CASE STUDY: Mr. Henry Baird.

By A. Crooks and J. Lane.

INTRODUCTION

On 2nd November, 1850, a Mr. Henry Baird was speared to death by Aborigines and his sheep stolen. This case study outlines the Police and Government response to the incident.

A couple of things to look for

- Need for a follow up on a “discharge of fire-arms” incident
- Discussion on the need for a “warrant” before an arrest takes place
- The response is to distribute flour and blankets
- The Commissioner of Police’s suggestion Baird was rash (follow on with Police Commissioner O’Haloran’s letter on the same subject)
- The immediate follow-up on Geharty’s assertion that Aborigines are afraid to cross the land.

It would appear from court records that Pulgalta was listed to appear in court charged with the murder of Henry Baird, but there is no record of him ever actually appearing in court, or the trial actually taking place. His name does not appear in the court records, in the Register of Executions or the Register of Commuted Sentences.

Trial Listings:

10 Feb 1851 | Pulgalta, Pt Lincoln | Murder of Henry BAIRD, Pt Lincoln

Exhibits:

1/ Dewson’s original Report  ?Apparenty no longer in State Archives.

Exhibit A: Police crime Report in the Government Gazette introduces us to the story
Exhibit B: The report of the Commissioner of Police and the Protector of Aborigines
Exhibit C: Police-constable Geharty’s follow up report
Exhibit D: gazette on the follow up
EXHIBIT A.

Police Report of the Commissioner of Police

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT GAZETTE. [Jan. 30, 1851.]

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With reference to the case of murder by the aborigines at Port Lincoln, the particulars are these – A Mr. Baird, about six or eight months since, proceeded to the District of Port Lincoln with about 2,600 sheep; his original intention appears to settle on the Island of St. Peter’s in Fowler’s Bay, about two hundred and sixty miles from Port Lincoln; but from some reason, which I have not been able to ascertain, the plan was abandoned, and he returned, settling himself down on the shores of an inlet running in from Cape Radstock, about eight miles from the headland, and about forty miles from Pinkerton’s, the nearest station. Here he remained unmolested for about six months, although his establishment consisted only of himself and one shepherd; their whole time, during the day, being occupied in shepherding the sheep, and their wretched tenement, which consisted of merely a few sticks stuck in the ground, so as to form a roof, and covered with grass, without a door or fastening of any kind, and which contained their stores of every kind and clothes, left during that time without any protection.
According to Mr. Townsend, Mr. Baird’s shepherd, which has throughout been very contradictory and unsatisfactory, Mr. Baird left the hut on the morning of the 2nd November, to endeavour to recover some sheep which Mr. Townsend had lost the previous day – since which time he has not seen him alive.

Townsend then states, that the natives came to the station at various times during the three subsequent days, unpacked wool, taking away the bags, and ribbing the hut of almost everything it contained; and that he then, fearing some accident had occurred to Mr. Baird, left the station and went to Mr. Pinkerton’s, from whence information was sent immediately to the police. The police from the Three Lakes station immediately proceeded to Mr. Baird’s, in company with Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart, whence, in a few days, they recovered about 1,400 of the lost sheep – nearly one-half this number were found astray in the bush. But on the 12th of November about 700 were found in possession of a large body of natives, who, when the police and their assistants attempted to arrest them, assumed an attitude of defence, threatening them with a discharge of spears and other missiles; whereupon, in their own defence, they fired several shots, and eventually captured one of them.

The following day, the 13th November, the body of Mr. Baird was found about seven miles from his hut, having ten spear wounds in the back part of his body. Subsequently, Corporal Geharty, and his detachment of police, went in search of the murderers, but although every exertion was made by him, and those under his orders, the culprits, in consequence of the inhospitable character of the country, and the want of water and provisions (necessaries which natives in their wild state can exist without for several days) succeeded in evading their pursuit.

The Lieutenant-Governor, having deemed it expedient that particular enquiries should be made into the circumstances, and especially into the necessity which existed for the resort to fire-arms, and the number of wounded, the Commissioner of Police, in company with Protector of Aborigines, by His Excellency’s directions, proceeded to Port Lincoln on the 6th December last. A full report of these inquiries being already before His Excellency, I do not now consider it necessary again to enter into particulars on this report, confining myself on the present occasion to the simple statements, that in our opinion the police were quite justified in firing on the natives in their own defence; and that the injury sustained by the natives were limited to one man killed and one wounded slightly in the arm.

The case of Badcock, who deliberately cut off a considerable portion of his wife’s nose, . . . .

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GEO. F. DASHWOOD,
Commissioner of Police and Police Magistrate.

Hon. the Colonial Secretary.
HIS Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor directs the publication of the following Report from the Commissioner of Police and the Protector of Aborigines, for general information.

By His Excellency’s command,
CHAS. STURT,
Colonial Secretary.
on Thursday the 12th, arriving at Mr Pinkerton’s station on the 17th December, where we were
joined by the detachment of Police stationed in that distinct under the orders of Corporal
Geharty, who were at this time returning to their quarters.

His Excellency is already acquainted with Police-constable Dewson’s proceedings,
from the date of his receiving information of the murder of Mr Baird until his report to
Corporal Geharty on the 20th November last, as per copies of report enclosed in letter of
Commissioner of Police, No 129-50, dated 28th November, and we have now the honor to
forward herewith copies of the journal of Corporal Geharty from 19th November to 9th
December. By these journals it will be seen that no time was lost by the Corporal in
proceeding to Mr. Baird’s station, and that from the 29th November until the 7th December,
every exertion was made by him and the men under his orders to apprehend the guilty parties,
but without success, being at that time obliged to relinquish the pursuit, their horses being
nearly exhausted and themselves absolutely without food.

The difficulties attending a search of this description at the present season of the year
in this inhospitable district, and the privations to be endured both by men and horses from the
scarcity of food and water, is not easily imagined without some experience of the locality.

From the report of Corporal Geharty we became fully persuaded that the natives were
aware of his being in search of them, and purposely avoided him, and that again to
recommence the pursuit under similar circumstances would scarcely hold out any hope of
success, it was therefore determined that our better plan would be to resort to stratagem.
Accordingly, leaving the horses at Mr Pinkerton’s station, with a supply of corn to recruit,
and Mr Schurman, the interpreter, who found himself unable to interpret the language of the
Streaky Bay tribe, having returned to Port Lincoln, we again embarked on board the Yalata in
Venus Bay, on the 18th December, with Corporal Geharty, our native interpreters, and a party
of Police, and sailed the next day for Streaky Bay, arriving there on the evening of the 19th.
We took up a berth in the S.W. corner of the Bay perfectly land-locked; this anchorage, by all
accounts little known, is in every respect a perfect harbor, capable of holding a considerable
number of vessels of a large tonnage, easily accessible, and as it will probably and at no
distant period become a port of this District of the Province, We propose with His
Excellency’s sanction to distinguish it by the name Augusta Harbor.

There we commenced the operations of wooding and watering and making fires, in
the hopes that natives seeing us thus employed would come to our assistance, as they are
frequently in the habit of doing so to whalers who sometimes frequent those places for
similar purposes, but although we observed several fires in the distance around the Bay, no
natives made their appearance; on the 23rd December we got underweigh with the intention of
taking up a more conspicuous position, and moving along the shore passed a native fire
which seemed at no great distance from the beach, we immediately came to an anchor, and
Mr. Moorhouse and Corporal Geharty having landed, and proceeded two or three mile in the
direction of the smoke, came upon a native camp which had evidently been left in great haste,
the fire (kept alive in the usual way by a few small sticks) was still burning; the wallaby and
kangaroo rats, which had been recently cooked were lefty in their wallets, and such was their
hurry, that they had not even taken their spears. Everything was purposely left statu quo, and in the course of the afternoon our native interpreters were sent on shore to obtain an interview, but on their coming back to the vessel at sunset, reported that the natives had returned to their camp since Mr. Moorhouse’s visit, had taken everything away, had tracked them part of the way to the beach and then taken a direct line into the scrub at a running pace.

This report satisfied us that we had been seen by the natives and that they were most probably keeping afloat. As a last resort our native interpreters were again dispatched, and returned on the morning of Christmas day, bringing with them ten men and two old women belonging to the Streaky Bay tribe, and undoubtly concerned more or less in the murder and robbery of Mr. Baird, this point gained, and having succeeded by timely donations of flour, sugar, &c., in gaining their confidence, our attention was directed to assembling by their means as many of the same tribe as possible, but although they willingly dispatched two or three parties in quest of other divisions of the tribe, only two men, one woman, and three boys were added to the number who first came with the interpreters; the messengers, as well as we could understand them, stated that the parties of whom they went in search had moved a considerable distance to the northward, but our impression is, that they purposefully abstained from coming, and that amongst the absentees are the real perpetrators of the murder.

The natural cunning of the savage soon extracted from our interpreters the real object we had in view, as well as the fact that we had on board the Yalata the prisoner who was captured by the Police on the 12th November last, with whom they were well acquainted, but no decrease of confidence became apparent from these circumstances, on the contrary, as day by day we became better acquainted, they, on their part became more communicative, and although none would admit having been present either at the murder, the robbery, or the affray, they gave us the names of those who were; did not deny having eaten of the sheep, informed us that two natives had been killed and offer to show us where they were buried.

This appeared a favourable time to carry out our original intention of visiting the scene of the affray between the police and the natives found in possession of the stolen sheep, and having made arrangements with our newly made acquaintances to meet us in the vicinity of Mr Baird’s station, and they having promised to bring with them some more of the tribe, we left Augusta Harbor on the morning of the 28th December, and anchored in Venus Bay the afternoon of the 29th of the same month, where according to previous arrangements we found our horses in readiness. Heavy rain prevented our leaving the vessel on the 30th, but the weather clearing up on the 31st, we started for Mr Baird’s station, where we arrived the same evening accompanied by Corporal Geharty and Police-constable Dewson.

Here we found our native interpreters true to their words, and the next morning having under their guidance proceeded in a northerly direction for a distance of about five or six miles along the shore of the inlet, which extends several miles in land from Cape Radstock, we arrived at the rendezvous, forming a kind of crest to a point of land partially covered with low scrub running into the inlet, we observed a considerable number of natives watching our approach, we rode up to them, and our attempts to establish a friendly
intercourse appeared to be well met, they amounted in numbers to forty-eight, amongst whom we noticed a number of women and children and the greater portion of our friends from Augusta Harbor. From their ignorance of a single syllable of the English language, the absence of the slightest symptoms of shame, though both sexes were in a state of perfect nudity, and from other peculiarities we feel satisfied that their intercourse with Europeans, if indeed they have ever had any, has been most limited in degree.

To what extent all or any of this party were implicated in Mr Baird’s murder, we had no means of determining, and certainly nothing before us to warrant their apprehension, it was deemed most advisable to continue our friendly relations, but having no substantial means at our disposal of showing our intentions, it was after some discussion arranged that the whole party should travel down to the coast and meet us at Anxious Bay, where they would be regaled with flour, and we therefore parted exchanging a variety of amicable salutes.

Guided by our interpreters and a couple of native volunteers, we then proceeded towards the scene of the affray between the police and the natives, and after having journeyed in an easterly direction for about five miles, we came upon a dry tea-tree swamp not very dense in its character, having an open space on the one side and a low gum scrub on the other, near the swamp we found a native well which probably caused the natives to select this spot as the scene of their feastings. We cleaned out the well which was filled with dirt, birds excrements and other abominations, and came upon the water which in taste and smell resembled very bad bilge water, after swallowing some of the execrable stuff which our intense thirst obliged us to drink, we passed through the swamp to a distance of about two hundred yards, and the grave of the deceased man was pointed out to us (the two dead having, however, dwindled down to one from some mistake in the interpretation). One of our native guides commenced the work of dis-interment, but it was with great reluctance that he took any part in this proceeding and eventually declines doing so, the police also not much relishing the job, Mr. Moorhouse himself was obliged to drag the body out of the grave, which appeared to have been a large wambat (sic) hole, the body being covered with alternate layers of brushwood and earth. The trunk of the body, which on being pulled out of the hole, had become separated from the head and shoulders presented a frightful and sickening mass of corruption, and the appearance of some of the bones totally free from fleshy integuments, would have induced the belief that the body had been buried a considerable time, were it not more than probable that the deceased had lain some days exposed to the action of the atmosphere previous to interment, and these effects consequently produced. After some difficulty the head was found, having the hair of an elderly native remaining attached to it, the upper part of the head was separated from the lower jaw, and the skull had not only been parted at the natural divisions of the bone, but was broken before and behind and split. In the back part of the skull was discovered a round hole precisely similar to that which would have been made by a musket ball; it had evidently entered the head from behind, taken a downward direction, but had not passed out of the head.

Every available means were used to find the ball, but the search was unsuccessful, indeed such was the stench and so mixed was the soil with lumps of putrid flesh, that no
human being could have followed it up long; the disgusting remains were therefore again buried, and we proceeded to examine the locality. We saw that fires had been made by the police and their party in several parts of the swamp, and we saw also where the natives had held their feasts, sheep’s bones, skins, and other remains lying about in every direct. The spot where the native has died was also pointed out to us, some broken spears had been placed under his head, and the ground had the appearance of being stained with blood. It was distant about sixty yards from the native well in the swamp. From the nature of the wound, Mr Moorhouse is of the opinion that he could not have lived many minutes, or gone many paces after receiving it, and it is far more probable that he fell and died instantly. The police and the two gentlemen who were in pursuit on this occasion, state that after the natives had decamped, they searched the swamp in all directions, but found neither dead nor wounded. Considering the position of the spot where the native died, and the open character of the swamp, this appears to us very unaccountable. After pushing our inquiries as far as possible, we became satisfied that that the injuries sustained by the natives were limited to one man killed and one man wounded in the arm, the latter undoubtedly injured by Townsend, Mr Baird’s hutkeeper, while the native was in the act of taking away property from the hut some days previous to the affray, and feeling further satisfied, that none of the natives we had seen were either willing or able to identify any of the Europeans concerned, we considered that our remaining any longer in the neighbourhood was unnecessary, we therefore returned to Mr Baird’s station and calling at Mr Pinkerton’s on our way reached Anxious Bay on the afternoon of the 4th January, where we found the Yalata and fourteen of the natives who had promised to follow us to Mr Baird’s station, the women and children and some men having been deterred from coming the whole distance partly by fatigue and partly by the fear of passing through the runs of the settlers, which we regret to find can seldom be done by natives with impunity. The four having been brought on shore, they were addressed through our Port Lincoln interpreters, and given to understand that we were extremely anxious to be on friendly terms with them, but that they would be equally with the whites, protected or punished by law according to their deserts, and were also informed that Pulgulta was aboard the Yalata, a prisoner on account of the murder of Mr Baird, and the robbery of his sheep, but that he would be released unless found guilty. It is a matter of regret that we have no means of knowing whether they were made to comprehend all we intended to impress upon their minds, we feel inclined to believe they were able to gather at all events the spirit if not the letter of our intended communications, and from the manner in which they shouldered the flour, there can be no doubt but that this intercourse was to them productive of most pleasing results. On the morning of 5th January we left Anxious Bay in the Yalata with the intention of calling at Port Lincoln, but when off Cape Catastrophe, finding a strong northerly wind blowing, which from the appearance of the weather might have detained us some days, it was deemed advisable to push on, and we accordingly arrived at Port Adelaide on the morning of the 7th January, instant.

Having thus briefly detailed our proceedings we purpose advertising to that part of your letter No. 1915-50, addressed to the Commissioner of Police, where attention is directed to “the fact of the shepherd of the late Mr Baird having recovered some of his master’s sheep without the aid of a police escort or resort to the use of firearms, that the police recovered
some of the remainder of the flock, and that only subsequently to the recovery of the greater part of the sheep did firing on the natives occur, when Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart joined the police.” As applicable to these points the real facts are, that Townsend, Mr. Baird’s shepherd, did not recover any of the lost sheep; and that the unfortunate Mr. Baird lost his life in very rashly attempting to recover single handed the sheep which had been lost through Townsend’s neglect. Again, about six hundred and fifty sheep were found by the police and Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart astray in the bush, and taken by them to the station; the only other sheep recovered, were seven hundred and odd, discovered in the possession of the natives at the time the firing took place, Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart having been in company with the police since the information of Mr Baird’s murder had been received by them. His Excellency then directs us to “institute inquiries into the necessity for the firing as well as the exact number of natives wounded, the part taken by Messrs Pinkerton and Stewart in the transaction, whether their aid was called for by the police, and whether the missing sheep were their property.”

It appears to us that the most satisfactory reply to these inquiries may be gathered from the recital of the substance of that part of the depositions of the Police-constables and the two gentlemen above mentioned having reference to the affray, which were taken before us, at the examination of the native Pulgulta who was captured by them on the 12th November, they followed the tracks of some sheep for about seven miles from Mr. Baird’s station when they came in sight of seven hundred and fifty sheep rounded up in an open space, at a distance of about forty of fifty yards from them, at the edge of a tea tree swamp, they discovered a body of natives, in numbers about sixty or one hundred, that they immediately quickened their pace to a sharp canter, and that on approaching the natives to within fifteen or twenty yards, the perceived them assuming a defensive attitude with their spears shipped and apparently on the point of throwing them at the advancing party. Police-constable Dewson by signs, and in the English language, desired them to lay down their spears, which directions not being attended to, but on the contrary, their hostile intentions becoming unquestionably manifest, he took it upon himself to order the party to fire, which was accordingly done: The results have already been described in a previous paragraph of this report – Police-constable Dewson, in his deposition, states that he heard Mr. Pinkerton fire from a double-barrelled gun, and Mr Stewart also from his pistol, but did not see them fire, or know for certain how many times they fired. Mr. Pinkerton, in his own deposition, states that he fired two shots from a double-barrelled gun loaded with ball, and that the native at whom he fired his second barrell appeared to him to fall. Mr. Stewart also states in his disposition that he fired his pistol, which was loaded with small shot, on the first occasion, but did no execution, that he re-loaded with ball and fired over the head of the prisoner Pulgulta, in order to frighten him and arrest his flight, but the prisoner not being wounded it is evident that Mr Stewart’s firing was not attended to by injury to any person. Police-constable Dewson denies having asked Mr Pinkerton or Mr. Stewart to accompany him on this occasion, Mr. Pinkerton states that his assistance was requested by Dewson, to recover Baird’s sheep, that were astray in the bush. Whether Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart were or were not especially asked by the police to accompany them, seems to us to be immaterial, they were acting in concert with the police, and with their concurrence, had they considered
that such a course was not advisable, they should have declined the company of these gentlemen, and left it for them to act upon their own responsibility. The police, however, do not appear to have made any objection to their presence, but, on the contrary, it is most apparent that their assistance and company were welcome.

Before offering any opinion as to the merit of this transaction, it seems necessary to consider, first, who the parties were, and how employed; secondly, whether they were lawfully employed; and thirdly, whether they were justified in resorting to the use of firearms for the purpose of effecting their object? In reply to the first query, we find that they were police-constables endeavouring to apprehend a murderer, and assisted by two respectable settlers living nearest to the station of the late Mr. Baird, and that they found the property of the murdered man in possession of the blacks. To the second, it may be said, that under ordinary circumstances it is more safe and proper that a constable should be armed with a Magistrate's warrant before apprehending a prisoner, whatever the offence with which he may be charged; but under a variety of circumstances the law will justify a constable in performing this part of his duty without a warrant, and it will also in some cases authorise him to call other persons to assist him in so doing. There can be no doubt, but that the case in question will come within that category. With respect to the third query, it may be stated, that if the natives in the present instance had been Europeans, and supposing them unable to understand Police-constable Dewson when he called upon them to surrender, but at the same time reasonable grounds for inferring the intention with which he interposed, he would, beyond any question, have been justified in firing upon them, when they threatened to assault him with a deadly weapon. To draw a distinction between blacks and whites, in cases of this kind, where both are amenable in all other aspects to the same law, would involve endless difficulties, and probably lead to more disastrous results.

Under these circumstances, we feel bound to state as our opinion, that Police-constable Dewson and his party were justified in firing on the natives, in defence of their own persons, being then and there engaged in a lawful pursuit; but, at the same time, it may be questionable, to what extent they, by heedlessly galloping up to the natives in the first instance, brought themselves into a position of danger; and whether the arrest of the prisoner could not have been effected by a more cautious mode of proceeding; and also whether, had such a course been adopted, the parties would have attempted to defend themselves in the manner they are described to have done. The solution to the last two questions must, after all, be problematical. As to the first, it may with great propriety be said, that on first coming in sight of the stolen sheep in the possession of the blacks, the natural impulse of the moment would be to hasten towards the spot. That zeal in performance of their duties would urge the police, especially to adopt this plan, and that they were further instigated to endeavour by every means to secure the offenders, lest they should be stigmatized for want of activity and courage. Such, we are informed having been the case on previous occasions, when police, in performance of their duties, have acted with more caution; but where the result has been neither successful in the apprehension of the parties suspected, or in the recovery of the property stole. Admitting, however, that some degree of rashness might be justly imputed to them, it seems hardly fair, in the quietness of domestic life, to judge too harshly the acts of
persons who, in a state of excitement, and engaged in a just cause, may have lacked judgement, but who, in point of fact, have not transgressed the law.

To suggest any measures which would be likely to prevent a recurrence of these disastrous events, we find a matter of considerable difficulty. In Mr. Baird’s unfortunate case we feel bound to say, that in settling himself down nearly forty miles from the nearest station, in the very centre of a tribe of natives known to be hostile to Europeans; with 2,600 sheep, himself and one shepherd constituting his whole establishment both of whom being obliged to tend the sheep during the day necessarily left their insecure tenement and the provisions it contained to the mercy of the winds, he acted most imprudently. But, on the other hand, to endeavour to prevent persons running risks of a similar kind by legislative enactment or otherwise, would, in our opinion, tend to cramp the energies of the colonists, by whom almost all the available country has as yet been discovered, as well as retard the advancement of the colony; and, on the other hand, to assist with the especial assistance and protection of the police every adventurous individual who, either influenced by avaricious motives or bent upon some wild speculation might take up an insulated position beyond the occupied districts, would be inexpedient, expensive, and inconvenient.

It is extremely doubtful whether the aborigines, and especially those who are but little acquainted with our customs and laws, can be made to comprehend the nature of those safeguards which have mercifully been placed by the wisdom of our legislature to prevent the innocent suffering, and that guilt must be made to appear as clear as daylight before the accused can be legally punished. Their surprise must, therefore, be great, when they find that those who they know to be guilty, should, for want of legal evidence to convict, return to them uninjured, and apparently rewarded; and points out the impolicy of resorting to arrest and the form of trial, unless such a measure of legal evidence can be produced as to render a conviction probable.

On the whole, therefore, we do not find ourselves in a position to recommend any course likely to produce beneficial results; but the one which we have in some degree been instrumental in carrying out during our recent visit to Port Lincoln, that is to say, cultivating the acquaintance of the northern tribes by issuing them with flour and blankets at stated periods, and thus obtaining a knowledge of their persons generally, and through interpreters of their own tribes, becoming aware of their haunts, habits, and movements. We see no reason why these measures should not result in taming the Port Lincoln natives as well as the natives of other districts of the Province, who, in the early history of the Colony were equally savage and ferocious; and we have, upon our own responsibility, in furtherance of these desirable ends, promised that an issue of flour and blankets shall take place at the Three Lakes Police Station, trusting that His Excellency will be pleased to sanction and approve of the same.

In conclusion, we feel it incumbent upon us to bring under His Excellency’s notice the untiring zeal, activity and perseverance of Corporal Geharty, who appears to have left no stone unturned to discover the murderers of the late Mr. Baird; and who now, having gained the confidence of some of the tribe, and inducing three of them to return with him to Port
Lincoln, will probably, ere long, succeed not only in bringing to justice criminals in the above case, but in establishing such a friendly understanding with the rest of the tribe as may reasonably be expected (in due course of time, under the supposition that common propriety of behaviour will be showed towards them) to prevent similar aggressions in future, under circumstances where ordinary precautions are taken to protect life and property.

We have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servants,
GEO. F. DASHWOOD.
Commissioner of Police.
M. MOORHOUSE.
Protector of Aborigines.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.
POLICE STATION AT PORT LINCOLN.

Journal for the week Commencing Tuesday November 19th, and ending Monday November 25th 1850:


20th. – Ditto, Corporal Geharty in charge of prisoner.

21st. – Corporal Geharty started search of native witness named Pulliringa, who was required in Adelaide in the case of Multulta, who stood committed to take his trial for the murder of Mr James Beevor, at Tonto, on the 3rd May, 1849. Proceeded to Miccora, Mr Borthwick’s station, found the native witness and returned to Port Lincoln. Police-constable Wilson in charge of prisoner Maltulta. This evening (78) Police-constable Dewson arrived with information that the natives had killed Mr Baird, and had taken a number of sheep, on the 2nd November, from his station Kolka, about 170 miles from Port Lincoln.

22nd. – Corporal Geharty despatched Police-constable Wilson to the Salt Creek police-station, to bring in Police-constables Moran and Kennings who were stationed there to form a party to go in search of the natives that murdered Mr Baird; Police-constable Wilson proceeded to Salt Creek station, and encamped distance of 40 miles; Corporal Geharty in barracks in charge of prisoner Maltulta; Police-constable Dewson having his horse shod.

23rd. – Police-constables Moran, Wilson, and Kennings, arrived from Salt Creek station, and encamped distance forty miles; Corporal Geharty in charge of prisoner; Police-constable Dewson in barracks.

24th. – Corporal Geharty, Police-constables Dewson, Kennings and Wilson, and a Port Lincoln native, to act as interpreter, started for Mr. Baird’s station, and encamped near Warrou, distance 31 miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.

25th. – Corporal Geharty and party started at daylight and proceeded on road to Mr Baird’s station, and encamped at southward of Lake Hamilton, distance travelled this day thirty-five miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner Maltulta; this evening Police-
constable Smith arrived at Lake Hamilton, with a prisoner named Poolulta, who was taken by Police-constables Dewson and Smith, accompanied by Messrs. Pinkerton and Stewart, near Mr Baird’s station on Tuesday the 12th instant; Corporal Geharty with the assistance of the Port Lincoln native, found out from the prisoner that a number of Mr Baird’s sheep had been driven in the direction of Streaky Bay by the natives of that district, whom he also said were the parties that murdered Mr. Baird, and gave the following names as the perpetrators of the deed: Korbally, Kuilgulta, alias John Murray, Marigiltee, Tumbulta, Ugiltee, Uulgulta, Kingulta, Kakumda, Nuuberry, Kokulta, Kulgulta, upon being asked if he saw those men spear Mr Baird, his answer was he did not, he merely heard it from other natives.

For the week ending December 2nd.

November 26th. – Corporal Geharty and party, together with the native prisoner Poolulta, and the Port Lincoln native, as interpreter, proceeded upon the road to Mr Baird’s station, and encamped at the Three Lakes police-station, distance travelled this day twenty-eight miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner Maltulta. This night Corporal Geharty and police employed in making cakes and getting things in readiness for the next morning, there being no flour at any of the stations further north.

27th. – Corporal Geharty and party started for Mr Baird’s station and encamped at Mr Horne’s, Lake Newland, distance twenty-four miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.

28th. – Corporal Geharty and party proceed to Venus Bay and encamped, distance twenty-four miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.

29th. – Corporal Geharty and party Baird’s station. No natives had been seen near the station since the police saw them on the 12th, distance thirty miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.

30th. – Corporal Geharty proceeded with the native prisoner, Poolulta, in the direction of Streaky Bay, where he informed Corporal Geharty he had seen a party of natives driving a number of Mr Baird’s sheep, after they had killed him, about eight miles north of Mr Baird’s station, the prisoner and police arrived at some salt lakes, and found the tracks of a mob of sheep with native foot-marks following them up as if driving them, about four miles further Corporal Geharty and party came up to a native well, dried up, all round this well was a mass of sheep’s paunches and bones, there was also a small sheep yard, evidently the work of natives from its construction – the yard would hold about 300 sheep thickly stowed – they appeared to have encamped here one night; Corporal Geharty tracked them to another native well about six miles further up the coast, and found traces of sheep as above described. From hence traced them to another native well about six miles further up the coast, and found traces of sheep as above described. From hence traced them to another native well about five miles further, and there found traces of sheep also slaughtered; this water hole is about 2 ½ miles south-east from Streaky Bay. Corporal Geharty and party encamped here for the night having procured water for the horses of a very indifferent kind; distance travelled this day twenty-five miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.
December 1st. – Corporal Geharty and party started at day-light and proceeded up the coast on the track of the sheep about ten miles, arrived at a water-hole near the beach on the north shore of Streaky Bay, here Corporal Geharty and party procured a little water for breakfast by scraping the sand, but were unable to procure any for the horses; the native prisoner through the Port Lincoln native, informed Corporal Geharty that there was a good supply of water up the coast, and also that the natives were there with the sheep; at this water Corporal Geharty and party lost the track of the sheep, the natives having evidently taken advantage of the tides and driven them along the beach to avoid the dense tea-tree scrub of about twenty-five miles through, and about twenty to thirty feet high, Corporal Geharty and party entered the scrub, the tide being too high to ride along the beach, and travelled through until sun-down, when we arrived at a small inlet running in land from Denial Bay, and about two mile from the water-hole mentioned by the native prisoner in the morning, the water being in a small plain; Corporal Geharty and party entered the scrub again, and got round to within half a mile of it, and carefully examined all round to see if there was any native or their smoke in the vicinity, but could see none, Corporal Geharty then approached the water-hole, and to their surprise instead of a large place where horses could drink freely, as described by the native prisoner in the morning, it was a small hole in a limestone rock about one foot in diameter at the top and about seven feet deep, however, it was very acceptable as both men and horses were quite knocked up, having been about ten hours in a dense scrub under the burning sun without a breath of air; Corporal Geharty and party set to work watering the horses, which took the best part of the night, owing to the bad supply, the Port Lincoln native being able to empty it out every half-hour with a quart pot, he was the only one of the party that could get down the opening at the top. The natives had been here some days previous and slaughtered some sheep; distance travelled this day Fifty miles; Police-constable Moran in charge of the prisoner Maltulta.

December 2nd. – Corporal Geharty and party started to another water-hole at day-light about four miles distant, and arrived within a short distance of it sheltered by the scrub, examined all round, but could see no smoke, we approached the water-hole which could be smelled a hundred yards to leeward from the stench of dead sheep lying about quite putrefied, the water also smelled so strong that the horses although thirsty would only drink a small quantity of it, a short distance from the water-hole the Port Lincoln native found some fresh print of natives feet, they had been at the water the evening previous. Corporal Geharty sent back two men in the scrub to watch the other water-hole, in case any of the natives should come for water. Whilst Corporal Geharty and the others went on the tracks of the natives, from the water-hole we traced them along the coast towards Fowlers Bay. After travelling about five miles, we came to the place where they had slept the night previous; Corporal Geharty and party then went into the scrub and returned towards the water-hole which the two men were sent to watch in the morning. We traced the natives to where we crossed with the horses in the morning, they turned short and got within a short distance of the water-hole, and then steered inland again. I saw by this move that they were keeping a lookout for us, and that the only chance I had was to come upon some of them that were not aware of our approach. For this purpose, Corporal Geharty and party started for a fishing ground on the coast. Proceeded in that direction, but we could see no trace of a native from five or six
miles of the water-hole. Within this circumference, there were plenty of foot-marks, going in all directions, as if hunting wallaby. Corporal Geharty and party then returned to the water-hole at sundown, and there saw the foot-marks of three men and three women who had been for water during our absence. This convinced me that there was not anything we did but was seen by them, more especially as, on going away, I hid a large shell which they had taken away; so that they must have been in the scrub, a very short distance from us, at the time we started. At this water they killed the last sheep, and what they did not kill died. Distance travelled this day, thirty miles. Police-constable Moran in charge of prisoner.

Week ended December 9th.

December 3rd. – This morning, Corporal Geharty and party started, with the native prisoner and Port Lincoln native, upon the tracks of the six natives that were at the water-hole the evening before. After the whole party got into the scrub, Corporal Geharty left two men, with orders to tie up their horses, and get down to the edge of the scrub on foot, in sight of the water-hole. This was done in case the natives were on the watch, and might suppose the whole party were on their track. Corporal Geharty and the remainder of the party proceeded on the tracks of the natives, and came up with their camp in the scrub, about six miles from the water hole. From the appearance of the camp, there might have been about thirty, including men, women, and children. The fires were still alight, and all around the camp was strewn with the root of a gum bush, from which they obtain water. Corporal Geharty and the party followed their tracks, from the camp through the scrub inland, in a northerly direction, for about eight miles: they were still using the scrub root as a source of water. The scrub got so dense that we could not proceed at more than three miles per hour, or could have seen a native if one had been within five yards of us. The Port Lincoln native, who was tracking, gave it up, having been informed by the native prisoner that the natives could subsist for many days, inland, on the scrub root as a substitute for water. Corporal Geharty and party then returned to the water-hole, and joined the other two men; no natives had made their appearance at the water-hole all the day. Corporal Geharty and party were now reduced to about ten lbs. of flour, for the journey down; this had to last the party, which consisted of seven, to Mr. Pinkerton’s station, as there was none to be had at Mr. Baird’s, the parties there being altogether dependent on the police, until some person took charge of the property. Under these circumstances, and finding that there was no chance of capturing the natives, Corporal Geharty and party gave the horses as much water as could be procured, and took advantage of the cool of the evening and part of the night to get back through the scrub. Started about 5 p.m., and encamped at the back of the coast, at Streaky Bay. We procured feed for our horses this night, but no water for them or for ourselves. Distance travelled this day, thirty-five miles. Police-constable Moran in charge of the prisoner, Maltulta.

4th. – Corporal Geharty and party returned to a water-hole, at Streaky Bay, and arrived there at about two p.m., both horses an men being nearly exhausted for want of water, the day being excessively hot. The horses drank at this water-hole, 400 quarts of water, between the six of them, before being satisfied. From thence, Corporal Geharty and party proceeded to another water-hole, on the road home, about five miles further and camped. Distance
travelled this day, about thirty miles.

5\textsuperscript{th}. – Corporal Geharty and party returned to Mr. Baird’s station, Kolka. Distance travelled this day about 15 miles. This evening, Corporal Geharty finding that the Port Lincoln native and the native prisoner, could understand each other pretty well, inquired of the prisoner through the Port Lincoln native if any of the natives were hurt by the whites, his answer was yes, one of them named Korbally, was slightly wounded in the thick part of the arm. Corporal Geharty asked if it was done by Mr. Baird, as that gentleman was armed when he went out in search of the sheep, he said it was done by a white man was gone to Port Lincoln. This must have been Townsend, as the native saw him going to Mr. Pinkerton’s with information, and concluded he was gone to Port Lincoln. That is the only native hurt, to the prisoner’s knowledge.

6\textsuperscript{th}. – Corporal Geharty and party made a small damper of the last flour they had, and proceeded to the west end of Venus Bay, and encamped. Distance fifteen miles.

7\textsuperscript{th}. – Corporal Geharty and party of police proceeded in the direction of Mount Cooper, to see if they could find any sheep tracks going eastwards of Mr Baird’s station, the shepherd, Townsend, having lost between five and six hundred sheep since they had been recovered from the natives by the police; but could find no trace of them. A number of these sheep were found by Mr. Pinkerton’s Overseer, Mr. Stewart, and that the two men are at present shepherding at the station, killed by wild dogs, so that this lot of sheep never came into the possession of the natives. Corporal Geharty and party, having used that last of their provisions in the morning, returned to Mr. Pinkerton’s station after nightfall, and encamped. Distance travelled this day, thirty-five miles.

8\textsuperscript{th}. – Corporal Geharty and party proceeded to Mr. Horne’s station and encamped. Distance twelve miles.

9\textsuperscript{th}. – Corporal Geharty and party proceeded to Police Station, Three Lakes, and encamped,
Distance, twenty-four miles. Police-constable Moran in charge of barracks and prisoner, Maltutla.

JAMES GEHARTY, Corporal of Police.
LAND ACCESS ISSUES ARRISING FROM THIS INCIDENT.

In an open letter, published in the Government Gazette in 1840, by the Colonial Secretary, Charles Sturt, reminded the colonists of Government policy with respect to land purchases and grants, and the role of the Protector of Aborigines.

“Land Office, July 11th, 1840.

To: the above.

Gentlemen,

Having laid your letter of the 9th inst. before the Governor and Resident Commissioner, I am desired by His Excellency to say, in reply, that it is to him a matter of deep surprize that persons of intelligence, like yourselves, who also, as preliminary purchasers, are well acquainted with the history of the establishment of the Colony, should consider any rights which any Europeans possess to the lands of the Province as preliminary to those of the aboriginal inhabitants.

Those natural indefeasible rights which, as His Excellency conceives, are vested in them as their birthright, have been confirmed to them by the Royal instructions to the Governor, and by the Commissioners' instructions to the Resident Commissioner. Under these it is that His Excellency has acted in the case to which your letter refers.

The Royal Instructions command that they shall be protected in the free enjoyment of their possessions; that injustice and violence towards them shall be prevented; that all measures which may appear to be necessary shall be taken for their advancement in civilization: and the Commissioners' instructions direct that they shall not be disturbed in the enjoyment of lands over which they may possess proprietary rights, and of which they are not disposed to make a voluntary transfer.

That this Colony was publicly known to have been founded on principles of the strictest regard to the original rights of the aboriginal inhabitants, His Excellency need only refer you to a document with which you must be well acquainted – the First Annual Report of the
Colonization Commissioners.

It is scarcely necessary for the Governor to mention, that, prior to the landing of the first British settlers, the natives possessed well understood and distinctly defined proprietor rights over the whole of the available lands in the Province.

In the degree of knowledge which they have attained, it would, however, have been to their great disadvantage to have them enter into general treaties with them for the cession of lands, inasmuch as such lands would certainly have been obtained for the most insignificant, ill-defined, and unsubstantial returns.

The course which the Governor and Resident Commissioner has preferred to take, is that of directing the Protector of Aborigines to select such land for the natives, in moderation, as he may deem likely to be necessary for their future use, support, and advancement in civilization: such land being afterward secured in the Governor and Council, and Protector of Aborigines, as trustees.

This measure has been immediately brought about by the direct applications on the part of some of the natives belonging to the districts to which your letter refers for land for cultivation.

The selection has been made by the Protector with judgement and moderation, and the only modification that His Excellency can allow to be made with regard to it, is one which he authorised when objections were first raised, that of permitting exchanges to other unappropriated sections in the event of the persons who may desire the sections which are first selected for the natives being able to show, to the satisfaction of the Governor and the Protector of Aborigines, that the sections proposed in exchange are equally advantageous in all respects for the purposes of the original possessors.

This modification must have reference as much to money tenders and to the holders of eighty-acre sections as to those of preliminary land orders. His Excellency cannot perceive the justice of your proposition, that the natives should choose immediately after yourselves, and consequently previous to the two other classes of purchasers.

If the claims of the natives are not void before all, they are preliminary to all. They cannot occupy a middle ground.
In the above letter published by Deputy Commissioner of Lands, Charles Sturt, it was emphasised that colonial settlers and Aborigines would have to learn to share the land. As colonial expansion progressed, it was the “pioneers”, the remote hut keepers and shepherds, who bore the brunt of the frontier friction with the Aborigines. However, the attitude of the Protectors was made perfectly plain. The attitude of the Commissioners of Police was equally consistent. The Police Force, overstretched by the rapid expansion of the colony, was not overly sympathetic to settlers who seemingly invited trouble by taking huge risks moving into outlying unsettled districts. Police Commissioner Dashwood’s above Report, (Exhibit C), responds to the Governor’s request on what legislative changes might be made to ease the situation in the outlying districts. The suppression of the Aborigines is not under consideration. An extract is re-presented here to emphasis the Commissioners opinions of these outlier settlers – he uses the terms “im prudent” and “adventurous”:

“To suggest any measures which would be likely to prevent a recurrence of these disastrous events, we find a matter of considerable difficulty. In Mr. Baird’s unfortunate case we feel bound to say, that in settling himself down nearly forty miles from the nearest station, in the very centre of a tribe of natives known to be hostile to Europeans; with 2,600 sheep, himself and one shepherd constituting his whole establishment both of whom being obliged to tend the sheep during the day necessarily left their insecure tenement and the provisions it contained to the mercy of the winds, he acted most imprudently. But, on the other hand, to endeavour to prevent persons running risks of a similar kind by legislative enactment or otherwise, would, in our opinion, tend to cramp the energies of the colonists, by whom almost all the available country has as yet been discovered, as well as retard the advancement of the colony; and, on the other hand, to assist with the especial assistance and protection of the police every adventurous individual who, either influenced by avaricious motives or bent upon some wild speculation might take up an insulated position beyond the occupied districts, would be inexpedient, expensive, and inconvenient.”

Police Commissioner
Dashwood, 1851.

Another memorandum taken from the Correspondence of the Police Commissioner’s Office, May/June 1866, from Egerton Warburton, Commissioner of Police in 1866, in a rather testy reply to letter from Sub-Protector Buttfield, (who I believe was also a deputised Minister of Religion, i.e., the “minister” referred to in the text) is quite explicit about the Police Department’s thoughts about these remote settler that get themselves into trouble and expect
the Police to bail them out. He outlines the responsibilities of the hut-keepers – and where their right to retribution ends:

“3
11/4/66
Memo
From: Egerton Warburton
? Commissioner of Police
Copy to Inspector Leary?
With reference to Mr Buttfield’s letter of March 30th 1866 to Inspector ?Leary – I can only say –
That no doubt the Blacks in the Gawler Ranges do from time to time commit depredations upon the property of the settlers – and so would the Whites in Adelaide if the citizens left their property equally exposed –
Mr Buttfield says the Shepherds and Hut-Keepers are unprotected – but to the best of my belief 19 out of 20 Huts are left during the day (sometimes for weeks) without any hutkeeper, and it is not the hutkeepers, but the property which is left by its owners wholly unprotected. If a man leaves his property in the Bush without any one to take care of it – no wonder he is robbed.
As to the Shepherds being unprotected, I do not know what they are to be protected from – have they been overpowered, assaulted & injured of their sheep forcibly taken from them whilst out tending their flocks in the Scrub ? I know of no ? case –
I do not see that it is needful the shepherds &c should be restrained as to their modes of “self-defence” – if a man be assaulted, he is quite justified in adapting his mode of self-defence to the character of the assault – but when Mr Buttfield says they are unrestrained as to the amount and kind of “retribution” certain emergencies may seem to them to demand, I think he is altogether mistaken – Retribution is not entrusted to private hands and any shepherd or other person who may assume to himself the right of dealing it out will find the Police (as in duty bound) quick enough to restrain him. Mr Buttfield has I think feelingly & faithfully pictured the real position of the Blacks. They are represented as smarting under a sense of injustice inflicted upon them by the occupation of their country – that the many & nameless hardships arising from the presence of the White man are sufficient to engender feelings of resentment in natives even less savage – I believe this to be true – but I cannot follow Mr Buttfield in his remedy for such evils – viz., that a Police Station should be established at Paney – or as I view the proposal – that we should employ the best means we know of to frighten and drive the poor creatures clear out of their country and away from their known waters ! To me it seems that, if our exclusive occupancy of every bit of water & country be admitted as an injustice towards the Blacks the implicit remedy would be to release our grasp and allow them a fair share, for their own exclusive use, of such country as was ?wanted to their sustenance.
I can not advocate a Pol. Station at Paney – the settlers want it, they can themselves the expense of taking proper care of their own property. The Sub Protector wants it – as far as I can understand – for the purpose of over-awing the Blacks and by driving them out of their country, & spare the whites the temptation of shooting them.
The Police are the only really executive native protectors, and I think that Inspector Leary, in dealing with the Blacks, will consult his own views of justice between man & man, rather than the pecuniary interests or the personal feelings of the settlers.

There can be no objection to sending Natives by ship when it can be done – but this is
not always the case. I need not here specify all the difficulties – they will readily recur to the Minister. I merely wish to show that that the Police do not escort Native prisoners & witnesses over long land journeys for their personal pleasure or for the infliction of wanton unnecessary hardship upon the natives; whenever circumstances admit of their being sent by ship that course should be adopted.

E. Warburton.”

After the incident involving the death of Mr. Baird and an Aborigine, it was resolved that the access to pastoral lands for the purposes of traditional ceremonial and hunting and gathering, should be made explicitly in the lease documents. The letter from Mr Charles Bonney, Commissioner of Crown Lands, reproduced below, is in almost immediate response to this sentence in Police Commissioner Dashwood’s report (Exhibit C):

“One calling at Mr Pinkerton’s on our way reached Anxious Bay on the afternoon of the 4th January, where we found the Yalata and fourteen of the natives who had promised to follow us to Mr Baird’s station, the women and children and some men having been deterred from coming the whole distance partly by fatigue and partly by the fear of passing through the runs of the settlers, which we regret to find can seldom be done by natives with impunity.”

In the Government Gazette of January, 1851, the following letter was published:

[79] THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT GAZETTE. [Jan. 30, 1851.]

Colonial Secretary’s Office, Adelaide, January 28, 1851.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor directs that the publication of the following Letters from the Commissioner of Crown Lands for general information.

By His Excellency’s command.

CHAS. STURT.
Colonial Secretary.


Sir – I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant, calling my attention to a report of the Commissioner of Police, in which an officer states that the natives of Port Lincoln have well-grounded fears in passing through the runs of the settlers, and directing me not to issue any further leases of land without inserting therein clauses recognizing the undoubted right of the natives to traverse the runs, so long as they do not violate the rights of property; and also providing for their
In a letter which I had the honor to address to you on the 16th instant, relative to the reservations to be inserted in leases, I suggested the adoption of some clauses reserving the right of the natives to dwell upon land, and to follow their usual customs in searching for food; but I am not able to suggest any other protective clauses which would be likely to operate usefully.

The regulations respecting the forfeiture of leases might be put into operation in the event of a settler being convicted of any crime against the natives, but this I apprehend would not apply to offences committed by the servant of the lessee.

I am of the opinion, however, that if it should be found at any time that the natives suffer oppression in consequence of the land being held under lease, the evil may easily be remedied by setting apart certain tracts of country as native reserves.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

CHAS. BONNEY.
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

The Hon., the Colonial Secretary.

The Pastoral Act was passed that same year in 1851, and explicitly gave Aborigines nearly unlimited access to leasehold land for hunting and ceremonial purposes. All the South Australian pastoral leases have the following clause inserted:

“And reserving to aboriginal inhabitants of the said State and their descendants during the continuance of this lease full and free right of egress and regress into upon and over the said lands and every part thereof and in and to the springs and surface waters therein and to make and erect and to take and use for food, birds and animals feræ naturæ in such manner as they would have been entitled to if this lease had not been made.”

The 1989 Pastoral Act maintains these rights to the present day.

PASTORAL LAND MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION ACT, 1989

DIVISION 111-PUBLIC ACCESS

Rights of Aborigines

47. (1) Notwithstanding this Act or any pastoral lease granted under this Act or the repealed Act, but subject to subsection (2), an Aborigine may enter, travel across or stay on pastoral land for the purpose of following the traditional pursuits of the Aboriginal people.

(2) Subsection (1) does not give an Aborigine a right to camp-
(a) within a radius of one kilometre of any house, shed or other outbuilding on pastoral land;
   or

    (b) within a radius of 500 metres of a dam or any other constructed stock watering point."

Later, the State Game Act of 1894 proclaimed reserved areas to be free from game hunting or fishing, but this applied only to the white settlers. Aborigines were excluded from its provisions.

Breaches to these laws were acted upon. A letter from the South Australian Protector of Aborigines, Letter Books dated 1876 (my emphasis):

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# 604

28th June 1876
Mr C.A. Meyer
Kopperamanna
Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 12th inst., respecting the natives at Kopperamanna and Cooper’s Creek, I have the honor to inform you that, your letter has been forwarded to Mr Buttfield, Sub-Protector of Aborigines, Blinman, and when his report thereon has been received, I will communicate with you again upon the questions referred to in your letter.

With regard to your statement ‘that a settler at Cooper’s Creek had ordered the natives to leave his run, as he had taken a lease of the land, and would not allow them to remain thereon any longer” – I have to state that, a pastoral lessee is not justified in interfering with the Aborigines on his run in the manner complained of, as his lease contains a clause specially reserving to the Aborigines their full and free right to live upon such land, to erect wurleys &c, to use springs and surface water thereon and to take and use for food all such native wild birds and animals as they are accustomed to.

I have also to request that you will be good enough to report the circumstances under which the settler in question objected to the natives remaining on his run, and forward a statement to this office giving full particulars as to name and dates &c – to enable the necessary action to be taken to protect the interests of these Natives.”

[Protector Hamilton 1876]
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Interestingly, apparently, the “settler of Cooper’s Creek” in question, subsequently applied to the Protector, and obtained approval, to become a distributor of Government rations.