Page 40]

40

ABORIGINES

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca.1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

Despatch from the Right Honorable Lord Glenelg, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to His Excellency Sir George Gipps, announcing the appointment of a Native Protector, and four Assistants: and proposing the removal of the Van Dieman's Land Natives from Flinders' Island to Port Phillip

No. 72.

Downing Street,
31st January, 1838.

Sir,

In transmitting to you a Duplicate Copy of the last Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on Aborigines, I have the honor to communicate to you, that Her Majesty's Government have directed their anxious attention to the adoption of some plan for the better protection and civilization of the Native Tribes within the limits of your Government.

With that view, it has been resolved to appoint at once a small number of persons qualified to fill the office of Protector of Aborigines. I have confined that number, in the first instance, to one Chief Protector, aided by four Assistant Protectors. I would propose that the Chief Protector should fix his principle station at Port Phillip, as the most convenient point from whence to traverse the surrounding country, and be in personal communication with his Assistants; two of whom should occupy the country to the northward, and as far westward as the boundaries of the Colony of South Australia.

I propose to confer the office of Chief Protector on Mr. Robinson, who, you are no doubt aware, has for some time past been in charge of the Aboriginal Establishment at Flinders' Island, and who has shewn himself to be eminently qualified for such an office. I shall direct the Lieutenant-Governor of Van Dieman's Land to communicate my intentions to Mr. Robinson, and to take the necessary measures for sending him to Sydney, if he should be prepared to undertake the office. It appears to be a question whether Mr. Robinson would be willing to quit the Establishment at Flinders' Island, unless he were accompanied by the Natives from Van Dieman's Land, in whose superintendence he is at present

[Page 41]

2

present engaged. I enclose, for your general information, a copy of a Despatch from Lieutenant-Governor Sir J. Franklin, with a Report from Mr. Robinson, on the state of the Native Settlement in that Island. It contains much interesting information as to the condition of the Natives under his charge, and also as to his mode of treating them. You will perceive that in this Report he strongly recommends the removal of these Natives to New Holland.

The late Lieutenant-Governor of Van Dieman's Land has expressed his conviction that no evil consequences are to be apprehended from allowing them to accompany Mr. Robinson. In the Despatch which is now enclosed, Sir John Franklin states many objections present themselves to such a measure; and I should not feel myself justified in directing the adoption of it, in opposition to such a statement. If, however, the result of the personal observations of Sir John Franklin, in the visit which he stated himself to be about to make to Flinders' Island, should be such as entirely to satisfy him that the Natives might be so removed, without personal risk or danger to themselves, and with their own free consent, important advantages might be anticipated from the formation in New Holland of an Aboriginal Settlement comparatively so far advanced in civilization. On this point, however, I should wish

George Augustus Robinson - 'Report of a Journey of two thousand two hundred miles to the Tribes of the Coast and Eastern Interior during the year 1844', ca. 1844

MLMSS 7335

Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

you to communicate with, Sir John Franklin, and it will be necessary to act in it with the utmost caution and circumspection. In the mean time, I trust that Mr. Robinson may, under any circumstances, be induced to undertake the office. The gentleman whose names are stated in the margin * have been chosen to fill the office of Assistant Protector.

With regard to expenses attending the Establishment, it is proposed to assign to the Chief Protector a salary of £500 per annum, and to each of the Assistants £250.

The four officers proceeding from this country will also have an allowance of £100 each, on account of their outfit and passage; and according to the general rule of this department, they have been informed that they will receive half salary from the date of embarkation.

It will also be necessary to make some provision to enable the Protectors to supply the natives occasionally with moderate quantities of food and clothing.

In fixing this expenditure, Her Majesty's Government have anticipated the concurrence of the Legislative Council of your Government, in voting the necessary sum for meeting the charge. The object contemplated is so important, and the obligation which rests on the Colonists to do their utmost for the protection and civilization of the Native Tribes

Mr. Sievwright, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Dredge, Mr. Parker

[Page 42]

3

Tribes so imperative, that I am convinced no further argument is necessary to induce a cheerful co-operation on their part in the measure now adopted. If the Aboriginal Establishment at Flinders' Island should be broken up, and transferred to New South Wales, some portion of the expenditure might reasonably be defrayed from the Revenues of Van Dieman's Land.

It remains for me to explain my general view of the duties which will devolve on the Protectors, and to refer to the points which will form the ground of Instructions which you will issue to them.

1. Each Protector should attach himself as closely and constantly as possible to the Aboriginal tribes, who may be found in the District for which he may be appointed; attending them if practicable in their movements from one place to another, until they can be induced to assume more settled habits of life, and endeavour to conciliate their respect and confidence, and make them feel that he is their Friend.
2. He must watch over the rights and interests of the Natives, protect them, as far as he can by his personal exertions and influence, from any encroachment on their property, and from acts of cruelty, oppression, or injustice, and fairly represent their wants, wishes, or grievances, if such representations be found necessary, through the Chief Protector, to the Government of the Colony. For this purpose it will be desirable to invest each Protector with a Commission as Magistrate.

3. If the Natives can be induced in any considerable numbers to locate themselves in a particular place, it will be the object of the Protector to teach and encourage them to engage in the cultivation of their grounds, in building suitable habitations for themselves, and in whatever else may conduce to their civilization and social improvement.

4. The education and instruction of the children, as early and as extensively as it may be practicable, is to be regarded as a matter of primary importance.

5. In connection with the engagements, and as affording the most efficient means for the ultimate accomplishment of them, the Assistant Protector should promote, to the utmost extent of his ability and opportunities, the *Moral* and *Religious* improvement of the Natives, by instructing them in the elements of the Christian Religion, and preparing them for the reception of Teachers, whose peculiar province it would be to promote the knowledge and practice of Christianity among them.

6.

[Page 43]

4

6. In reference to every object contemplated by the proposed appointment, it is exceedingly desirable that the Protector should, as soon as possible, learn the language of the Natives, so as to be able freely and familiarly to converse with them.

7. He must take charge of, and be accountable for, any provisions or clothing which may be placed under his care for distribution to the Natives.

8. He will obtain as accurate information as may be practicable of the number of the Natives within his District, and of all important particulars in regard to them.

These appear to me the principal points which demand attention in reference to this subject.

But it is of course not my intention to restrict you, in the Instructions which you will have to issue to the Protectors, within the topics on which I have touched, as your local knowledge and experience will doubtless enable you to supply omissions in the outline which I have given.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

GLENELG.

[Page 44]

[Book plates]

John M Chapman Collection
Ex-Libris
D^r George Mackaness

[Transcribed by Peter Mayo, John Brooker]