“A Question of Necessity”:
The Native Police in Queensland
Jonathan Richards, Bachelor of Arts in
Australian and Comparative Studies (Honours)

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School of Arts, Media and Culture, Griffith University
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March, 2005
Abstract

Frontier issues are an inevitable part of Australian historiography, and have often been dealt with in either an indifferent or a moralistic manner. Specifically, it has been widely argued that records of officially condoned frontier violence have been destroyed or lost. This thesis, which deals with the Native Police in Queensland from 1860 to 1905, attempts to move the discussion on to firmer ground. It is driven by a passionate commitment to the rights of Indigenous Australians, and shows that detailed archival research does not support those who deny the violence that accompanied the colonisation of Australia. Apologists for dispossession will find no comfort in the archival records. The Native Police force was widely reputed to have been the most violent police force on the Australian frontier. Long-standing and widely cited references about the lack of Native Police records have been tied into arguments about the kind of force it was.

This dissertation is the first significant archival work on the Native Police force after Separation. The force was part of broader colonial settler-society, and I analyse the Native Police in that context. The problem with existing literature is that the archives have not been adequately consulted, and historians have neglected vital contextual aspects of the force in Queensland. The sociology of policing has not been integrated with a model of military force in the Queensland case, even though in colonial Queensland the same men formed the dual function of soldiers and police. The aim of the thesis is to provide an integrated model documented by detailed research in the archives. The research hypothesis is that the Native Police played a central role in the dispossession and punitive treatment of Indigenous people. Chapter 1 sets up the research problem in the context of the existing scholarship on native policing. Chapter 2 looks at the officers. Chapter 3 is concerned with the Aboriginal troopers of the force, and Chapter 4 examines the operations of the Native Police in Queensland. The thesis is very detailed, as the topic requires, but it still only opens up essential avenues of research. In particular, more work needs to be done on the experiences of the troopers and on the records of frontier violence in general.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Jonathan Richards
March 2005

WARNING

This thesis contains language and material that may be distressing for some readers. It includes references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have passed away, and also includes racist language and expressions. Some readers will find the violence described in this thesis disturbing or offensive. No offence or disrespect is intended towards any persons living or deceased.
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‘A famous old Native trooper’, Queensland State Archives, PRE/140


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Organisations: Archivists, librarians and staff at Brisbane City Council Library Service, Cairns Historical Society, Community and Personal History Unit, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, Griffith University Library, Mitchell Library (State Library of New South Wales), National Library of Australia, Queensland State Archives, School of Arts, Media and Culture, Griffith University, John Oxley Library (State Library of Queensland).
On the Queensland frontier in the nineteenth century, Aboriginal men under the command of Europeans killed large numbers of Indigenous men, women and children. They were members of a force created by the New South Wales government in 1848 and called the Native Police. The Queensland government retained this armed force as an effective means of crushing Indigenous resistance to European colonisation. The Native Police were deployed in mounted detachments (usually about six Aboriginal troopers led

by a White officer). When aspiring settlers complained about ‘attacks’ or ‘depredations’, the force went into action, ‘punished the offenders’, and made the country ‘safe’ for Europeans. They were the ‘defenders of colonisation’.

Were the Aboriginal men of the Native Police in colonial Queensland soldiers or police? What sort of force was the Native Police? In this dissertation, I argue that the differences between police and military actions in colonial Queensland were blurred. Archival records give us insights into the military-like operations of the Native Police. The thesis, which is divided into chapters dealing with the force in general, the officers, the troopers, and operations in the field, represents a revision of frontier history in Queensland.² This thesis looks at some unanswered questions in the context of new data on frontier violence. Many surviving records of Native Police operations have been located, and evidence reveals much about Native Police operations in Queensland. The records show that the force was, at the time, a standard form of colonial law enforcement apparatus.

Research historians for government, Indigenous groups and educational institutions in Queensland have needed a reliable and detailed history of the Native Police force for decades.³ Several books, all written after 1970, look at the force. While they give us some idea of the force’s cruel history, they are less useful when it comes to

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details of actual operations. Only a limited selection of names, dates and places are given. None of the works to date covers the whole history of the force. Apparently, nobody knew where detailed records could be found.

I needed a history of the Native Police ten years ago when I was doing research for my Honours thesis on a part of the North Queensland coast. I wanted to know how many Aboriginal people the force had killed in the area. At the time, I believed, as most people involved in frontier history research did, that the records of the Native Police in Queensland had been destroyed, were lost or never existed. At the time, most if not all, historians of the colonial frontier agreed on this point. ‘[S]tudies were restricted by the lack of sources. Extensive research by Queensland historians has failed to find the majority of official records on this force’.5

As I was researching my Honours thesis, I discovered that the accounts of frontier violence in the area disagreed with one another. I needed to know what had happened to Aboriginal people in the study area, but the contradictions in the published works made this difficult. One historian said that Aboriginal people were killed, which distressed local residents. Another claimed ‘no massacre took place’.7 I really needed to find as much as I could if I was to compile a reasonably accurate account of the history of the study area. In an attempt to clarify the situation, I began to compile my own ‘guide to police operations’ based on surviving primary records, and anything else I could find. My earliest attempt at making sense of the force’s activities was primitive, and not very

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4 This point is discussed in Chapter 1 of the thesis.
6 JW Collinson, *Early Days of Cairns* (Cairns: GK Bolton, 1939), 64.
successful. To determine which officers were in the area, I looked at every source I could find. I eventually learned to be careful with primary records and secondary sources. While they can occasionally give us valuable insights into the Native Police, invariably they are found to be just rumours, opinions, and hearsay. My second task was to determine which Native Police officers really deserved the reputation they had been given by historians. That way, I would know if an officer with a proven record of extreme violence was in a particular area at the same time that newspapers, oral accounts or other sources indicated that killings had taken place. This was difficult, since I didn’t know, when I first started looking, who had been in the force.

I discovered several newspaper stories, saying there had been reprisals in the study area, and that several children had been ‘captured and taken away’. There were reports that ‘a number of townsmen armed with revolvers and breechloaders in case of collision’ went to the area I was interested in – obviously prepared to shoot Aborigines – ‘but no such luck was in store’. I also found newspaper references to Native Police ‘dispersals’ and the capture of Aboriginal children. Were the settlers displeased or relieved? Which historian was right? All I could say at the time was that the events ‘have been interpreted by some historians as important episodes in local history’. I really didn’t know much more about the Native Police than I did when I started researching.

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8 *Cairns Post* (16 April 1885).
With hindsight, my efforts were crude and unscientific. I naively believed that the published works were based on thorough research into primary records. I thought they were reasonably accurate and reliable interpretations. I was able to build a picture of the force, but knew there were lots of gaps in my understanding. With regard to the small area I was considering, I made some progress. I completed and submitted my Honours thesis.

Many writers have continued to argue that the records of the force were lost, so the history could not be written. ‘There are indications of official cover-ups and careful ‘weeding’ of the Native Police records’, and ‘Analysis of the workings of the Black Police is bedevilled by lack of documentation’.¹¹ I found that many experienced and respected historians had looked for records about the Native Police in the Queensland State Archives, without much success. A few useful documents had been located, but not too many more. Details of violence, and many other aspects of the force’s history, were extremely rare. Even basic questions were unanswered. For instance, was the Native Police force a legally constituted body? Some historians argued that it was not ‘lawful’. Then I realised something else. Most previous work on the Native Police was based on a small number of archival records, and official published sources such as the Queensland Parliamentary Debates and the Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings. Were the official reports of any real use? These books don’t provide much detail on personnel or operations, and leave gaps in our knowledge of the force’s activities.

In the absence of a comprehensive and accurate historical account, I began looking at published works in the hope of building up some sort of reasonably decent picture of the force. I didn’t anticipate great success, but I did find some useful material, a lot of second-hand opinions, and much hearsay evidence that could not be confirmed. It was not a very fruitful search. But, more importantly, my research confirmed that there were huge gaps in the secondary sources. Much of the force’s history was, apparently, unknown to historians. Then, I found a much more serious problem in the published historical work. There was intense disagreement between historians about the extent and impact of frontier violence in Queensland, and the Native Police force was at the heart of the debate.12

After completing my Honours thesis, I began working as a history researcher, looking for records of relationships on the frontiers of colonial Queensland. I still needed to know more about frontier violence and the Native Police, because, if I had more detail on the force, I could write more accurate historical reports. Besides, one of the first questions that most of my Indigenous clients asked related to the force’s violent history. ‘What about the killings by the Native Police?’ they said. I returned to the Queensland

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State Archives and kept looking. I found some more material, but soon realised there were still many large gaps in the records. Others had already used many of the files that I saw. What could be done about this frustrating ‘research block’? Had the records of the Native Police really been, as so many believed, destroyed?

I refused to admit defeat. My first task was the compilation of a digital reference database containing all the references I found. At first this was a slow process, involving a collation of secondary sources with newspaper reports and any surviving official records. Later, as I started to recognise patterns and knew more detail, my ‘data-entry’ began to get faster. It is never easy work. One must learn to scan vast quantities of records quickly and accurately. There is another important issue – compassion. Those who research frontier violence records know that most European settlers felt little sympathy for Aboriginal people in Queensland. The work of examining records about extreme violence on the colonial frontier is generally frustrating, often tiring, and frequently distressing. It can be quite depressing, and disheartening.

Then I had a lucky break. I started work with Mark Finnane, examining inquests into Aboriginal deaths in colonial Queensland from 1859 to 1896. In the Justice Department inquest series (‘JUS/N’) at the State Archives, I looked at Magisterial Investigations into Aboriginal frontier deaths. Some inquests clearly implicated officers and troopers of the Native Police in unlawful killings. For the first time, there was good evidence of violence. I was starting to become numb to the brutality of the records. What else could be found? At archives, and in libraries and other repositories across Australia, I managed to locate notes about the force in logs, diaries, journals, manuscripts and personal papers. Some were useful, others just rumour and repetition. How could I tell
the difference? I started looking at microfilms of Queensland newspapers. The *Queenslander* and the *Brisbane Courier* were good sources of frontier violence reports. How many were true?

I didn’t expect to find detailed records of the force. There were some exceptional discoveries, including a few reminiscences by former Native Police officers.13 Then I had a second piece of luck. I was working at the State Archives with two fellow researchers, Mark Copland and Andrew Walker, who were both as determined as I to discover any references to Indigenous people in the files. We joined forces in a systematic survey of the Colonial Secretary’s Inwards Correspondence series (COL/A). The massive task of examining over 800 bundles of records took almost a year to complete, and enabled the production of a detailed index to over 3,000 historical documents relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland. It was a major breakthrough, as there was much valuable evidence in the red-taped bundles. We even found clear signs of Aboriginal ‘voices’. Many answers emerged, but, now, even more questions became possible. For example, there were references to the ‘Rules and Regulations’ under which the Native Police operated, but no copies of the actual rules. Where were they? If so many records could be found in one single provenance, how many more were in others?

I didn’t want to just scrape the surface of the records. I needed to find a rich vein that would lead me deep into the documents about the force. Although the existing historical literature had introduced me to the subject, I wanted to see a lot more. It was

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not, I felt, good enough to examine a limited number of records, and to then make an assessment of the force based on them. A systematic survey of the archival files might, if I persevered, reveal more documents. So, one series at a time, I slowly and progressively worked my way through the record sets created by the machinery of colonial government. I took a scientific approach, believing that the subject of the Native Police in Queensland was important enough that others should be able to follow what I had begun. I felt it was crucial that my research should be *reproducible* and *expandable*. Any historian should be able to retrace my steps through the archives, and then could build on what I had found.

I found records relating to the Native Police in every provenance at the Queensland State Archives. The surviving Outwards Correspondence series from the Colonial Secretary’s Office uncovered over 400 records. A survey of 2500 Police staff files yielded the names and career details of almost eighty individuals who served with the force. The bundles of Executive Council Minutes contain over three hundred references to the force. The ‘Confidential Despatches’ to and from successive Queensland Governors hold valuable correspondence with London on the subject of the Native Police. But of all the series of records that told us about the Native Police and violence on the Queensland frontier, none matches the Justice Department’s inquest series. Apart from revealing investigations into Native Police killings, the inquest files show us details of Native Police retribution after the deaths of settlers. The series also contains rich material on the deaths of some members of the force.

I still hadn’t found the Native Police Rules in the files at the State Archives. They had been drawn up in 1866, and approved by the Executive Council in the same year. Had they been legally proclaimed, and if so when? One day, after several years of
research, I decided to check the *Queensland Government Gazette*. In the 1866 volumes I found the ‘Rules for the general government and discipline of the Native Mounted Police Force’ in Queensland. They had been ‘staring us in the face’ all the time. There was no ‘secret cover up’ of the force’s existence. Encouraged by this find, I kept going. I found over 500 other Native Police references in the *Queensland Government Gazette*, ranging from the proclaiming of reserves for camps to the dismissal of men. There were another 500 references to members of the force in the pages of the *Queensland Police Gazette*. The archival evidence is complex, diverse and detailed.

Others had looked in these same places, but I was finding so much more. Why? The database of archival records and newspaper reports that I had looked at built over time into a massive document, which eventually became a critical mass. I started to recognise names, and I grew to know which ones were frequently misspelled. I acquired an understanding of how the records are organised at the State Archives. Most importantly, I became familiar with the operations of colonial government. I knew where to look, and what to look for. By constantly cross-referencing names, dates and other details on a chronological basis, I was able to determine which records were relevant. A nominal roll with the names of all European members of the Native Police made research easier. A list of all the Native Police camps gave the project a spatial base. All these factors helped me to navigate the Archives.

The archival files found thus far allow us to get a good idea of Native Police camps, operations, and personnel. Orders, reports, and despatches from the upper echelons of colonial government record the appointments, deaths, and dismissals in the force. *Queensland Government Gazette* and *Queensland Police Gazette* entries show
assignments, demotions, and retirements. Career paths, disciplinary action, and chain of command can be traced in the staff files. Investigations of some Native Police killings are recorded in the Inquest series. Details of criminal charges against a few former-officers can be found amongst Court record series. All these records help us see the force at work.

Other details also emerged from the archival material. One of the most surprising aspects of the research was the discovery of connections between the Native Police and two of Australia’s best-known icons: the song *Waltzing Matilda* and the hunt for the Kelly Gang. While the use of Queensland trackers in a futile attempt to catch Ned Kelly’s outlaw band is well known, the link with *Waltzing Matilda* is not. The clue was the line ‘Down came the troopers, one, two, three’. At the time, White officers in the Queensland Police were never called ‘troopers’, only Aborigines were. Most writers have observed that the song, written by Banjo Paterson in 1895, was largely based on the death of shearer Samuel ‘Frenchy’ Hoffmeister near Kynuna in late 1894. The Police Magistrate at Winton, Ernest Eglinton (a former Native Police officer) investigated Hoffmeister’s death, but the records definitely show there were no police ‘troopers’ at the scene. Hoffmeister shot himself with a revolver, and did not ‘jump in the billabong’. Why were ‘troopers’ and the billabong mentioned in the song? The inquest files reveal the answer. Two months after the inquest into Hoffmeister’s death, Eglinton investigated the drowning of a journalist at a waterhole near Winton. This man did jump in the water. Two Native trackers helped a police officer to retrieve the body. Three police went to that

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16 Inquest into death of Samuel Hoffmeister at Winton, JUS/N227/94/357.
17 Inquest into death of David Maxwell at Winton, JUS/N227/94/389.
billabong (‘one, two, three’), but only one Constable investigated Hoffmeister’s suicide. Perhaps Paterson heard about the two deaths, and rolled the stories into one song.

The importance of the Native Police to Queenslanders was brought home when a university colleague told me he was a descendant of Frederick Wheeler. What could I tell him about his forebear? In the course of my research I met a number of families who were descended from the officers and the troopers of the force. All were hungry for information, and curious for details about their relatives. I also discovered that places I knew (including a street I had once lived in, Patrick Lane at Toowong) were named after Native Police officers. The legacy of the force, both as part of Queensland’s racial history, and in tangible terms through the naming of streets, mountains and watercourses, reaches into the present-day. More references will be found, I am sure, to expand this connection between the colonial frontier and contemporary Queensland.

There are limitations to this research. Obviously the incomplete nature of the records dictates this from the beginning. Another is time. I am firmly convinced that more records pertaining to the Native Police will be found with a stern resolve and sufficient resources. I confined my search to the period from 1860 to about 1910. Records of the Native Police, under New South Wales control before Queensland separated in 1859, could have been included. Another set of records succeeds that of the Native Police force in Queensland. These are the tracker files, which are well worth closer examination because they trace the employment of Aboriginal men and women by the Queensland

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18 Apparently named after an early resident, Lieutenant Alfred Patrick, Helen Gregory, ‘Toowong, Or Should It Be Baneraba or Even West Milton’, *Brisbane: Local, Oral and Placename History* (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1990), 103. In Cloncurry, three streets – Douglas, Seymour and Uhr – were named after police officers, A/3938/37/9016.
Police Force during the twentieth century. After the 1880s, ‘ordinary’ Police gradually replaced Native Police detachments. Unarmed Aboriginal ‘trackers’ were attached to each station to care for horses, to cut wood, and to assist in the location of missing persons, stolen livestock, or wanted criminals. Sometimes, in public statements, the troopers of the remaining Native Police detachments in North Queensland were referred to as ‘trackers’. Fully armed and mounted, these men were used on bush patrols into the colony’s rugged tropical districts. They were really ‘troopers’. Further work on the ‘tracker’ files will undoubtedly reveal more detail of the troopers’ lives as well. Another group of men who might have been considered were the ‘Policemen’ of Torres Strait; yet another could have been the ‘Reserve Police’, who policed Aboriginal Reserves and Settlements from about 1900.

The greatest restriction on the research has been with regard to the troopers. The Indigenous men who joined the force were almost exclusively Aboriginal. Only a limited number of Torres Strait Islander men were employed, mostly as Water Police at Thursday Island. It would appear, from the data, that shortage of troopers was a perennial issue. Desertion, one of the causes of the shortage, was always a major concern for all settlers. However, I did not get the same insights into the troopers’ lives as I did with the officers. Almost 900 references to individual troopers have been located in the records, but only about twenty of these are given a family name. It is therefore, very difficult, to track a man with a name such as ‘Dick’, ‘Harry’, or ‘Tommy’. While some records may indeed refer to the same individual at different Native Police camps, there is no way of checking them. For instance, it may just be a coincidence that a trooper ‘Sam’ was listed in ten
North Queensland camps from 1872 to 1901. There might have been ten troopers called ‘Sam’. Rather than speculate, it is better not to ‘track’ the troopers.

Another restriction relates to the reports of brutality, violence, and distress that this research uncovers. There is never an easy way to come to terms with the content of the records. They show that many Europeans had no regard for Indigenous people. Casual violence towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was accepted and commonplace. Killing was no secret. The frankness of the admissions in the records is truly frightening. The records of investigations into Aboriginal deaths show that colonists in Queensland, especially the Native Police, killed Indigenous people for almost any reason. Similar levels of violence occurred in other parts of Australia, as Tony Robert’s work on the frontier history of the Northern Territory shows.19

The collection of Native Police references and records gradually grew into the 1000 page documentary history that is an appendix of this thesis. The data I have found in surviving records informs my analysis. The records clearly show that the Native Police acted in a military-fashion against Aboriginal resistance in Queensland. Colonial administrators, settlers, and the officers of the force justified this method. They all argued that the alternative was an abandonment of the colony.

The Native Police officers say their orders are to “disperse” blacks wherever they find them and, that, as they are a semi-military body, they are justified in putting the military interpretation on the word, and to kill all they can and scatter the rest.20

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Archival material shows that on many occasions, the Native Police killed ‘all they could’.

The dissertation is organised thematically. Chapter 1 considers Native forces and precedents of the British Empire. Chapter 2 deals with the European officers of the force. The Aboriginal troopers are discussed in Chapter 3, and the operations of the Native Police are assessed in Chapter 4. Seven appendices follow, including a 1000-page documentary history in digital form (disc sleeve inside rear cover).

**Capitalisation**

In this thesis, the words Black, Colored/Coloured, Indigenous, Native and White are capitalised. All police are ‘officers’, but in the context of the Native Police, the term is used for those men above the rank of Acting Sub Inspector and Cadet Sub Inspector. The words ‘trooper’ and ‘tracker’ both refer to the Aboriginal members of the force. The terms ‘camp and ‘station’ are interchangeable.

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Chapter 1: ‘The Bloodhounds of the Queensland Government’¹: Positioning the Native Police

It was a question of absolute necessity, a choice between the protection of the pastoral industry of the country, or the abandonment of that pursuit by the colonists; nay, further, it was a choice between the sons of Japhet and the sons of Cush, for they could not coexist.²

The Native Police offered a perfect niche for the sadist.³

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¹ The Empire, 27 October 1865.  
² Japhet was Noah’s son, and Cush was the Biblical name for Ethiopia, Charles Eden, My Wife and I in Queensland (London: John Murray, 1872), 114-117.  
In this thesis, I argue that the history of the Native Police, reconstructed from an extensive archive of surviving records, shows that the differences between police and military actions in colonial Queensland were extremely blurred. This fact is significant because it contributes to what historians in recent years have come to recognise as a complete history of policing in the English-speaking world. At one extreme, London, and later the English counties, accepted police so long as they were not like a military force – at the other, mounted and armed forces were imposed without hesitation. The Native Police of Queensland was one such armed and mounted colonial force.

In this chapter I examine the research problem in the context of the existing scholarship on Native policing in the colonial world. Then, I deal with the diversity of police systems in the English-speaking world and beyond, the origins of the Native Police, and the failures of successive Queensland governments to make the force accountable. Later chapters deal with the backgrounds and careers of the officers and the troopers, and finally with an account of the force’s violent operations.

‘Pegging the boundaries’

In Queensland, the Native Police played a major role in the dispossession of Aboriginal people from their land, the almost complete destruction of Aboriginal law, and the disintegration of Aboriginal families. As a major instrument of colonial authority and order, the Native Police of Queensland was - for Aboriginal peoples - the symbol of
Native policy, invasion and dispossession throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Some people have claimed that a history of the Native Police could not be written because of the ‘known fact’ that the records of the force were destroyed years ago. Despite such assertions and assumptions, historical accounts of the force have been published, though public knowledge and misinformation about the Native Police has changed over time. In other words, there have been debates based on shallow research. For example, during the early decades of the twentieth century there was little mention of the force’s activities, but during the 1930s journalists and amateur historians began submitting ‘frontier’ stories and letters on the Native Police to magazines and newspapers. Hearsay became accepted as facts, and myths assumed importance as writers largely ignored Australia’s record of racial violence during the colonial era. The omission of frontier violence in published histories is inextricably linked to the denial of prior Aboriginal occupancy and ownership of the land. Much of the frontier history written to date relies too heavily on the work of a small group of men with an interest in perpetuating the stereotyped perceptions of the force. The main writers on the Native Police until 1960 were journalists, novelists and popular historians. Many later historians quote their works as if they were accurate accounts based on official records and reliable witnesses.

As a self-governing colony of the British Empire, Queensland had much in common with several settler colonies; however, this Native Police force and the others it

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4 Even the name of the force is potentially confusing: at various times it was referred to as the Native Mounted Police, while for most of its history it was known simply as the Native Police. It was never called the Queensland Native Police.
5 For publication details see bibliography.
resembled were at the extreme end of a spectrum of police forces. As a first consideration, a brief survey of colonial policing practices in other places is useful. Police were often the symbols and instruments of colonial rule and the imposition of policing was an integral part of ‘empire building’. Police forces came in a variety of forms, and explanations for this diversity can be found in social history. For example, the English did not want tyranny at home (except when controlling the working class) so avoided installing a gendarmerie – but when policing other people they had fewer scruples. Always, they looked for cheap solutions. Other examples of different kinds of police forces include uniformed but unarmed ‘Bobbies’ in London, and a complete range of law-enforcement bodies in the United States and Canada.

Sir George Bowen was Queensland’s first Governor. The Police Force he established in colonial Queensland was based on the Irish model. In Ireland, armed detachments living in fortified barracks policed the local inhabitants. Historians of

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policing have covered the development of modern police forces during the nineteenth century, particularly in Ireland and England.\(^{10}\) The ‘modern police’ represented a major shift away from the notion of communal policing and the traditional institution of village constables.\(^{11}\) In Europe an older tradition of rural police, the gendarmerie, evolved into paramilitary forces that have largely survived until the present day.\(^{12}\) Various forms of gendarmerie were operating in parts of Germany, France, Italy and France by the middle of the eighteenth century. Armed and mounted patrols of gendarmes effectively extended the rule of the capital into rural areas, but gendarmes were usually strangers to the areas they policed. Many English politicians rejected the European model as being too centralised and uncontrollable by local magistrates.\(^{13}\)

The study of police history is a very useful and under-utilised tool for analysis of social history. However, although police history helps us to see the Native Police in a global context, a different kind of history is required to understand the military character of the Native Police. An understanding of colonial military practices is useful, because a significant number of colonists in Queensland had military backgrounds and army

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\(^{11}\) For a different perspective on the evolution of modern police, see WG Carson, ‘Policing the Periphery: the development of Scottish Policing 1795-1900’, *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 17 (1984).


Military history is a much older discipline, but until recent decades has been primarily concerned with describing and celebrating the actions of the European victors. However, some of the literature is useful as a means of understanding colonial military formations and techniques.

Most contemporary understandings of police forces focus on their provision of internal security, but colonial formations operated in a more shadowy world where the distinction between internal and external threats was blurred. Indeed, in colonial situations there was confusion between internal and external threats. The agents of European expansion and settlement tended to see Indigenous peoples, who became ‘the colonised’ with the stroke of a pen, as potential law-breakers and ‘outlaws’ unless they embraced European culture. In examining the activities of a force like the Native Police, we can see how colonialism operates as the clash of two law systems. Indigenous law, based on principle and respect for elders, insists that individuals must defend their traditional country and their right to survival. Settler law, based on precedent and respect for authority, regards such self-preservation as an affront to ‘civilised’ beliefs and values. Indigenous people in Queensland were caught between the two laws, and

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16 On the other hand, the greatest ‘crime’ under military law (which was based on ‘discipline and not jurisprudence’) was to ‘impair’ a soldier’s efficiency, Gerry Oram, ‘The greatest efficiency’: British and American military law, 1866-1918’, *Comparative Histories of Crime*, edited by Barry S Godfrey, Clive Emsley and Graeme Dunstall (Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing, 2003), 163.
subjected to the machinery of colonial government.\textsuperscript{17} ‘Native land was confiscated through trickery and the “white man’s law”, which was foreign to the native language and was an invention of a capitalist economy, i.e., private property as a new concept’.\textsuperscript{18} Their capacity to endure is even more astonishing.

Before we can consider the practices used by the force, we need to look at the policies and the groups in colonial society that made the force feasible. In other words, the context of ‘lawful racial violence’ that pervaded the Australian colonies at that time must be considered before we can gain an understanding of what the force actually did. Given the variety of attitudes to, and opinions about, the Native Police, we need to first pose a series of fundamental questions. What sort of force was the Native Police? Was it a legal body? Was it the only force of its kind, or were there other formations with similar roles? Who controlled it, and who benefited from its activities? What might cause a frontier colonist to publicly declare that the Native Police was a ‘question of necessity’? These questions guide the discussion that follows.

The military dimension of Native Police history has to be stressed for several reasons. Native Police camps were opened, closed and shifted as the frontier of settlement moved northwards and westwards – just as army posts were in colonial wars.

\textsuperscript{17} This collision of Law systems was recognised by a few observers in colonial times. ‘When the eastern coast of New Holland was taken possession of by the English in 1788, it was owned and occupied by a number of small Native states, each of which had its own territory, within and over which it was sovereign and independent’, W Frederic Morrison, \textit{The Aldine History of Queensland} 2 (Brisbane: Outridge Publishing, 1888), 565. See also ethnographer AW Howitt’s comment: ‘there are well-understood customs, or tribal laws, which are binding on the individual, and which control him’, AW Howitt, \textit{The Native Tribes of South-East Australia} (London: Macmillan, 1904), 295; and Alan Atkinson, \textit{The Europeans in Australia: a history. Volume two: Democracy} (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2004), 154.

An understanding of colonial military practices and history is useful - firstly, because Aboriginal resistance was deemed by some to require a military action; secondly, as previously mentioned, there is the presence of a network of military connections in Australian colonial society. Through the ‘old boy networks’, some gained prestigious appointments while others made fortunes from land speculation. A number of officers in the Native Police were former members of British armed forces, and fought in other parts of the Empire. At least one correspondent to the Brisbane papers wrote that recruiting soldiers for public service was a mistake. ‘Military men are the very worst to select’. As Bill Thorpe argues, the process of European colonisation in Australia was partly based on the artificial community of the regiment that replaced the ‘lost homes’ of soldiers from England, Ireland, and Scotland. The British army as a ‘collection of military tribes or warrior guilds’ influenced European expansion in Australia because officers especially assumed they belonged to a fraternity. They could expect hospitality, sharing of information, and protection by brother officers. At one stage, it was suggested that former officers living in the colony could ‘supervise’ the Native Police.

19 Officers in the Native Police with military experience included Henry Browne (1863-75), William Armit (1872-82), Alexander Douglas (1872-1905), Robert Little (1875-89), Walter Jones (1880-84), and Robert Barson (1891-1912). Others, including the Morisset brothers, Stanhope O’Connor (1875-80), Henry Kaye (1876-81), and Frederick Urquhart (1882-1921) were the sons of army officers.

20 ‘Civil Service Appointments’ by ‘Justitia’, *Brisbane Courier* (3 November 1864). What is interesting is the implication that military men were favoured


The connection between the military and colonial society are important factors in the history of the force. Details found during my research have convinced me that the Native Police should be regarded as a military force, albeit an odd one. Just as it was an exceptional police force, it was an exceptional military force, yet linked to the social world of officers ‘adrift’ in the colonies. The appointment of former military officers alerts us to the ‘special’ operational requirements of the force, and the connections with other armed units in different parts of the empire.

The Native Police were certainly not a police in the ordinary sense of the word. Their specific purpose was to suppress Indigenous resistance to colonisation. This emerges clearly from the instructions from the Governor of New South Wales when he sought the formation of a ‘Corps of Native Police’ in 1848.

Circumstances having been recently brought under the Governor’s notice, in respect of certain collisions which have taken place, in parts beyond the Settled Districts, between the white inhabitants and the Aborigines, which appear to him to require that immediate steps should be taken for their repression, he transmits to the Council an Estimate for the formation of a small Corps of Native Police, to be employed on this service.24

It is worth noting that the new force was to be used beyond the settled districts, which immediately suggests something other than a regular Constabulary, and was described as a ‘Corps’ – a word which commonly meant, at the time, a military unit (in later years it was widened to include other groups, such as ‘the diplomatic corps’ and ‘press corps’).

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Police today are sworn to uphold the law ‘without fear or favour’, but that was not the case with the Native Police, who failed to offer Aboriginal people the same protection as European citizens. Indeed, no evidence has been found of any Aboriginal trooper throughout the force’s history swearing an oath to ‘uphold justice’. Of course, discrimination against the Aboriginal population was also common among other agents of colonial law and order, such as the Justices of the Peace, Stipendiary Magistrates, and Commissioners of Crown Land.

The problems of colonisers in Queensland, and the solutions they employed, in connection with the dispossession of Aboriginal people, were not unique. In other parts of Australia, in other British colonies and in other European empires, armed Indigenous forces performed similar functions to the Native Police of Queensland, using almost identical tactics. The beginnings of the Native Police are connected with the expansion of British control in Australia and the division of the continent into separate self-governing colonies of the Empire. As Libby Connors has previously noted, colonial police forces developed from rough convict patrols to professional bodies in the 1840s and 1850s. The force was ‘inherited’ by Queensland on Separation from New South Wales in 1859, by which time its reputation as a violent, punitive institution was already well established. The force was transferred to the new colony along with all the other assets and prerogatives of colonial government.

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A tradition of violence towards Indigenous people migrated north with landseekers from New South Wales. The frontier violence inflicted upon Aboriginal people in Queensland was a refinement of practices in southern colonies. Colonialism is inherently violent. Moreover, the concept of using Indigenous troops to further colonisation and suppress resistance was not new. Like the British, other conquerors had found that ‘Native’ forces enjoyed a number of important advantages as imperial soldiers and frontier guards. Indigenous people were familiar with local terrain, customs and languages, and they had an ability to survive off the land without the catastrophic health problems that affected invading armies and expeditions. British soldiers in the tropics, for example, suffered heavier casualties from medical problems than from conflict. The greatest benefit of all, however, was cost. Native forces expected less, were paid less, and their overall cost to colonial administrators was much less than for European soldiers.

By the time the British colonised Australia several practices were standard. The Native Police, like other armed colonial formations based on the use of Indigenous recruits, took advantage of the fact that Native people had no loyalties to other Indigenous groups. Indeed, in some cases they were sworn enemies, and fought as much in their own self-interest as for other reasons. The concept of ‘divide and rule’, which was implicit in the recruitment of Indigenous troopers, shows how the British had learned

to adapt traditional Indigenous enmity to their advantage. Yet, with all forces like the Native Police, there was always the complicating risk that men taken locally would turn against their officers in sympathy with the people they policed. Consequently, the Native troopers were often recruited at distances from their postings, in order to ‘police’ Indigenous people without risk of them becoming partial in their activities. Divide and rule was, therefore, a fundamental means of oppression. But there were other factors at work here as well. The records in Queensland show that in some cases the detachments targeted certain groups – young men, who were potential combatants; and old people, who as keepers of traditional law and protectors of tribal culture and sacred country, could ‘sing’ death on these strangers in police uniforms. The impact of the force’s violence on Indigenous people is discussed in Chapter 4.

Throughout the British Empire, armed Indigenous units were deployed against local resistance to colonisation, and to advance imperial ambitions. The British managed to conquer and hold India with the assistance of large locally recruited Sepoy armies, while in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) mercenaries were used. In the Caribbean, former slaves were recruited for the West Indian Regiments, which served as garrison forces on islands and also in West Africa. Similar armed colonial formations existed in almost every corner of the British Empire, and in the lands claimed by other European powers. As

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30 It has been argued that the search for ‘a Native power base’ is an essential step in many invasions, Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (San Diego: Harvest Books, 1970), 52.


well, Japan, an expansionist power that adapted the practices of European empires, used Native police in Taiwan and its other Pacific territories, beginning in the 1890s.33

Other colonial policing arrangements, and their influence on the Native Police, are worth consideration. In his Despatches to the Secretary of State for Colonies, Governor Bowen named several colonial forces as models for the Native Police. According to Bowen, the Native Police were protecting the margins of the Empire and contributing towards the expansion of British domains. The force was ‘a contribution towards the general defence of the Empire, since the inland boundary of Queensland is the boundary also of the Empire, which it is necessary to protect from the numerous and hostile savages of this portion of Australia’.34 Bowen named the Malay Corps in Ceylon, the Cape Regiment in the Cape Colony (now South Africa), and the Native units of the Indian army. Bowen’s awareness of these units is a revealing example of the way that colonial administrators thought about their jurisdictions in relation to other regions of the empire. They were aware of practices in an emergent world empire; the empire was itself a textbook for oppression. Each force mentioned is worth closer examination, as they provide us with an understanding of how the operations and evolution of the Native Police in Queensland matched those in other colonial settings. Bowen’s letter clearly shows that the Native Police was not unique.


In Ceylon, the Cape Colony, and India, similar colonial policing formations existed. Native armed forces used by the British in Ceylon evolved from units that first fought under the Dutch. They included the Malay Corps, a formation that shared many characteristics with the Native Police of Queensland. The soldiers of this force helped the British to defeat the Kingdom of Kandy in 1815. Members of an African pastoralist group called the Khoikhoi, but known by Europeans as the Hottentots (and more recently as the Cape Coloured People), lived in the territory called by Europeans the Cape Colony. The Dutch and the British recruited them as soldiers. Khoikhoi men joined the Cape Regiment from 1806, and then the Cape Mounted Rifles. Native soldiers fought in all South African frontier wars until the unit was disbanded in 1870. In India, the widespread use of Native troops or sepoys meant that a small number of British troops were able to control most of the subcontinent. Native forces defended the boundaries, and enforced colonial law and order throughout India during the nineteenth century. In 1857 the East India Company employed 238,000 Indian soldiers. The British government, which took over the company’s army and reorganised it after the 1857 Mutiny, continued to rely heavily on loyal Indigenous forces.

The issues in other colonies mirrored those in Queensland. Like most colonial administrators, Governor Bowen believed that some form of government control over frontier conflict was necessary, and reported to London that the Native Police only operated in the remote ‘unsettled’ districts of the colony. As well as mentioning other colonial military bodies, he also reported to London in 1860 that he had organised the

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36 WA Richards, *Historical Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen* (Capetown, 1893).
37 See [http://indianarmy.nic.in/arhist.htm](http://indianarmy.nic.in/arhist.htm)
Queensland Police Force ‘on the Irish model’. As an estate-owning Irishman and a former Chief Secretary for Ireland, his preference for the ‘Irish model’ is not surprising. As police historians have noted, the Irish police was one of the main templates for the establishment of colonial law-enforcement agencies throughout the British Empire. Unlike the Native Police, the regular Queensland police force incorporated many features of the Irish Constabulary.

The Native Police incorporated one element of the ‘Irish model’ – the military aspect. Bowen mentioned the help he had received in setting up the Queensland Police from an officer of ‘much experience’ who had ‘shown great energy and resolution as Commandant of the Native Mounted Police’. This individual was Edric Morisset. The story of the Morisset family’s involvement in the force’s early history underscores what has already been noted, namely the importance of individual, regimental, and family movements in the administration of British colonies.

Bowen built on his apprehension about Aboriginal resistance, as justification for the force’s existence, and claimed the ‘Native tribes in Queensland’ were ‘far more

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38 Bowen to Newcastle, Governor’s Despatches, 10 April 1860, GOV/22/60/33. According to one historian, Bowen ‘had always been anxious for Imperial control of the aborigines’, but his efforts were completely frustrated by the Queensland Legislature; Patricia C Kelly, Sir George Bowen, Governor of Queensland 1859-1868 (Honours thesis, University of Queensland, 1952).
40 Edric Morisset was one of three brothers (the other two were Rudolph and Aulaire) who served in the force. Their father, James Morisset, served in the Crimean War, and was the Superintendent at the Norfolk Island convict settlement. He was later appointed as the Police Magistrate at Bathurst, New South Wales. See Vivienne Parsons, ‘James Thomas Morisset, 1780-1852’, Australian Dictionary of Biography 2 (Canberra: Australian National University, 1967), 260-1.
numerous and more formidable than in any other portion of Australia’. He compared the colonisation of Australia with other parts of the British Empire.

In the early days of the occupation of each district, the Colonists are frequently obliged to associate together, for self-defence against the blacks, in a somewhat irregular manner, and after a fashion, as I am informed, of the old Dutch Commandos in South Africa. For many obvious reasons, it seems highly desirable that this border warfare, when absolutely unavoidable, should be carried on under some control on the part of the Government. The establishment of the Native Police has contributed much towards this end.41

The ‘Dutch Commandos’ had a distinctive history.42 It is unclear who informed Bowen about the use of ‘commandos’, but this statement demonstrates that practices in older colonies were transmitted to the new parts of empire. Bowen’s remark about the Cape Commandos is another valuable clue to how colonial administrators thought about the empire, and it is also a useful lead into further reflection on the character of the Native Police. As South African historian Timothy Keegan argues ‘the commando became the single most important symbol of the cultural and social cohesion of the frontier burghers, and the chief instrument of their common interest in dispossessing and subjugating Indigenous peoples’.43 Interestingly, the commandos sometimes included Indigenous servants. Moreover, Khoikhoi soldiers that had formed part of the Dutch forces at the Cape since 1652, fought against British invaders, and took part in ‘commandos’ against other African peoples. The term ‘commando’ was also used in early colonial Australia.

41 GOV/22/60/33.
42 ‘Commando’, an Afrikaans name for an armed force raised by the Boers in South Africa, was originally a Portuguese word, *Macquarie Dictionary* (Sydney: Macquarie University, 1987), 376.
‘The Yass and Bathurst Blacks in the early settling of the Colony were said to have been troublesome, and that in consequence Commandoes (sic) had gone out against them’. 44

In Ceylon the use of armed Native forces in several formations during the early decades of the nineteenth century firmly established new tactics and policies. There is no evidence in Australian historiography of any awareness of this important forerunner to the Native Police forces in Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory. The Malay Corps, later renamed the Ceylon Rifle Regiment, was formed in 1802. 45 When conventional military forces proved incapable of securing the island, British officials in Africa and India sent mercenaries from 1804. 46 The Kaffir Corps, composed of armed and mounted African soldiers, conducted a campaign of terror and destruction against the Singhalese, until being disbanded in 1825. 47 The Native Police in Queensland came to resemble this force. 48 The Malay Corps was used by the British to eventually defeat the Kingdom of Kandy in 1815. Many former members of the Malay Corps later joined the Ceylon Police. 49 For the last twenty years of the unit’s existence, it supplied detachments to Hong Kong and other British territories in Asia. 50

Malay soldiers were originally taken from the islands of the Dutch East Indies to Ceylon, and recruited by the Dutch. They were absorbed into the British army when the

44 GA Robinson, Journey into south-east Australia (Sydney: DS Ford, 1941, originally published 1844).
45 Hussainmiya, Orang Regimen.
46 Colvin De Silva, Ceylon Under the British Occupation, 1795-1833 (New Delhi: Navrang, 1995).
47 Hussainmiya, Orang Regimen, 62.
49 Hussainmiya, Orang Regimen, 91.
Dutch surrendered the island in 1796. Ceylon was a strategic part of British efforts to block French expansion. The Malay forces were divided into mounted detachments, and sent to the island’s highland interior where they made frequent patrols to destroy resources and terrify the Singhalese. Villages were burned, crops destroyed and cattle driven away by these military mercenaries. The British quickly realised that local knowledge was the key to success, and one officer reported that the only way to defeat the Kandyans ‘requires the aid of their countrymen’. The British war against the Kingdom of Kandy involved the use of ‘plain terrorism’ and violent reprisals to defeat local guerrilla forces. When difficulties arose in securing Malay recruits from Southeast Asia, British officials briefly considered using Hottentots from the Cape Colony.

In South Africa, the *Corps Bastard Hottentotten* composed of 400 Hottentot (Khoi-Khoin) and Bastards (people of mixed race origins) led by two European officers, was formed in 1781 but disbanded soon afterwards. A second formation, the ‘Pandour Corps’, was established in 1793. They were the precursors to the Cape Regiment, formed by the British in 1806 and later renamed the Cape Mounted Rifles. This unit fought in a number of frontier clashes until disbanded in 1870. After serving with the

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51 Cited in De Silva, *Ceylon*, 186.
52 De Silva, *Ceylon*, 189.
53 Hussainmiya, *Orang Regimen*, 100.
British as they extended their control over most of Southern Africa, Native forces also played important parts in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 to 1902.57

At the Cape, not all settlers were happy with the use of Native forces and settlers’ anxieties were aroused in 1851 when deserters from the Cape Rifles joined other Hottentots in an abortive rebellion.58 At the time, Britain was at war with the ‘Kaffirs’-‘experts in guerilla warfare’.59 Only Native forces that could be trusted were wanted. Settlers in later years held grave fears about the risks of armed African police turning against their White masters. The British continued to use Native Police in southern colonies of Africa for a further century, but colonial authorities took colonists’ concerns seriously, and limited the Mounted Rifles’ powers of arrest, located their barracks on the edges of towns, and ensured that Black troopers and constables only policed other Africans.60 Queensland adopted these restrictions on Native armed forces for the operations of its Native Police.

57 British officials wanted to recruit Africans for the Natal Mounted Police, but ‘the colonists would not hear of it’ although a ‘large troop of Mounted Basuto Guides, armed with Martin-Henry carbines, and known as Durnford’s Horse’ was raised in the 1870s; Donald Morris, *The Washing of the Spears* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1966) 272 & 305.


60 John Brewer, *Black and Blue: Policing in South Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 22-3. There is a rich literature on the complex history of policing in South Africa, ranging from scattered references to the Natal Mounted Police and the Zululand Mounted Police, to the extensive records of the British South Africa Police (including Native Police), and the South African Police. The Bechuanaland Native Police Force, consisting of European officers and African constables, existed from the 1880s to the 1960s. For an introduction and a historical overview, see Brewer, *Black and Blue.*
Indigenous recruits were widely used in other parts of the Empire. Native soldiers in the British army of India were instrumental in the defeat of local rulers and their forces. Native units, including irregular forces led by British officers, were integral parts of the British army in India from the early decades of the nineteenth century. 61 Local magistrates controlled formations of paramilitary police. ‘Irregular Horse’ units were used to suppress ‘disturbances’, and in some parts of the sub-continent, a ‘reign of terror’ against ‘insurgents’ was enforced by these troops. 62 In the subcontinent’s northwest, irregular forces fought for decades against the Pathans and other groups. 63

A preference for the ‘martial races’ meant that Sikhs of the Punjab were recruited for military service from 1812. 64 The first Indian police force, established by the British in 1843, was led by ex-army officers and included a body of ‘special armed police’ used as mounted infantry. In 1847, the East India Company created an auxiliary force, the Northwest Corps of Guides, which was in turn succeeded by the Border Security Corps. This policy of using Native troops was so successful that an armed Sikh brigade ‘for police and general purposes on the Afghanistan/India border’ was raised in 1849. 65 In 1863 New Zealand Governor Sir George Grey asked for two Sikh regiments to fight the Maori, but, because the cost of Indian units was charged to India, the idea was dropped.

for ‘financial reasons’. 66 Sikhs continued to be recruited as soldiers. A number also served as police in the Hong Kong Colonial Police Force (created in 1844); colonial officials used them to replace Chinese recruits whom they regarded as ‘utterly useless and untrustworthy’. 67 The abortive Indian Mutiny of 1857 meant that many Native units were subsequently considered unreliable, yet the British continued to use Indian troops for many decades and relied on them during many colonial campaigns and both World Wars. 68

Events in other parts of the world also had an effect on Queensland, including the widespread reporting of the Indian Mutiny, the political consequences of the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica, and similar events in the Cape Colony. 69 A rebellion at Morant Bay in 1865 was ruthlessly suppressed by Black troops of the First West India Regiment (first established in 1795) and groups of Maroon irregulars. Over 500 people died as a result. Governor Edward J Eyre (a former explorer and administrator in Australia and New Zealand) declared martial law, and defended his condoning of violent suppression. 70 Humanitarian groups, politicians and newspapers in Britain were outraged, and an official inquiry was convened in 1866. When the Hlubi in Natal refused to hand over their weapons to British authorities in 1873, official thoughts immediately turned to

69 As has been noted, news of the killings at Hornetbank reached settlers at the same time as reports on the Indian Mutiny, David Denholm, Some Aspects of Squatting in New South Wales and Queensland, 1847-1864 (Doctoral thesis, Australian National University, 1972), 344 and 347.
Morant Bay, and the way in which the uprising there had been suppressed with ‘unnecessary ferocity’.\textsuperscript{71}

In West Africa, Native soldiers were ‘recruited’ by purchase or capture. Both France and Britain used ‘freed slaves’ of other nations as soldiers. Soldiers from the colonies of Portugal, ‘liberated’ by the British, had to give fourteen years service to the Crown.\textsuperscript{72} British troops located at Sierra Leone and on the Gold Coast (Ghana) included a substantial proportion of convict-soldiers, whose sentences for military crimes were commuted when they ‘volunteered’ for West African duty.\textsuperscript{73} The First and Second West India regiments of ex-slaves served as garrison troops in Africa and the Caribbean.\textsuperscript{74} They fought in British campaigns against the kingdom of Ashanti in 1824 and 1873.\textsuperscript{75} The Sierra Leone Frontier Police, consisting of Africans led by British officers, was founded in 1829, and a corps of African troops was merged with the West India Regiments in the 1840s.\textsuperscript{76}

Native units in Africa often bore the names of commanding officers; for example, Russell’s and Wood’s irregular regiments of militia and police.\textsuperscript{77} Many of the soldiers in these unconventional armed forces were Hausa men from northern Nigeria. Like the

\textsuperscript{72} Philip Curtin, \textit{Disease and Empire}, 17.
\textsuperscript{74} Brian Dyde, \textit{The Empty Sleeve: The Story of the West India Regiments of the British Army} (St Johns, Antigua: Hansib Caribbean, 1997).
\textsuperscript{75} Roger Norman Buckley, \textit{Slaves in Red Coats: The British West India Regiments, 1795-1815} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).
Sikhs and the Gurkhas, the Hausa were labelled a ‘martial race’, and, because military experts saw the Hausa as potential ‘African Sikhs’, they were often used to police other races.78 Glover’s column in the 1873 Ashanti War consisted of Hausa from the Nigeria Armed Police Force (raised in 1862), ex-slaves, and former members of the Lagos Constabulary (founded in 1865).79 The Hausa Armed Police Force, initially formed of freed slaves under British leadership, was reformed as the Gold Coast Constabulary in 1879.80 The Aborigines Protection Society and others condemned the use of Hausa as soldiers in imperial armies as a ‘disease’.81

In the Pacific, colonisers used the strategies that had worked so well in Africa. When New Guinea came under British control in 1888, Fijians ‘who had a natural aptitude for soldiering’ were initially preferred as constables.82 A military force known as the Native Infantry Regiment (later called the Armed Native Constabulary) had existed before 1874 when Britain annexed Fiji and the Fiji Police Force was created. When arrangements were made for a New Guinea Constabulary in 1890, two Fijian non-commissioned officers and ten Melanesian constables from the Solomon Islands, armed with rifles supplied ‘at a very moderate price’ by the Queensland Government, were

chosen. Native police operations continued as an integral part of colonial rule after German New Guinea was captured by Australian troops during the First World War. Further work could be undertaken on this particular colonial police force.

Other European powers used formations of Native troops and Native police in their colonies, especially in Africa. Historian David Killingray notes that ‘European empires in Africa were gained principally by African mercenary armies’. In Angola the Portuguese used ‘Jaga (Imbangala) auxiliary troops’, described as ‘cannibal brigands’ by one administrator, to counter resistance. Settlers had persuaded the government that it would be impossible to maintain the colony without them. The tirailleurs algériens and the tirailleurs sénégalais, formed in the 1850s, played an important role in French colonial expansion. The French allowed a few Africans to pass from the enlisted ranks to the officer class, which was consistent with their policy of turning colonial subjects into French citizens. West African troops were sent to Madagascar in 1828; soldiers from

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84 The most detailed work on the New Guinea Native Police to date is August Kituai, My Gun, My Brother (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998).
Senegal fought in French Guinea during 1838 and Senegalese forces fought in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871.\textsuperscript{89}

In the German Empire, the number of Native troops in colonial armed forces was restricted to levels sufficient for ‘policing’ only.\textsuperscript{90} However, they were really soldiers. Native auxiliary forces under European officers were deployed in most German colonies in Africa and the Pacific: 2500 in German East Africa, 1500 in the Cameroons and 500 in South-West Africa.\textsuperscript{91} The German police force in the Cameroons in 1891 included Hausas, Dahomans and recruits from the Sudan and Togo.\textsuperscript{92} The members of the \textit{Schutztruppen} or ‘protective forces’ in German East Africa were Zulus, Somalis, Sudanese, Swahilis and coast ‘Arabs’.\textsuperscript{93} In German New Guinea, each station and district office raised recruits locally and then exchanged them with other offices in order to reduce the possibility of Native constables having to deal with their own communities.\textsuperscript{94} This Native Police formation existed from 1899 until the German colony was surrendered to Australian military forces in 1914.

In South America, Black soldiers served as part of frontier armies and supervised Indian workers.\textsuperscript{95} Colombian and Peruvian rubber barons employed men from Barbados

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{89} Michael Crowder, \textit{Colonial West Africa} (London: Frank Cass, 1978), 108.
  \item \textsuperscript{90} For further details, see WO Henderson, \textit{The German Colonial Empire 1884-1919} (London: Frank Cass, 1993); and John Noyes, \textit{Colonial Space: Spatiality in the discourse of German South West Africa 1884-1915} (Reading: Harwood, 1992).
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Peter Hempenstall, \textit{Pacific Islanders under German Rule: A Study in the Meaning of Colonial Resistance} (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978), 23.
  \item \textsuperscript{92} VG Kiernan, \textit{Imperialism and its Contradictions} (New York: Routledge, 1995), 81.
  \item \textsuperscript{93} Kiernan, \textit{Imperialism}, 82.
  \item \textsuperscript{95} Mark Burkholder and Lyman Johnson, \textit{Colonial Latin America} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 201.
\end{itemize}
to control their Indian labour force in the early years of the twentieth century. The violence they used and the terror they inflicted on the Putumayo Indians was so extreme it became the subject of an English parliamentary enquiry.\textsuperscript{96} Anthropologist Michael Taussig says the Barbadians were in effect ‘indebted peons’ who were used to ‘hunt down Indians’ and were themselves subject to torture’.\textsuperscript{97} Even worse violence was committed by the ‘muchachos’ (‘guys’ or ‘servants’) or ‘muchachos de confianza’ (‘trusted servants’ or ‘trusted inferiors’), who were armed Indians working for the rubber companies. These men were ‘armed with the weapon of greatest repute, the infamous Winchester rifle’ and were ‘recruited and trained at an early age to bully other Indians into gathering rubber’ – usually Indians ‘from tribes hostile to those to which the boys belonged’.\textsuperscript{98}

As has already been seen with respect to the Cape Colony, Native troops worried as well as served colonisers. New Zealand considered forming a Native Police force in 1845. It was to be led by White officers and organised after the style of the Cape and Ceylon formations as ‘a cheap and effective means of controlling race relations’ in that colony.\textsuperscript{99} In New Zealand, all Maori were declared British subjects after 1842 at the same time that police forces were being organised along paramilitary lines throughout the

\textsuperscript{97} Taussig, \textit{Shamanism}, 43.
\textsuperscript{98} Taussig, \textit{Shamanism}, 47.
\textsuperscript{99} This plan was suggested by Governor Sir George Grey, who wanted to establish a sixty-man all Maori unit, but instead got a mixed race paramilitary force, Richard S Hill, \textit{Policing the Colonial Frontier} Volume One, Part One (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1986), 239. See also Richard S Hill, ‘Maori police personnel and the rangitiratanga discourse’, \textit{Crime and Empire 1840-1940: Criminal justice in local and global context}, edited by Barry Godfrey and Graeme Dunstall (Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005).
Empire. Maori who joined the police forces at isolated frontier outposts did so as a means of retaining their status, rather than as agents of the coloniser’s ‘civilizing’ mission.100 Many European settlers opposed what they saw as a dangerous and irresponsible scheme to place ‘armed Natives’ in positions of power, and that forced an end to the scheme, but the colonial government recruited many Maori in the late 1860s to end rebellion of other Maori.101

A summary account of policing in British North American colonies completes the history of imperial experiments. Canada, like Australia, tried all sorts of police forces. The Canadian Rural Constabulary, raised in 1839 to deal with the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1837, was an Irish-style gendarmerie housed in barracks in ‘an attempt to cut them off from the populace’.102 British army instructors trained police units that were modelled on the mounted rifle units of the American army used in the Indian Wars. The formation had a short life. Black (or ‘Coloured’) soldiers, including men from Sierra Leone, were used to separate rival Irish factions during the building of Ontario’s Welland Canal during the 1840s.103 An unsuccessful experiment in Native policing, using chiefs and influential West Coast Natives as special constables, was conducted in 1861 near

100 Maori constables had very restricted powers and were often seen by other Maori as ‘components of traditional [i.e., Indigenous] struggles’, Richard S Hill, Policing the Colonial Frontier, Volume One, Part Two (Wellington, 1986), 839.
101 A ‘Native Police Ordinance’ was passed in 1847, but settlers resisted the levy, Hill, Policing, Volume One, Part Two, 802, and James Belich, ‘The New Zealand Wars and the Myth of Conquest’ Remembrance of Pacific Pasts, edited by Robert Borofsky (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press), 2000. Small numbers of Maori Constables were retained in remote areas until 1945, Hill, ‘Maori police’.
This force was based on a previous body of volunteers, the ‘Victoria Voltigeurs’, which was largely made up of ‘French-Canadian halfbreeds’ and used to ‘deal with any disturbances between settlers and the local Native population’ from about 1853. Native constables were seen as useful in ‘the assimilation of Indians to Canadian law’.

The Northwest Mounted Police, established in 1873, was to be called the Northwest Mounted Rifles but Canadian Prime Minister Sir John Macdonald decided that ‘Police’ sounded less military. The NWMP was originally intended to be a Native Police force, following the Indian constabulary pattern, composed of Indigenous and mixed blood (Métis) troops commanded by European officers, but the Red River rebellion of 1869-70 forced a change of plans. The name of the formation was later changed to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but the men simply became known as ‘Mounties’.

Indigenous and African American men were used as allies, scouts and soldiers by the American, British, French and Spanish armies in the wars of invasion, the Colonial Wars, and the War of Independence. Like most Indigenous people, American Indians ‘defined their loyalty according to community, not race’, so were not betraying their own tribes when they collaborated with the Europeans. The Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts, which operated against Native tribes in Texas, was formed during the 1870s from the

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descendants of escaped slaves and Native Americans from Florida and Mexico. The pay, guns and opportunity to strike at traditional enemies provided incentives for military service; so too was the opportunity for young men to escape from life in a disintegrating world and become warriors again. In the United States, a Choctaw light horse police operated during the 1820s, and a company of light horse consisting of Cherokee troopers was raised in 1844. A United States Indian Police, consisting of troopers from a number of Indigenous nations, was organised at Muskogee, Oklahoma in 1880. As one historian notes, tribal police may have easily seen themselves as ‘the last of the warriors’. 

American armed forces of the nineteenth century, particularly in the South and the West, included a few units of African-American soldiers, some mounted. During the Civil War, 180,000 Black soldiers, organised in Native Guard, Colored Volunteer, Black Brigade and regular units, served in the Union army. Although soldiers rather than police, the parallels with the Native Police are important. Numbers of African-

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110 See further discussion of the recruiting process in Chapter 3.
113 Wilcomb Washburn, Red Man’s Land/White Man’s Law, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971); 171.
Americans, and some Native Americans, also served with the Confederate armies.\textsuperscript{116}

This included rival groups of Cherokee who fought for the Union and the Confederate armies.\textsuperscript{117} Regiments of African Americans, many of them freed slaves, served in the United States Cavalry during the Indian Wars and were known as ‘Buffalo Soldiers’.\textsuperscript{118}

Useful comparisons can be made between the Native Police of Queensland and the United States Cavalry.

After this survey of comparable formations, we now turn to look at the situation in Queensland. As we have seen, the use of Native soldiers and police in colonial situations was a well-established practice by the time the Native Police force of Queensland was created. And the Queensland force adopted many of the elements found in forces elsewhere. These include the concept of ‘divide and rule’, where Indigenous formations policed other colonised peoples, and the widespread use of ex-slaves or ex-convicts. Men from certain groups, identified by colonisers as ‘martial races’, were


\textsuperscript{117} Edward Everett Dale and Gaston Litton, \textit{Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as told in the Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family} (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939).

preferred.\textsuperscript{119} However, the arming of Natives to control others was never popular with settler-colonists, and restrictions were always placed on their powers. Colonists feared an uprising of armed Natives.

\textbf{‘Native Police in Australia’}

Given the universal recourse to Indigenous manpower in the armies and police forces of colonising powers, it is unremarkable that Indigenous recruits served in other parts of Australia. The best known is the Victorian Corps, which began at Port Phillip in 1837. Marie Fels concluded that the history of this formation was ‘basically a story of co-operation’ and its activities were ‘quite distant from what is termed murderous’.\textsuperscript{120} In truth, this force killed many Aboriginal people. There has been a lengthy debate about the general level of settler-Aboriginal violence in Victoria. Older studies by Andrew Markus and Beverley Nance, along with more recent work by PD Gardner, Richard Broome and Ian Clark, leave little doubt about the role of this force in killing Aborigines to clear the way for European occupation.\textsuperscript{121} The conclusions that Fels reached cannot be applied to

the Queensland force. As Jan Kociumbas argues, the approach used by Marie Fels, with an emphasis on ‘intelligent parasitism’ could really only be called a ‘positive Aboriginal choice’ if each trooper was fully informed of the consequences of his actions. By focusing on the ‘bonds of affection’ instead of the violence, Fels downplays the negative aspects of the Victorian Native Police Corps.

In South Australia twelve Aboriginal troopers were recruited in 1852 but none returned after being granted leave, and the police engaged local trackers ‘as needed’ instead. In Adelaide in 1884, a deputation of Northern Territory residents sought the creation of a ‘Black Police Force on the same lines as the Queensland force’. This occurred in the immediate aftermath of the Daly River copper mine murders in which Aborigines killed three miners and seriously wounded another on 3 September. The government agreed to the formation of such a force and within a matter of weeks six Aboriginal troopers were recruited from Central Australia for service in the Top End under the control of two European officers. They arrived in Palmerston (now Darwin) in January 1885 and were stationed at the Roper River. A second unit was then formed, for service in Central Australia. Their official role, as set out in the South Australian


124 ‘Deputation of Residents’ in the South Australian Register (10 September 1884: 7).
Government Gazette, was to ‘protect the settlers from the outrages of the Natives’. The Top End unit was disbanded in the latter part of 1886. In 1891, Constable William Willshire, the officer in charge of the southern unit, was tried for murder but acquitted. Further allegations of troopers shooting Aboriginals in cold blood were made in 1898 and shortly afterwards the remaining Native Police units appear to have been disbanded.

Work by Peter Donovan, Richard Kimber, Gordon Reid, Peter Read, Bill Wilson and Tony Roberts have detailed the history of this small but violent frontier force, which killed a great many Aboriginal people. Bill Wilson notes that Fels’ denial that Native Police engaged in ‘wholesale slaughter’ would not apply in the Northern Territory, where ‘a bankrupt policy led to Native police engaging in outright warfare to secure peace on the frontier, a peace bought with death and violence’.

Thirty-nine Aboriginal men were employed as trackers and guides by the West Australian police in 1872. In 1893, northern graziers in the Legislative Assembly called for a force of Native troopers to be stationed in the Kimberley district.

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125 South Australian Government Gazette (17 September 1885:831).
128 Wilson, A Force Apart, 328.
129 Mollie Bentley, Grandfather was a Policeman (Perth: Hesperian Press, 1993), 40.
130 Western Australia Parliamentary Debates 5 (1893: 1049).
member for East Kimberley, Francis Connor, said ‘it is simply a question of whether the Natives are to have the country or the whites’. Premier Sir John Forrest disagreed:

> I do not think anyone in this House would approve of a lot of armed Native trackers going through the country shooting Natives indiscriminately, wherever they found them – men, women and children.\(^\text{131}\)

Forrest continued, ‘we know what Native trackers are. [T]he first idea of these Natives is to shoot all the blackfellows who are not of their own country’.\(^\text{132}\) The subject of Native Police for Western Australia surfaced again in 1916. A senior police officer said, with regard to the alleged problems of arresting Aboriginal ‘offenders’, that:

> I have heard it said that in the early days of Queensland the Native police there had a special and most effective way of overcoming the difficulty [of language], but I am afraid that the tactics employed by them to that end would hardly find favour here.\(^\text{133}\)

Other colonies eventually mentioned the Queensland force both as a model and as an example of ‘over-zealous’ policing. To summarise, the Native Police had a conflicted status in Australian discourses over policing. As the brief account above of similar formations in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India and the Cape Colony (South Africa) demonstrates, Queensland’s own Native Police was modelled on previous formations of Indigenous armed forces. Similar groups were raised in the West Indies, Africa and North

\(^\text{131}\) *Western Australia Parliamentary Debates* 5 (1893: 1064).
\(^\text{132}\) *Western Australia Parliamentary Debates* 5 (1893: 1064).
\(^\text{133}\) Inspector Sillenger to Police Commissioner, 29 March 1916, Western Australia Public Records Office, ACC 430.
America. Some British men appointed to the Native Police force between 1848 and 1859 had been military officers in other colonies, and had seen action against, and with, Native forces. The use of armed Indigenous formations was, at the time of Queensland’s inception, a standard colonial practice embraced by the first Governor as a core function of the new colonial government. To establish exactly how such a formation came into existence in Queensland, I have to offer a short account of selected episodes in the history of policing in New South Wales.

Native Police in New South Wales

The New South Wales Mounted Police section, formed from an earlier ‘Horse Patrol’ by Governor Brisbane in 1826, initially consisted of soldiers seconded from the various infantry regiments posted at Sydney. The New South Wales Mounted Police wore military-style uniforms of Black trousers and jackets – a uniform described as ‘similar in every respect to the 18th Light Dragoon Regiment’. They continued to be paid by the army and, importantly, retained their military status. The government stationed detachments of the force at Bathurst and Newcastle in 1829 to control

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134 The Mounted Police were described by one Sydney newspaper as ‘the germ and basis of all our future military institutions’, cited in Peter Stanley, Australia: Two Centuries of War and Peace (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1988), 75.
Aboriginal ‘depredations’. The relations between Indigenous groups and these Mounted Police usually turned violent. The Mounted Police probably killed about one hundred Aboriginal people in 1836, and at least a further sixty-five were shot dead in 1838. As David Neal notes, the Mounted Police exerted the Crown’s monopoly over armed force on the frontier while maintaining the appearance of law. In other words, while described as a police force upholding the rule of law, the force actually resembled an army unit actively engaged with an enemy.

According to Roger Milliss, the Mounted Police Force’s most ‘notorious’ commander was Major James Nunn. After arriving at Sydney in July 1837 with the 80th Regiment, Nunn was appointed Commandant of the Mounted Police in September 1837. In January 1838 possibly up to three hundred Aboriginal people were killed at Waterloo Creek by Mounted Police under Nunn’s command. In the same year, a massacre of Aboriginal people at Myall Creek by stockmen resulted in the public learning about frontier massacres and eventually, for the first time, the hanging of White men for the killing of Blacks. The Mounted Police apprehended the Myall Creek

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139 Neal, *Rule of Law*, 154
murderers, because it was the duty of the force. The action conformed to an image of police neutrality in service of the Crown and civilisation.

The New South Wales Mounted Police operated in the central parts of the colony, and the government created another force for the expanding northern districts – the Native Police of New South Wales. When Queensland ‘inherited’ the Native Police upon Separation in 1859, the force had existed for ten years. The first Commandant of the (New South Wales) formation, Frederick Walker, had already conducted similar operations in that colony’s western districts before his appointment in 1848. It must be stressed that Walker received his appointment because of his connections with colonial gentry and his previous experience in crushing Aboriginal resistance. Widely referred to as ‘Filibuster’ Walker, he was dismissed in 1855. In addition to its well-known political context, ‘filibuster’ also has a darker meaning. The Macquarie and Oxford dictionaries define it as ‘an irregular military adventurer’, ‘to act as a freebooter, buccaneer, or irregular military adventurer’, ‘one who engages in unauthorised warfare against [a] foreign State’. As Richard Slotkin, an American historian, explains, ‘Filibusters were private military expeditions’. Walker was at one time superintendent on grazier William Wentworth’s ‘Tala’ station on the Murrumbidgee River from 1845 to

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143 The first troopers in the Native Police were recruited in the Murray and Murrumbidgee districts of southern New South Wales, LE Skinner, Police of the Pastoral Frontier (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1975).

144 For details of Walker’s previous exploits, see Patrick Collins, Goodbye Bussamarai: the Mandandanji Land War, Southern Queensland 1842-1852 (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2002), 48-51. Collins confuses Frederick’s brother Robert, who also served in the Native Police, with frontiersman Richard Walker; see 35, 180 & 194. Others believed Frederick and Robert were unrelated. For instance, see David Denholm, Some Aspects of Squatting in New South Wales and Queensland, 1847-1864 (Doctoral thesis, Australian National University, 1972), 338.

References to Walker’s presence in the Darling River area, when squatter Edmund Morey called for assistance to ‘chasten the local tribes’, alerts us to his frontier experience. Walker took with him two Aboriginal men from the Murrumbidgee who were ‘spoiling for a fight against an alien tribe’.

For the most part, the settlers who colonised Australia did not recognise any form of Indigenous Sovereignty and regarded Indigenous people as ‘sub-human’. Most saw Aboriginal resistance as an ‘outrage’ against civilised values and British law. As far as the colonists were concerned, the only way to deal with ‘collisions’ and ‘depredation’ was by using overwhelming force against what they saw as the enemy. Walker’s small band of Native Police at Callandoon near Goondiwindi was, as Mark Copland notes, a pilot scheme for the policing of the colony.

It is important to remember that the Native Police, as formed in 1848, originated from a well-established history of violence against Aboriginal people in older colonies. As in other colonies, the ‘dangers’ of arming Indigenous men was constantly reiterated in politics and in the press. A complicated man, Walker voiced controversial views about the place of Aborigines in Australia. Not only did he favour arming a Native Police, he felt squatters should allow Aborigines to stay on stations. There was animated discussion

146 General Correspondence Records of the Native Police (1848-57), NMP/J1. WC (William) Wentworth, the champion of the squatters, was antagonistic to ‘the Blacks’, and his 1849 speech ‘the civilized people had come in, and the savage must go back’ was cheered by the Legislature of New South Wales, Sydney Morning Herald (29 June 1849).
147 Bobbie Hardy, Lament of the Barkindji (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), 77.
148 Collins, Goodbye Bussamarai. Walker ‘answered a call’ in the 1840s from pioneer Edmund Morey for assistance in ‘chastening’ the local tribes; 48-49.
150 For further discussion of media and political attitudes to Walker, see Denis Cryle, The Press in Colonial Queensland, (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1989).
over his preference for a supposed policy of encouraging squatters to ‘let in’ Aboriginal people who could be effectively controlled.\textsuperscript{151}

Walker and his Native troopers gained a reputation for brutality towards Aborigines in southern Queensland, but his was only one part of the violence on this colonial frontier. It was common knowledge on the frontier that squatters killed Aborigines before the arrival of the Native Police. For example, in 1853 Walker's force was criticised in a letter to the \textit{Moreton Bay Courier} by a man named James Marks. Walker responded, in a letter to the Colonial Secretary, that Marks was ‘an individual whose atrocities on the MacIntyre first induced His Excellency to command me to raise the Native Police’\textsuperscript{152}. The \textit{Moreton Bay Courier} actively supported the force’s deployment, arguing that the Native Police would ‘afford a more probable chance of repressing aboriginal violence than any plan hitherto proposed’.\textsuperscript{153}

More telling is the correspondence between the New South Wales Colonial Secretary and Walker. In October 1848, before the force arrived at the Macintyre, squatter E.D. Thomson wrote to the Colonial Secretary about ‘certain murders having been recently perpetrated by the whites on the Aborigines at the MacIntyre River’.\textsuperscript{154} There is no evidence, however, of Walker or his Native Police attempting to apprehend anyone for these alleged murders. The New South Wales Native Police force was, on the available evidence, an armed instrument of a colonial government. Like the Victorian

\textsuperscript{151} Copland, ‘The Native Police at Callandoon’.
\textsuperscript{152} Walker to Colonial Secretary, 31 December 1853, NMP B/5.
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Moreton Bay Courier} (1 July 1848).
\textsuperscript{154} Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 4 October 1848, New South Wales State Archives, 4/3860, reel 2818. See also an important recent revision on Walker by Mark Copland, ‘The Native Police at Callandoon’.
Corps, its purpose was the protection of squatters’ lives and property in the aftermath of resistance by Aboriginal people to the taking of their traditional land.

‘The language of oppression’

The historical accounts of policing and of colonial military units comprised of Indigenous troops help to contextualise the Native Police; however, another branch of historical inquiry is also helpful, namely studies of the ideology or language of displacement and violence. A complete language of colonisation, dispossession and conquest evolved in the colonies, and Queensland was no exception. The denial of human rights extended to the use of derogatory terms for Aboriginal people; men were ‘boys’, women were ‘gins’ and children were ‘picaninnies’. ‘Myalls, and niggers, and gins and piccaninnies seem further removed from humanity’. This ‘linguistic coding’ caused problems for later historians and writers, who sometimes incorrectly assumed that the word ‘boy’ signified a child. For example, some thought that the killing of a young man of twenty-two referred to a boy of eight.

Indigenous resistance was ‘an outrage’ and colonial punitive expeditions justified as necessary steps in the colonial project. This use of coded terms extended further. The word ‘disperse’ became a euphemism for the killing of Aboriginal people. Disperse;

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157 See the discussion on the age of a young man named Jemmy on page 68.
158 The term ‘Outrages’, or ‘attacks on people and animals’, was brought from Great Britain, see Palmer, *Police and Protest*, 45.
dispersal and dispersion had frequent use in the official correspondence about the police. Some writers mentioned frontier linguistic terms. One contributor to Edward Curr’s study of Aboriginal languages described as ‘interesting to note the new signification of the verb to disperse: that when a Black girl of fifteen is shot down she is said to be dispersed’.¹⁵⁹ Some officials and newspaper correspondents took this use of euphemistic language to extremes. For example, a news item was published stating ‘we trust that these sable brethren will receive a lesson likely to endure amongst the archives of their tribe’.¹⁶⁰ The term ‘sable’, to describe Aboriginal people, was used very occasionally in the nineteenth century. Another newspaper story described one Native Police ‘dispersal’, supposedly in the words of an officer. ‘I am glad to say they will not run a white man (sic) again in this sublunary orb’.¹⁶¹ The writer, evidently a literary ‘type’, was happy to see Aboriginal lives terminated.

The term ‘Disperse’ gained a specific legal meaning with the introduction of the Riot Act in Britain during the Eighteen-century, although it was probably used more frequently during the early part of the nineteenth century.¹⁶² When workers and peasants resisted authority, government officials and soldiers called on them to ‘disperse’ at once.¹⁶³ Under this law, penalties were introduced for any group of more than twelve persons who refused to disperse within an hour of a magistrate’s direction.¹⁶⁴ Local

¹⁶³ George I, Statute 2, 1714
magistrates were granted the power to order soldiers to fire upon those who failed to
‘disperse’ when so ordered. To invoke the Act’s provisions, magistrates had to ‘read the
*Riot Act* to the mob’, declaring:

> Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons, being
> assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their
> habitations, or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the act made
> in the first year of King George, for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies.
> God save the King.\(^{165}\)

The recourse to troops was politically dangerous, and thus there was a growing support
for some new agency that could enforce order without stabbing, slashing, or shooting
people. In other words, support for a police force.

The first use of the term ‘dispersal’ in connection with Aboriginal people in
Australia was made in the very early years of the first British outpost at Sydney. Military
units were sent to ‘disperse’ Natives in various districts during the first decades of the
Nineteenth century, culminating in the declaration of Martial Law in the Bathurst district
during 1824.\(^{166}\) An acceptance of racial violence on the frontier was shared by many –
perhaps most – colonists, from the highest officials to the poorest labourers. The Native
Police came into being within this violent context. Calls for action and aggressive
‘punishment’ by the Native Police generally increased after colonial newspapers reported
that Indigenous people had allegedly committed ‘atrocities’, ‘depredations’ and
‘outrages’, or after colonists petitioned the government to stop Aborigines raiding

\(^{165}\) *George I, Statute* 2, 1714

stations. See, for example, a letter from the Colonial Secretary to a grazier who reported ‘an aggression by the Natives’ at his station on the Maranoa River.

It is with extreme regret that this intelligence has been received and I am to assure you that prompt measures will be adopted for punishing the aggressors and restoring tranquility and confidence among your own people and the residents in the outlying portions of the Maranoa district. Instructions have already been sent to the Headquarters of the 3rd Division of Native Police directing the immediate despatch of a proper force to the scene of the outrage and the complete dispersion of the Natives.167

It is possible to cite many instances when Aboriginal resistance provoked colonisers’ anxieties, to embark on retribution, and to enlist the Native Police in a campaign of vengeance that simultaneously served to pacify the land for further exploitation. There is a danger of underestimating the role of fear and anxiety in the contact zones. If Aboriginal resistance was persistent, unpredictable, occasionally murderous, then ‘panic’ does not adequately describe the situation.168 Nevertheless, one gains the impression that at certain times, colonists were very afraid of being overwhelmed by Aborigines. Settlers abandoned the North Queensland mining township of Gilberton in 1873.169 According to one colonial official, most of the Chinese left the township owing to ‘the impunity with which the blacks rob and murder them’.170

167 Colonial Secretary to Edward Moray, 4 August 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/R3/62/473, author’s underlining.
168 According to one pioneer grazier, workers ‘cried’ “Wild Blacks” to ‘prevent other men from coming out’ and reducing their ‘high wages’, Mary A McManus, Reminiscences of the Early Settlement of the Maranoa District (Charleville, 1969), 5.
169 Colin Hooper, Angor to Zillmanton: stories of North Queensland’s deserted towns (Brisbane, 1995), 59.
170 Dalrymple to Colonial Secretary, 24 January 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A183/73/893 and Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings 2 (1874).
Two notorious examples will serve to show how fear, racism, and vengeance pulled the Native Police into acts of violence. Local squatters and the Native Police organised punitive expeditions after Aborigines killed eleven Europeans at Hornetbank station in the Upper Dawson district in October 1857. ‘The massacre aroused horror throughout the colony’ says one historian.171 Grazier George Serocold wrote to his brother in England after Hornetbank, saying he and a group of colonists ‘killed every grown up black’ they found for 100 miles.172 The number killed by the Native Police is unknown, but was large.173 When news of the killings at Cullin-la-Ringo in October 1861 reached Brisbane, Colonial Secretary Robert Herbert personally ordered all available detachments of Native Police into the area.

The Government feels deep sympathy for those who have suffered and who are endangered by the cold blooded and unprovoked hostility of the Natives; and will use every effort to protect life and property against their attacks.174

Colonists justified their actions with elaborate rationalisations that invoked God, assumptions of European superiority, and notions of how to discipline children and Blacks. In 1861, a correspondent writing in the *Darling Downs Gazette* criticised the ‘liberal agitation’ of a Brisbane newspaper against the Native Police.

171 JE Murphy, ‘11 Settlers died in Queensland station massacre’, *Courier Mail* (26 October 1957: 2).
174 Colonial Secretary to Mayor of Rockhampton, 12 November 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/R2/61/895, emphasis added.
The country does not belong to the black man; it is God’s country. If he put the black man first upon the land, it must also be allowed it is through His providence that the white man has come to dispossess that black man of that country which the latter has failed to apply to the purposes of its designed utility. We concur with the Courier that the occupation of the country must be held by main force; but we disagree with that contemporary, when he contends that the pastoral pioneers should be allowed to fight it out single handed with the blacks, unaided by Government police protection. In occupying the country, it is necessary to subjugate the blacks, and the most merciful way of doing this, in the long run, is to treat them with severity at first. If they attempt to massacre the whites, or to wage war against us, they must be shot down, and only when this is done promptly, and effectually, can they be trusted.\textsuperscript{175}

This justification for colonisation, and for the methods used to achieve it, was a perennial theme in Queensland and in other parts of Australia, as Eden’s comments at the beginning of this chapter show.\textsuperscript{176} Many newspaper editorials and letters claimed that settlers had no choice except to ‘exterminate’ Aboriginal people in order to hold and improve the country.\textsuperscript{177}

\textsuperscript{175} \textit{Darling Downs Gazette} (21 November 1861: 3).
\textsuperscript{176} See, for example, Henry Reynolds, ‘Violence, the Aboriginals and the Australian Historian’, \textit{Meanjin} 31 (1972: 471-77); Richard Broome, ‘The Struggle for Australia: Aboriginal-European Warfare, 1770-1930’, \textit{Australia: Two Centuries of War and Peace}, edited by Michael McKernan and Margaret Browne (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1988); and Osterhammel, \textit{Colonialism}.
\textsuperscript{177} Examples include, ‘a war of extermination is the only policy to pursue, the alternative being an abandonment of the country, which no sane man will advocate for an instant’, \textit{The Queenslander} (31 March 1866: 7); a letter from ‘Birraree’ saying there were two courses open ‘either to abandon our property, or to fight it out to the bitter end in a war of wholesale extermination’, \textit{The Queenslander} (5 June 1880: 722-3); and an article by Archibald Meston stating:

The pioneer squatters knew nothing of the blacks’ tribal laws and boundaries, and cared less. If a sheep or a bullock was killed the valuable animal had to be avenged in the blood of the nearest blacks. War once begun, continued and spread with white settlement from Point Danger to the Gulf of Carpentaria. Squatters at last were forced to shoot the blacks or abandon their runs and all they possessed.
Making frontier history

A realistic approach to frontier history involves the recognition that Black and White histories in Queensland are intertwined, highly fluid, and often violent. Not all settlers were antagonistic towards Indigenous people, and the true extent of the violence is ultimately unknowable. Are the violent episodes we know about only the ‘tip of the iceberg’? Even if they were not, enough is now known about violent acts and the casual attitudes of White hatred and cheap regard for life to know that there is a terrible context for the violence of the Native Police.

Australian history until recently betrayed a triumphalist approach to colonisation. For example, the widely quoted writings of Hudson Fysh, Sir Raphael Cilento, W Ross Johnston, Anne Allingham and others are based on ‘triumph’ over nature and British ‘conquering’ of Australian lands. This triumphalist approach carried over into the historical treatment of the Native Police. Existing histories of the police are useful as initial points of study but generally uncritical. Most, if not all, are based on incomplete research, wrong assumptions or inaccurate secondary texts. There is a reliance on several key documents, for example the Report of the 1861 Select Committee into the Native Police.

It was impossible that the two races could exist and flourish together’, ‘Queensland Aboriginal Missions’, The Queenslander (4 October 1890: 654-5).

Police; and an ignorance of others. No work cites the crucial 1866 Native Police Rules and Regulations in the *Queensland Government Gazette*.

The most commonly cited works on the Native Police are Les Skinner’s *Police of the Pastoral Frontier*, Henry Reynolds’s *With The White People*, and Bill Rosser’s *Up Rode The Troopers*. Of these, Reynolds is the most important because, as John Connor notes, of the number of books he has written, intended for ‘both general and academic audiences’. Skinner’s book covers the history of the force from 1848 to 1859, but does not deal with the Native Police under Queensland control. It is therefore of very limited use to anyone examining the Queensland force. There is another issue to consider as well. Skinner is criticised by Copland for neglecting to mention ‘Walker’s use of the term annihilate’ in his reports. Historians who skirt around the topic of violence with regard to the Native Police do not really help us to come to terms with our colonial history. Reynolds uses the Native Police in his book as an instance of his wider theme about Aboriginal co-operation, but does not discuss the force in detail. Rosser combined oral history with some archival research, but his book doesn’t cover the whole history of the Native Police. The only published history of the Queensland Police, Ross Johnston’s *The

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181 Connor, *Frontier Wars*, ix.


Long Blue Line, contains one brief chapter on the Native Police and thirty-two on the ‘ordinary Police’.\textsuperscript{184}

Violence and terror are integral parts of the colonisation process. As we know, historians and writers, generally, would rather applaud the achievements of the ‘pioneers’ than deal with the distress and loss that is the Indigenous experience of colonialism. Some historians have drawn connections between colonialism, terror, and the relationships of power and knowledge, but more work on this critical nexus is needed.\textsuperscript{185} The literature to date fails to adequately assess the relationship between the force and the rest of the Queensland Police. It also fails to come to terms with the oddness of the force.

The Native Police was not purely a police force, but rather a military formation of ‘irregular light cavalry’, which was distinguished by the use of extreme violence.\textsuperscript{186} One of the most useful ways to describe the status of the Native Police is suggested by historian Peter Hempenstall in his analysis of a similar force in German New Guinea. He describes the Native Police in that colony as ‘soldier-police’, and this synthesis appears to come closest to the organisation and activities of the Native Police.\textsuperscript{187} This way of looking at the force is similar to Clive Emsley’s ‘state-military police’ who were armed, lived in separate barracks, operated under central control, and were more like soldiers

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\textsuperscript{184} W Ross Johnston, \textit{The Long Blue Line} (Brisbane: Boolarong, 1992).
\textsuperscript{186} According to one newspaper, light cavalry were used to ‘prevent all possibility of a surprise’ and to ‘keep the enemy at a proper distance’, \textit{Illustrated London News} (23 December 1854: 678). An editorial in 1861 described the Native Police as ‘Our Ethiopian Cavalry’, \textit{Moreton Bay Courier} (16 April 1861).
\textsuperscript{187} Hempenstall, \textit{Pacific Islanders under German Rule}, 63.
\end{flushright}
than police.\textsuperscript{188} The Native Police needs to be dealt with in terms of police history, military history, empire history, and a history of violence in Australian colonisation.

\textbf{‘Police protection’}

The Native Police are part of the history of policing in Australia, and the history of the force reveals much about the development of ‘lawful violence’ in the southern continent. As the colonial frontier moved northwards and westwards from the southeast corner of what became Queensland, the Native Police rode at the vanguard of expansion. Detachments of Aboriginal troopers led by European officers patrolled newly occupied pastoral districts, responded to calls for ‘police protection’ from settlers, and made districts ‘quiet’. The object of colonisation was the acquisition of land, minerals, timber, and other resources, and in Queensland, the Native Police was an essential instrument of government policy in achieving this aim.\textsuperscript{189} ‘There was a direct link between the legal recognition of the land grab by squatters and the development of specific forms of policing’.\textsuperscript{190}

The tactics used by the Native Police were typical under the rules of frontier colonialism. Signs of resistance were usually met with immediate and violent ‘punitive measures’, although sometimes, in other parts of Empire, prudent retreat and negotiation

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\textsuperscript{190} Chris Cuneen, \textit{Conflict, Politics and Crime: Aboriginal Communities and the Police} (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001), 47.
\end{flushleft}
were chosen instead. By using the advantages of the colonisers, namely technology, mobility and communication, the force enjoyed an enormous advantage when attacking Aboriginal people. It readily imposed a regime of terror, confusion and suffering on them. The use of horses and firearms gave the detachments a clear advantage in the field. Efficient postal and telegraphic systems allowed the authorities in Brisbane to quickly gather news and send orders. Horses (and horse food) were always problems for police, but regular subsidised steamer services helped the government to remotely deploy the Native Police rapidly and effectively against any Indigenous resistance. While many historians have noted the use of firearms and horses, not all have commented on the importance of technology at the frontier. Orders were sent to detachments, and reports transmitted back to Brisbane, via the postal and telegraphic systems. Postal services, operating before Separation, allowed orders and reports to be transmitted before telegraph lines opened. The first telegraph line in Queensland, from Brisbane to Ipswich, was opened in 1861.\textsuperscript{191} Communication and transportation systems were critical factors in the operations of the Native Police. Contextual factors such as technology have to be considered before an assessment of the force’s history can be attempted.

The Native Police have not gone unnoticed. We have mentioned the four most commonly cited works, but many other books either focus on the Native Police or incorporate it into a history of colonisation. Worth mentioning, in chronological order, are Arthur Vogan, \textit{The Black Police: a story of modern Australia} (1890); Edward


Even the best works leave room for major reassessment, the objective of this thesis. All works on the Native Police to date either approach the subject superficially, and fail to recognise important transitions in the force; or focus on a single geographic area or period of time, and miss the broader aspects of the force’s history. For example, there were significant differences between the Native Police in the southern parts of Queensland during the 1860s and activities in northern districts during the 1890s, which have been overlooked. Far too many historians have used the report from the Queensland Parliament’s 1861 Select Committee into the Native Police as representative of the force’s entire history. None of the officers who gave evidence at the Select Committee hearings were still employed after the 1870s. By the 1890s, the Native Police were seen as ‘the friends of the Blacks’, rather than as their enemy.\(^{193}\)

Awareness of the force’s activities appeared to have largely disappeared during the early decades of the twentieth century, but re-emerged before the Second World War. Journalists and amateur historians began submitting articles on the Native Police to

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\(^{193}\) See Chapter 4 for further detail.
popular magazines during the 1930s, and many of these were subsequently published. Much of what has been written since relies too heavily on the writings of a small group of men intent on praising the force’s record.\textsuperscript{194} Hearsay became accepted as facts, and myths assumed importance as historians largely ignored Australia’s record of racial violence during the colonial era.

There has been some good revisionist work on local and regional history in recent years, which has illuminated specific episodes, and these are noted throughout this thesis.\textsuperscript{195} However, far too much writing on the Native Police has been constructed from tainted sources and hearsay. The authors of popular histories of regions and detailed accounts of frontier incidents have often relied on ‘recycled’ inaccurate evidence, which has sometimes led to myths being widely accepted as truth. An example of a chain of errors concerns a young Aboriginal man’s death in Central Queensland during 1876. It demands attention because of apparent discrepancies in the claims about his age. Jemmy died after being beaten by Sub Inspector Frederick Wheeler and his detachment at Banchory station near Clermont.\textsuperscript{196} Journalists, beginning with Clem Lack in 1964, said he was ‘no older than ten or eleven’, and this has been accepted by most writers and historians as accurate.\textsuperscript{197} In fact Jemmy was a man in his early twenties, but only one

\textsuperscript{194} The main writers on the Native Police until 1960 were journalists Clem Lack and JE Murphy, novelist Henry Lamond, and popular historians Glenville Pike and Harry Perry. See for example John Mulvaney, \textit{Encounters In Place} (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1989); Bruce Breslin, \textit{Exterminate With Pride: Aboriginal-European Relations in the Townsville-Bowen Region to 1869} (Townsville: James Cook University, 1992); Geof Genever, \textit{Failure of Justice: the story of the Irvinebank Massacre} (Eacham: Eacham Historical Society, 1997); Pamela Lukin Watson, \textit{Frontier Lands & Pioneer Legends} (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1998); and Elder, \textit{Blood on the Wattle}.

\textsuperscript{195} Supreme Court Records, SCT/CG7/372.

\textsuperscript{196} Jemmy was first described as ‘a strange Native boy, no older than ten or eleven’, Clem Lack and Harry Stafford, \textit{The Rifle and The Spear} (Brisbane: Fortitude Press, 1964), 132;
historian, Geof Genever, got this simple fact right.\textsuperscript{198} He looked at the archival records of this incident while others apparently relied on flawed published works.\textsuperscript{199}

However, the greatest error of all does not relate to an event, but to a false notion about archival records that deal with the force. For over fifty years, this absence has justified assumptions, inaccuracies and mistakes. One reason given for the absence of a comprehensive history of the Native Police has been the alleged ‘non-existence’ of records pertaining to the force.\textsuperscript{200} Historians and writers have claimed that archival records in Queensland have been destroyed, removed, defaced or ‘lost’ in attempts to ‘cover up’ the force’s record of violence against Aboriginal people.

Some years ago I wanted to write a book dealing with the Native Mounted Police. I went to the Police [but] one high official told me the records had been lost; another told me they had been destroyed by fire. I know Police don’t lose records or destroy them. I don’t know yet if those were polite snubs or diplomatic lies. I also knew, such is the petty conceit of some men in high places, the true records weren’t wanted.\textsuperscript{201}


\textsuperscript{198} Inquest into death of Jemmy at Banchory, SCT/CG7/372.
\textsuperscript{200} Henry Lamond, ‘Native Mounted Police’, Walkabout 15, 11 (1949), 31-32; Evans et al, Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, 61; Rosser, Up Rode the Troopers, 7; Loos, Invasion and Resistance, 255.
Lamond was not the only writer to complain about alleged ‘cover-ups’. Veronica Brady, author Judith Wright’s biographer, claimed that Wright encountered difficulties with records during the writing of her account of frontier conflict. ‘Letters and documents to do with atrocities against the Aborigines had been removed and mutilated. Pages had been torn out and there were large gaps in the records’, and ‘not only libraries, but whole institutions, are involved in suggestio veri and suggestio falsi’. There is no reference in *The Cry for the Dead* to these discoveries.\(^{202}\) According to Noel Loos, ‘determined efforts to locate these records have been unsuccessful’.\(^{203}\) Henry Reynolds said ‘very few records of the Native Police have survived’.\(^{204}\) Most recently, Alison Palmer, quoting Mulvaney, Reynolds and Loos, claims ‘the Native Police Corps files are missing from the historical archives’. These repeated assertions helped cement the image of Native Police as a secretive organisation.\(^{205}\) Writer Patrick Collins claims (without proof) that records were destroyed to ‘cover up’ the activities of the Native Police.\(^{206}\) Some New South Wales inquest records were pulped simply because no one valued them. Apparently, the official destruction of these records took place during the twentieth century.\(^{207}\)

Additionally, it must be emphasised that this force operated far from the capital and its white officers were rarely men of a bureaucratic temperament. They disliked writing.

Yet, vast amounts of historical material, allowing us to gain a good understanding of the activities of the Native Police, are held in the Queensland State Archives. Records

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\(^{203}\) Loos, *Invasion and Resistance*, 255.

\(^{204}\) Henry Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain: The question of genocide in Australia’s history* (Melbourne: Viking, 2001), 102


\(^{206}\) Collins, *Goodbye Bussamarai*, xviii.

\(^{207}\) For a useful discussion on ‘lost records’, see Tom Griffiths, ‘The Frontier Fallen’.
about the Native Police can be found under a wide range of provenances, including the Colonial Secretary’s office, the Commissioner of Police, the Justice Department, and others. Records relating to the Native Police in Queensland have been located in every branch of colonial government, from the Executive Council and the Governors’ Despatches to the Colonial Storekeeper and the Department of Works. Even the Colonial Architect’s files contain references to the force. All that was needed, to uncover this wealth of historical detail, was a considerable commitment of time and a systematic approach to the records. How to process the huge body of historical material, without descending into an antiquarian slant, was the real problem. I am especially mindful of Peter Sack’s warning, in his study of German New Guinea, that conventional narrative history is not a realistic tool to account for colonial history. His concept of ‘phantom history’ using administrative records to reveal structural features and quantitative details is a useful method of approaching Native Police history.  

What was the nature of the records collected by government departments? The main source of Native Police records in each agency reflects that agency’s part in the constitution of colonial law and government. The Executive Council files demonstrate the evolution of government policy, and the machinery of control over all branches of the colonial authorities. For instance, the Executive Council approved appointments, dismissals, promotions, retirements, and reductions in rank. Some contemporary correspondents perceived the Executive Council as being the supreme authority with regard to colonial violence. See for example the letter, saying ‘It is not enough that we occupy what was their country, but a number of paid ruffians … shoot down the

208 See Peter Sack, *Phantom History: The Rule of Law and the Colonial State* (Canberra: Division of Pacific and Asian History, Australian National University, 2001).
unoffending and the useful of them like dogs, while the innocent blood thus shed lies at
the door of our Executive Council’.

See also a news item about Lieutenant Harris, who was charged with murdering a ‘blackfellow’. Harris was set free on bail, and the writer asked ‘Does not Lieutenant Harris act under orders from the executive?’

The decisions made by the executive arm were relayed to the operational forces via the Colonial Secretary’s Office and the Police Commissioner. General orders, memos and staff files are found in the Commissioner’s records. The Colonial Secretary, who functioned as the government’s main co-ordinator of important letters, petitions, and executive decisions, sent paperwork on to other agencies, including the Attorney General and the Justice Department. The Justice Department records include dozens of coronial inquests into sudden and violent deaths of Aboriginal people at the hands of the Native Police, along with associated correspondence and court records.

There are two major factors that probably now help enormously in the production of a comprehensive history of the force. First, it is now easier than ever before to access and process the information using computers. To some extent, the improvement came due to technological advances, but the creation of the Queensland State Archives was also important. It was very difficult until the later decades of the twentieth century to gain access to the state’s records for a number of reasons. Queensland’s first State Archivist was not appointed until 1959, and many records were still held by various government departments in widely dispersed and inaccessible locations. There were very limited

211 The discovery of almost fifty coronial investigations naming the Native Police as being involved in the deaths of Aboriginal people alerted me to the possibility of writing a history of the Native Police based on primary records.
facilities for viewing those records that were open. The opening of the Runcorn facility of the Queensland State Archives in 1993 effectively meant the beginning of easy and open access to most archival material.212

Second, there is now a curiosity to discover the truth about the Native Police. The fact that those generations that may have personally recalled the frontier period are no longer with us has liberated historical inquiry from the pale of self-appointed guardians of alleged fact. The descendants of pioneers still hold private records, but there has been a general reluctance to allow researchers access to material that might incriminate individuals involved in acts of colonial violence. Government officials and departments, with a desire to ‘leave the past behind’, echoed this attitude.213 Of the numerous examples of this informal censorship, two will suffice. In 1882 Wanderings South and East by journalist Walter Coote was published, saying he was ‘almost tempted to say something here about these luckless Queensland blacks,’ and noting ‘the truth of it has been hidden by those who were interested’.214 This book has not been widely used as a source by later writers and historians. Seventy years later, little had changed. In 1945, an article by writer Noel Griffiths was submitted to the Queensland Police Public Relations before publication in Walkabout.215 Consent was granted, after deletion of this paragraph: ‘Last century, when it was war to the death between white men and the former lords of the Australian soil, the Queensland Native Mounted Police were ruthless in their method of ridding the outback of marauders’. Griffiths eventually submitted a piece on a

212 One significant exception is the murder file series, which remain partly closed.
213 Commissioner of Police, Historical Inquiries re Queensland Police Force, A/45223.
215 Commissioner of Police, Historical Inquiries re Queensland Police Force, A/45223.
completely different topic to *Walkabout*.\textsuperscript{216} Perhaps earlier researchers did not have easy access to these records, but there is very little sign of any deliberate tampering with them.\textsuperscript{217} The research conducted to date shows that rather than there being a shortage of archival material, there is actually so much at the Archives that some records have not been closely examined.

The absence of an extensive accurate analysis of the Native Police also owes something to the impoverished state of the historiography of settler-colonialism, at least before the 1970s. Violence, which was often evaded in ‘pioneer’ histories, is ever-present in both ‘contact’ and ‘revisionist’ histories.\textsuperscript{218} Primary sources from the colonial era are rich with references to the violent treatment of Indigenous peoples, but historians of the early twentieth century failed to incorporate this evidence in their narratives. The newspapers of the colonial period also allow us to learn about some of the violence and public criticism of the force. They also make it possible to investigate contradictions and congruencies between public knowledge and internal correspondence. Myths and opinions about the force’s history remained undisturbed by fact and critical analysis until

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{216} ‘Mt Bartle Frere’ by Noel Griffiths, *Walkabout* (May 1945).
\item\textsuperscript{217} The only known instance of the deliberate destruction of documents took place in 1892, when a case of records marked ‘Old Papers Colonial Secretary’s Department 1847 to 1860’ was found by the Colonial Storekeeper; the case was opened and was found to contain records of the Government Resident’s Office. The file was noted ‘a greater portion of them [are to] be burnt’, Colonial Storekeeper to Colonial Secretary, 11 July 1892, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A703/92/8443.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the 1970s and 1980s when new perspectives on ‘subject’ peoples began to be incorporated into our national history.

Another source of confusion for some historians was the force’s legal standing. Some contemporary critics claimed that the Native Police force was not a ‘legal body’ and later historians have occasionally accepted this allegation without closer examination. After his dismissal from the force, ex-Sub Inspector John Carroll, condemned ‘the vague and mysterious regulations’ under which the Native Police operated.219 Another letter-writer, called ‘An Ex-officer’, wrote in 1879 ‘never from its origin to its existence in Queensland at the present moment, has its legitimacy been defined’.220 Later historians have accepted these two statements as valid sources. For example, Russell McGregor claims ‘the force as a whole was largely uncontrolled and unregulated by any superior central authority’.221 Under the Police Act of 1863, the Native Police was a legally constituted force under the immediate control of the colony’s Police Commissioner and Government.222

The Colonial Secretary, as the head of government, and the Governor in Council, as the representative of the Queen, generally but not always, endorsed the Police Commissioner’s decisions and recommendations. The Commissioner acted under the direction of the Colonial Secretary, and the Executive Council had sole responsibility in


220 ‘Reminiscences of the Native Mounted Police of Queensland’ by ‘An Ex-officer’, Town and Country Journal (15 March 1879); the Executive Council noted in 1863 that the force was ‘not as yet constituted or recognised by law’ but remedied that soon after, 16 May 1863, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E7/63/22.


some areas (for example, senior appointments). Officers of the Native Police force were legally appointed, promoted, disciplined, and dismissed as members of the police force. News of these official actions was conveyed throughout the colony by official channels such as the *Queensland Police Gazette*. The Native Police was legally constituted and official decisions about it were clearly, publicly announced.\(^{223}\) However, as will be seen, its operations in the field were not always the result of clearly enunciated government orders, let alone published orders. The Native Police existed in two worlds – the legal, visible, and governmental; and the secretive, unofficial, and violent.

‘Taking charge’

For most of the time that the Native Police existed, the Commissioner of Police in Queensland was David Seymour. He was in charge for thirty-one years – 1864 to 1895. His attitude towards the force must be examined along with any evidence of his knowledge of the force’s secretive, unofficial, and violent activities. His family and military background reveals much about the importance of patronage networks across the British Empire, and the promulgation of colonial practices deemed to have been ‘successful’. Colonists often compared parts of Queensland with other British colonies, and there was a constant exchange of information, policies and practices between different parts of the British Empire, as evidenced by the records of Governors’

\(^{223}\) Appointments, promotions and dismissals were regularly advised in the *Queensland Police Gazette* and the *Queensland Government Gazette*, and thence to the newspapers.
Despatches and Circular Memoranda. Seymour recommended the appointment of some very unsuitable officers (discussed in Chapter Two), and defended the Native Police against its critics on several occasions. His part in the history of the force merits close examination.

David Seymour was born in 1831 at Ballymore Castle, Galway, in western Ireland. His father Thomas was a barrister, High Sheriff at the King’s Court, and Lieutenant Colonel of the Galway Militia. David joined the British army as an ensign at the age of twenty-five, and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the 12th Regiment of Foot two years later. A detachment from this unit arrived at Brisbane in 1861, and Seymour became Governor Bowen’s aide-de-camp. Appointed as Queensland’s first Commissioner of Police in 1864, Seymour held this office until his retirement in 1895.

Seymour’s family connections undoubtedly helped in securing the post of Commissioner, and his military background is relevant to the Native Police. Seymour oversaw the restructure of the force from a small frontier force into an armed wing of the colonial government. In 1865, with the assistance of other government officers, he

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224 See, for instance, George Dalrymple’s comparison of the North Queensland coast with Ceylon, ‘Narrative and Reports of the Queensland North-East Coast Expedition’, Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1873): 8; most colonial newspapers carried stories from other parts of the Empire. The movements of Governors and other colonial officials from one colony to another also served to disseminate practices from other Empire posts.
225 Police Staff File, David Thompson Seymour, A/47922.
226 ‘Seymour of Ballymore Castle’, Burke’s Peerage (London, 1904), 546.
227 For detail of the regiment’s campaigns, see CH Gardiner, Centurions of a Century: The Twelfth or The Suffolk Regiment of Foot (Brighton, c.1908); and Guthrie Moir, The Suffolk Regiment (London: Leo Cooper, 1969).
229 See Seymour’s Annual Report for 1865, mentioning ‘the proposed staffing structure for the Native Police, with Inspectors to be placed in charge of Sub Inspectors’,
drafted the ‘Regulations for the Native Police Force’. Soon afterwards he was criticised for failing to drill the police force and the government reminded him that a military officer had been chosen to lead the police specifically because of his experience in drill, discipline and use of firearms.

Seymour’s rules authorised the use of ‘appropriate force’ against Aboriginal people. The key word is appropriate. What men in the field, riding with squatters, thought was appropriate is one thing; what the Commissioner thought another. What the members of the government thought about frontier violence was still another matter completely. Rule 31 stated ‘The officers will see the necessity of teaching the aborigines that no outrage or depredation shall be committed with impunity’. Rule 47 said ‘their duties are never ending; their presence is required everywhere, and it is solely by their intelligence, unceasing vigilance, and watchful superintendence of the men, that the protection, which is the main object of the force, can be afforded’. There is no doubt that contemporaries knew that the terms ‘teaching the aborigines’ and ‘protection’ meant different things to different people. Later, one North Queenslander wrote to the Commissioner ‘I know you have no conception of how things are carried on here’, showing northern opinion on officialdom in distant Brisbane. The Colonial Secretary wrote to the Commissioner.

Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 15 February 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A77/66/870 and Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1867).


232 A Forsythe to Commissioner, Port Douglas Inspector’s Letterbook, 27 August 1881, POL/12M/G2.
Representations having on more than one occasion been made to the Government that the Native Police when dispersing assemblages of blacks, are in the habit of indiscriminately shooting down and otherwise maltreating those against whom they are acting, I am directed to inform you that under an Order in Council it is your duty to issue such explicit instructions to the officers of the Force under your control as will put an immediate and effectual stop to all unnecessary harshness or cruelty and I am to inform you that under the same Order in Council it has been directed that when in future any instance of this kind is proved the Government will make severe examples of all persons concerned.233

Three months later, under government pressure, Seymour sent out a circular memo directing police to ‘carefully insert on the back of each report the date of all outrages reported to have been committed by the Blacks, on whom, by whom reported, with particulars of outrages and supposed cause thereof, also date and full particulars of every “collision”’.234 There is no evidence of this order being obeyed.

In his first Annual Report Seymour said there were no written instructions for the guidance of the Native Police, and a serious shortage of troopers to meet the demands of settlers engaged in the ‘constantly increasing occupation of hitherto waste country’.235 The absence of written instructions was remedied in 1866. But the shortage of troopers remained a problem. Three years later he reported:

I can only say that, with the means at my command, every exertion has been made to render it as effective as possible; and any want of success has been caused, not by the inefficiencies of the force, but by its weakness. The detachments are too small and too far apart to patrol properly the extensive area of country they are supposed to protect.236

233 Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 26 February 1867, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q4/67/160.
234 Circular Memo from Commissioner of Police, 14 May 1867, POL/4/249.
236 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 4 February 1868, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A101/68/343.
This became a perennial theme in each of Seymour’s *Annual Reports*, although he claimed in 1873 that the force’s 150 troopers had ‘served such as to prevent great murders and bloodsheds’ by an Aboriginal population, estimated to be 50,000 strong.\(^{237}\)

In 1875 the Commissioner was asked to report on ‘outrages alleged to have been committed by the Native Police’. Seymour responded:

> If there was any truth in the tenth or even the hundredth of what is charged against the Native Police, surely at least one instance could have been given that might be brought home to the perpetrators, but this has never been done; and it is but fair to presume that the cases existed but in imagination.\(^ {238}\)

Yet by this date Seymour had personally recommended the dismissal of three officers from the Native Police after each was implicated in killings that led to criminal charges, parliamentary inquiries or became public knowledge. Magisterial investigations were held into each of the killings. Archival records of these dismissals have been located. Sub Inspector Myrtil Aubin was dismissed by the Executive Council after his detachment killed several ‘quiet’ Aborigines at Morinish near Rockhampton in 1867.\(^ {239}\) Acting Sub Inspector Charles Shairp was dismissed in 1872 after an inquiry into the death of an Aboriginal woman at the Herbert River.\(^ {240}\) Acting Sub Inspector Thomas Williams was dismissed in 1875, ostensibly for drunkenness and financial irregularities.\(^ {241}\) Williams’ detachment had killed two ‘friendly’ Aboriginal men at Tambo in 1872, which may have

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\(^{237}\) Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 15 January 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A188/73/2320.

\(^{238}\) Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276.

\(^{239}\) Dismissal of Sub Inspector Aubin, 11 July 1867, Executive Council Minute, COL/E1/67/172.

\(^{240}\) Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 31 October 1872, POL/4/552.

\(^{241}\) Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 31 January 1875, POL/4/583.
been his ‘undoing’. Moreover, with his public denial of wrongdoing Seymour explicitly rejected complaints made by numbers of ‘respectable’ persons about the force that had been surfacing for almost thirty years. His claim pre-empted the report prepared by Aboriginal Commissioners William Drew, Augustus Gregory and Charles Coxen in the same year. They stated that any inquiry into the force’s activities would be useless:

Nearly the only persons who could afford reliable information upon the subject are the Native Police officers themselves, whose testimony, if favourable to the Force, would not satisfy the public, and if unfavourable, would probably reflect upon, or possible incriminate the witnesses themselves.242

The Commissioners decided that the Native Police’s actions amounted to ‘the employment of a Civil force in what were really military operations’.

The legality of the force’s tactics was not an issue, but getting evidence of illegal action was at issue. Had the police exceeded appropriate force, its actions would have been illegal. However, the problem facing anyone who attempted to indict members of the force was obvious – the absence of witnesses who would testify. Officially speaking, the police could not kill Aborigines without cause, anymore than they could kill settlers. The challenge is to examine the borderline between the force acting under law, and the evidence of violent illegal acts, which nevertheless were not prosecuted. Successive administrators and officials were often reminded by the government in London that Aboriginal people were British subjects and were therefore entitled to the same treatment as others. As New South Wales Governor Richard Bourke had been informed by London in 1837:

242 Police Staff File, Hervey Fitzgerald, A/40291.
All the Natives inhabiting the territories [of every part of the continent of New Holland] must be considered as Subjects of the Queen and as within Her Majesty's allegiance. To regard them as Aliens with whom a War can exist, and against whom Her Majesty’s Troops may exercise belligerent right, is to deny that protection to which they derive the highest possible claim from the Sovereignty, which has been assumed over the whole of their Ancient Possessions.243

The Secretary of State for Colonies (Lord Glenelg) advised Bourke that ‘if the rights of the Aborigines as British Subjects be fully acknowledged’, an Inquest should be held to ‘ascertain the cause of death’ whenever ‘any of them comes to death by the hands of the Queen’s officers’.244 These directives were generally – but not always – obeyed in colonial Queensland and in other parts of Australia, as the frontier inquest records show. Glenelg was specifically referring to soldiers and police, but settlers also killed Indigenous men, women and children, and inquests were not always conducted.245 Fewer Aboriginal deaths were investigated than those of settlers. When they were, it was due to the initiative of an exceptional Justice of the Peace, who often found little support – and no thanks – for his actions.246 As has been pointed out, evidence from Aboriginal witnesses about frontier crimes, including murder, was not accepted in Australian courts

243 Lord Glenelg to Bourke, 26 July 1837, Historical Records of Australia Volume 19: 48. This directive stands in stark contrast with the attitudes of Governor Bowen.

244 Historical Records of Australia Volume 19: 48.

245 Many records about the killing of Aboriginal people by settlers have been located – in at least twenty cases the evidence was clear, but none of these resulted in a conviction. See Mark Finnane and Jonathan Richards ‘You’ll Get Nothing out of It’? The Inquest, Police and Aboriginal Deaths in Colonial Queensland’, Australian Historical Studies 35, 123 (2004): 84-105.

246 These men, such as Ipswich doctor, parliamentarian and clergymen Henry Challinor, did exist, as some historians have noted, Rowley, The Destruction of Aboriginal Society, 165-166.
until the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{247} Authorities in Great Britain were powerless to prevent violence against Aboriginal people in Queensland after self-government was granted to the colony in 1859.\textsuperscript{248} The Native Police, as will be shown in Chapter 4, participated in murders, and certainly did not perform investigative roles in any meaningful way. It was no ordinary police agency.

Violence by settlers towards Aboriginal people was noted by the Aboriginal Commission of 1875, which saw frontier policing as a necessary activity with a long history:

> Before the establishment of this force, the outer districts were often left without protection, and the Settlers were under the necessity of repelling aggression personally. This, however, was not only inconvenient and insufficient, but often otherwise illustrated the inexpediency of leaving the execution of the law in the hands of persons seeking redress for personal injury.\textsuperscript{249}

The Commission further noted that despite the objections of ‘many’ to the force’s continuing existence, ‘hitherto no practicable substitute has been suggested by the objectors and without an armed force the frontier settlement could not be maintained’.\textsuperscript{250} In other words, colonisation needed defenders.


\textsuperscript{248} See, for example, a 1882 news item about an English Parliamentary debate over ‘Kidnapping in the Pacific’, which mentioned the question as to ‘whether Queensland was not a Crown Colony, and therefore under the control of Her Majesty’. The answer was ‘in the negative’, \textit{London Times} (23 June 1882: 6-7).

\textsuperscript{249} \textit{Report from Aboriginal Commissioners Drew, Gregory and Coxen to the Colonial Secretary}, 6 May 1875 staff file of Hervey Fitzgerald, A/40291.

\textsuperscript{250} \textit{Aboriginal Commissioner’s Report}.
Conclusion

Until recent years, much of the popular writing about the Native Police was published during the middle decades of the last century, the period that WEH Stanner described as ‘The Great Australian Silence’. He was remarking on an alleged exclusion of the Aboriginal experience. However, a great deal was written and published in Queensland about the Native Police during the period between 1930 and 1960. Stanner’s survey of ‘historical writings’ did not extend to popular magazines that were the main avenue for the promulgation and dissemination of erroneous ‘facts’. The combination of ignorance about Aborigines in the Australian experience and biased accounts of the Native Police had enabled Queenslanders to ‘stick their heads in the sand’.

The historical picture of the Native Police that has emerged relied principally on the opinions of popular writers, who mostly insisted that the force’s officers were 'gentlemen' who obeyed the law and treated Aboriginal people fairly. Keith Windschuttle’s claim in 2000 that ‘British colonies in Australia were civilised societies governed by both morality and laws that forbade the killing of the innocent’, is the latest

252 Others to write on the force during this period included former officer Robert Little, journalist Arthur Laurie, and CA Jenkinson writing from North Queensland as ‘Tramp’.
253 Stanner, After The Dreaming.
254 One Queensland historian said, ‘Humanity seems to be blessed with a form of amnesia as regards the unpleasant events of the past’, JCH Gill, ‘Governor Bowen and the Aborigines: A Documentary Review’, Queensland Heritage 2, 7 (1972: 28).

Another version of Native Police history, derived from the critics of the force, has also survived, but is not as widely quoted or known. A number of individuals, including Doctor Henry Challinor, anti-slavery campaigner Alfred Davidson, and journalist Carl Feilberg publicly criticised the violent tactics used by the Native Police. Henry Challinor arrived at Moreton Bay in 1849, and in 1860 (as the Ipswich coroner) held an inquest into the killing of Aboriginal people at Fassifern. After the Attorney General informed him he had found ‘no evidence to sustain a charge of murder’ by Wheeler’s detachment, Challinor resigned from his position. He sent a copy of his letter to Attorney General Ratcliffe Pring to the Ipswich and Brisbane papers to ‘inform the public that I was no party to the non-further prosecution of the case’.\footnote{Attorney General to Challinor, 14 February 1861, Attorney General’s Letterbook, JUS/G1/61/16; Challinor to Attorney General, 16 February 1861, Attorney General’s Correspondence, JUS/A2.} Alfred Davidson, who arrived in Brisbane during 1863, was probably the most outspoken critic of the Native Police. He wrote his first letters about “The Blacks” in the early 1870s, and submitted a proposal for an Aboriginal Commission in early 1872.\footnote{\textit{The Queenslander} (21 May 1870: 2).} This was rejected by the Executive
Historians have largely ignored another long-term critic of the Native Police, journalist Carl Feilberg. Feilberg, a friend of parliamentarian and one-time Premier John Douglas, attacked the force, and earned the hatred of many political figures. In 1882, Feilberg wrote in a personal letter that he had never known of a White man being convicted for killing an Aboriginal person during his eleven years in the colony.260

Several quotes from the apologists for the force will suffice as examples of their attitudes, and bring to a close this chapter on positioning the Native Police in historical writing. In 1947, popular historian Glenville Pike wrote in his regular weekly column, ‘Around the Campfire’, that the Native Police officers were innocent of wrongdoing. He blamed the troopers, but at least intimated there had been killings.

Judging from his published writings, there is little evidence of Pike examining any records. He returned to this theme soon after, claiming ‘All police records I have studied have denied that the black troopers ever committed crimes against their black brethren’. Pike concluded ‘Something is wrong somewhere and I do not think it is the memories of

261 Glenville Pike, writing as ‘Sundowner’ in ‘Around the Camp Fire’, North Queensland Register (1 November 1947).
Pike, like many popular historians, never references his work, but his impact on contemporary historical knowledge, especially in North Queensland, should not be underestimated. Over 150,000 copies of his twenty-seven books have been sold since 1952. Author Henry Lamond, writing during the early 1950s, expressed his opinion on the force in an article he said was ‘written after much research: from information gained by correspondence and conversation with old officers of the corps over the past 30 years’.

Old maids of both sexes of today may pretend to shudder in horror over the methods used by the N.M.P. If they have Australian lineage long enough and consider for a moment, they may realise they are alive now because the early N.M.P. protected their ancestors.

Lamond said, in response to criticism from journalist Clem Lack, that the Native Police was ‘paid to uphold the law’, and did ‘as they were told to do’. Lack, who had acknowledged ‘the blacks committed terrible atrocities’, wrote that the ‘indiscriminate vengeance’ of the Native Police and the ‘decimation of whole tribes’ by the colonisers was the ‘greater infamy’.

Now that the debates about the Native Police and the imperial and local contexts for the force’s formation have been dealt with, we can proceed to an examination of the men who served as officers in the Native Police and the relationship between these men and broader colonial contexts and networks. As the next chapter shows, many of the

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officers had connections with land-owning families and individuals who enjoyed government favour. Individual officers interpreted the official regulations in different ways, which often led to public complaints and official inquiries. The importance of networks, patronage and favour are critical factors in determining who joined the force, who climbed the ranks, and who left in disgrace. The White officers of Native Police bridge the world of imperial privilege and opportunity, and the world of frontier resource grabbing. They were middlemen of the empire.
Chapter 2: ‘never any lack of candidates’¹

The European members of the Native Police

As no depot exists for training Officers to the special duties of the Force, and as no more are employed than are absolutely required for active service, it becomes frequently a matter of very great difficulty to find a suitable officer to fill a vacancy; though there has never been any lack of candidates.²

A frightful amount of irresponsible power is held by the officers of the Native Police.³

¹ Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276.
² COL/A209/75/1276 (underlining in original).
The men who supervised the Native Police and the men who led the detachments were the only Europeans. They filled both commissioned (Sub Inspectors, Inspectors, Commissioners) and non-commissioned ranks (Constables and Sergeants). When New South Wales directed the force, Europeans held positions as Lieutenants and Camp Sergeants. The first appointments under Queensland control were as Lieutenants, followed by Sub Inspectors, and later Acting Sub Inspectors (who replaced the Camp Sergeants).\(^4\) Constables were in charge of Native Police camps from the 1870s, and in charge of bush patrols in North Queensland from the 1880s. The shift from military to civilian designations echoed similar changes in other colonial police forces and contexts at the time. This chapter examines the careers of the Europeans in the force, as revealed in the surviving records. An assessment of these men’s lives shows a number of important points about colonial policing. The ‘right’ connections helped to gain appointment, posting to ‘easy’ stations and camps, and assisted in promotion. Some came from military backgrounds or held other colonial offices; others went on to successful careers in the Public Service after leaving the Native Police. Most importantly, this chapter shows that the men who served in the force can be positively identified. We can also determine – from the records – which of them was partial to violence.

What do the surviving records tell us about the officers of the Native Police? How much can the records tell us about the careers they had before, during, and after their service in the force? Do the files contain enough information to allow us to ask why these men were attracted to this line of ‘work’ in the first place? Finally, how do the answers to
these questions compare with what is known about comparable police forces in British colonial settings?

Apparently, no government official in New South Wales, or in Queensland after Separation during the nineteenth century, ever compiled a complete list of all the Europeans who served with the Native Police. The names of one hundred and fifty individual men appointed to the force have been found in assorted archival files; staff files have been located for almost half (seventy six) of this number. These documents reveal many details of individual careers, and give some insights into the characters of the men. For instance, the birthplaces of seventy-six men are recorded. A third (twenty) were born in England, and another third (seventeen) in Ireland. A sixth (twelve) came from New South Wales, and only five were born in Queensland. Smaller numbers came to Queensland from Canada, the Channel Islands, Scotland, Tasmania, and Victoria. Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and Russia were the birthplaces of other officers. Family connections and career patterns, including length of service, promotions and disciplinary measures, are all included.

Although some published works do mention the cases and careers of individual officers, none cover all those recorded as having served in the force, and errors often emerge in these books. The published secondary works on the Native Police are generally inaccurate and unreliable. The flaws begin with the officers’ names and ranks. Non-existent ranks appeared in the secondary texts. The force never had captains, commanders or sub-lieutenants but these ranks appear in several books and other sources.

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4 The rank of Cadet Sub Inspector replaced that of Acting Sub Inspector from 1860 to 1889.
5 See Appendix 1 for a nominal roll of all Europeans who served in the Native Police.
For example, Sub Inspector Robert Little has often been referred to as ‘Captain’, his former rank in the army.  His son, John Little (also a Native Police officer), wrote a number of pieces referring to his father, including a letter to *The Bulletin* claiming that Robert Little was ‘inspector of white police from Normanton to Camooweal’ at the same time that he (John Little) was posted to the Native Police station at Turn Off Lagoon in 1902. Records reveal that Robert Little only reached the rank of Sub Inspector in the Native Police, and was never stationed in the Gulf district. Most importantly, they show that Constable John Little was not sent to the Turn Off Lagoon station until 1902, thirteen years after his father’s death at Birdsville. By the time the family story had been passed down to the next generation, Robert Little had ‘raised the first trackers in the Colony’, then went to Birdsville where he ‘died of a wound he had received during the Indian Mutiny’. According to the inquest records, Robert Little died of heat apoplexy during a ‘very hot summer’; an obituary after his death did not mention any old war injuries. Writer Henry Lamond wrote to journalist Sydney May, saying his father was ‘a cadet under Captain Little’, and added the family ‘now call themselves Kyle-Little and are great publicity hunters’. Lamond was born at Carl Creek Native Police camp, the son of Inspector James Lamond, and had his own skewed interpretation of Native Police history.

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8 Police Staff File, Robert Kyle Little, A/40048/89/2351.
but the exaggerations of both writers show just how unreliable and inaccurate secondary sources on the Native Police can be. Lamond is often quoted as a ‘good’ source, but in at least one important respect, he was very misleading. He claimed that one in four officers died. Records show that actually about one in eight died on active service, and only five died during attacks. Lamond refused to name the officers in case he missed one, saying ‘it would be a greater shame for me to omit one of those gallant old boys than it would be to my credit if I could name forty of them’.12

Some men, such as Sub Inspector James Gilmour, had names that were easily misspelled, and obviously became confused over time with those of others.13 The correct spelling can usually be determined by locating a document signed by the individual.14 Officer ‘Gilmore’ appeared in the records and the newspapers, and then in books and articles as the Sub Inspector who led an 1871 search for any traces of Ludwig Leichhardt’s last expedition.15 When more than one man with the same family name served in the force – for example, the five unrelated men with the family name of Murray – compounded by ignorance or misunderstandings about first names, non-existent ranks

13 I have seen, in a forgettable article, Commissioner Seymour’s name recorded as ‘Seymore’.
14 For example, the letter signed ‘James Merry Gilmour’ requesting an appointment, Gilmour to Commissioner, 25 November 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A76/66/549.
15 See letter of acknowledgment in relation to receipt of a *Brisbane Courier* article about ‘Sub-Inspector Gilmore’s report on the search for a white man reported to be living with Aborigines’, Chief Secretary of Western Australia to the Colonial Secretary, 8 June 1871, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A157/71/1547.
and fictitious characters were created. Colonial clerks and contemporary historians alike have been confused by the fact that in at least twelve cases more than one member of a family, (multiple family members included two Littles, two Blakeneyes, three Morisset brothers, two Townsend brothers, two Uhr brothers, two Walker brothers and two Wheeler brothers) served in the Native Police.

Records can correct mistakes in rank and name, but more significantly they also reveal much about particular groups of men in the force. One of the most important facts is length of service, because it can be used to establish clusters of men who were either career officers or ‘passing through’. Lengths of service in the Native Police varied from a few weeks to three decades. Reconstructing a nominal roll from a variety of documents allows one particular group, the ‘Short-timers’, who served less than five years, to be identified. Some of these actually served longer periods, by virtue of successive re-appointments. About forty individuals left and were re-appointed.

Collecting and collating data on officers also makes it possible to identify a small group of ‘phantoms’ – men appointed to the force, according to published sources – for whom no other records exist. Some of these may be the result of clerical mistake (as with the misspelling of names in official records) and simple human error, but others incorrectly identified men appointed, but who probably never joined the Native Police. Histories of the Native Police written solely from the official published records, especially the Commissioner’s Annual Reports in the Queensland Parliamentary Votes

16 Frederick J Murray (1865-95), George PM Murray (1857-67), John Murray (1852-70), Michael J Murray (1900-07) and Robert Murray (1889-1904) were all unrelated.
and Proceedings, can sometimes be inaccurate and misleading.\textsuperscript{17} Thus, a thorough historical investigation requires working with several types of records and an especial search for information in the archives.

To begin to understand the Europeans who served in the Native Police, we need to know not only who was actually in the force at a particular time, but also to gain insights into attitudes towards the Native Police in Queensland, and the private motivations of those individuals who joined. The attitudes, motives, and experiences of one hundred and fifty men are equally as hard to understand if studied as a whole or as individuals. However, the men of the force can be easily organised into clusters containing groups of individuals sharing common characteristics or experiences, such as rank. This is a helpful method for studying a group such as this because it allows useful insights – despite the lack of complete personnel records – into their backgrounds, personal careers, and colonial connections. However, before turning to examine the groups of officers that can be identified in the Native Police of Queensland, some general remarks on previous colonial experience, chain of command, rank, appointments and dismissals, and individual careers, are in order.

Service in the Native Police was a classic ‘Boy’s Own’ adventure for some men, and a nightmare for others. Some individuals lasted decades in the force, but others left within weeks of their induction. Many left the force with their health broken by lengthy service in rough isolated conditions, and a number of officers literally gave their lives to

the Native Police. Yet the government was reluctant to mark the graves of these men who died in the name of Empire. This paradox, of men seeking adventure and danger on the frontier in the colonial project, knowing they were expendable and their work would be unacknowledged, echoes the position of the force itself. The men who served in it were civil servants with special duties on a complex and shifting frontier, where aggression and agreement took place simultaneously. Native Police officers worked at the ‘edge of the wave’ that settlers and colonial officials glowingly described.

Many men were originally appointed to the force on the recommendation of the Commandant, and after 1864, the Commissioner. Serving officers recommended their brothers, and sometimes politicians, clergymen and pastoralists recommended young men. The eleven men who transferred from the New South Wales Native Police force at Separation in 1859 formed the initial officer cohort. Joining the force in Queensland usually meant applying in writing to the Commissioner of Police, the Colonial Secretary or to other Government ministers. Some individuals moved between the Native Police and other branches of the Public Service, and their cases are worth closer examination

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18 Marcus Beresford (1883), George Dyas (1881), Cecil Hill (1865), Henry Kaye (1881) and Alfred Wavell (1889).
19 See letter from Commissioner’s office, saying they had ‘no record of Kay’s burial’, 17 January 1922, Police Staff File, Henry P Kaye, A/38864.
20 See, for example, an editorial ‘The Native Police’, noting ‘the wave of resistless settlement’ that swept over New South Wales and Victoria, and ‘carried before it the barbarous and disunited tribes’, The Queenslander (18 September 1880: 368) and ‘the great invading wave of white faces’ in Margaret Seymour, ‘Queensland: Past and Present’, Cassell’s Picturesque Australasia, edited by EE Morris (Sydney: Fine Arts Press, 1978, 642; originally published in London by Cassell & Company, 1889).
21 These were John Murray, Edric Morisset, John Bligh, Robert Walker, Frederick Powell, Frederick Carr, Charles Phibbs, William Moorhead, George Murray, Frederick Wheeler, and John Baker. Phibbs drowned in 1861 and Baker resigned a year later. Some thirty unsuccessful applications to join the Native Police have been located.
because they show that the force was not, in career terms, really a shadowy distant elite but an almost ‘normal’ branch of the colonial administration.

There were specific criteria for appointment to the force. Previous writers have gleaned the primary requirements that successful candidates for appointment had to be ‘a crack shot and a first rate rider’, and able to ‘control’ Aboriginal people, but several other equally important pre-requisites have not been as readily noticed. These were the ability to navigate, to write legible reports, to organise the issue and order of stores, and to prepare financial statements. Mark Finnane has correctly identified literacy as ‘the major requirement’ for appointment to the police force. Numeracy was another. In many districts, funds for the trooper’s rations were deposited in the bank account of the officer in charge of a detachment, and he was required to furnish regular and accurate financial reports. This use of the individual police officers as paymasters for the government was, as Ross Johnston notes, a standard procedure at the time. Several officers were dismissed or reprimanded for failing to provide timely financial returns.

Issues such as these remind us that the units and the men of this force usually operated ‘beyond the settled districts’. Service in the Native Police meant isolation. Most officers served in remote locations, and often had only their Aboriginal troopers for company. Some complained about the loneliness, and they nearly all grumbled about the

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23 From a letter asking about ‘employment for a friend of mine who just arrived on the Flying Cloud’, and who ‘prefers getting a berth in the Native Police if possible, to going on a station at £30 to £40 a year with nothing else in view’, Mr Palmer of South Brisbane to Arthur Macalister, Secretary for Lands and Public Works, 22 January 1863, Land and Works Department Correspondence, LWO/A4/63/310.
isolation. For example, when asked why he was drunk at the Coen Native Police camp, Constable Joseph Shannon said ‘the only reason I can give are that life here is monotonous’. Adding that ‘I am frightened of having my nerves totally unstrung from listening to blacks, gins and piccaninnies howling or chanting both day and night’, he asked for a transfer.\textsuperscript{26} Marriage was actively discouraged, as it could mean bigger and more expensive accommodation would be needed for the officers’ families.\textsuperscript{27}

Fourteen Native Police officers (listed page 99) were later appointed as Police Magistrates in colonial Queensland. Four other men (Maxwell Armstrong, Aulaire Morisset, John Nutting, and Thomas Thornton) acted ‘on magisterial duties’ while still serving in the Police force. As the local authorities for the colonial law system, Magistrates were powerful figures in colonial society. In particular, Police Magistrates were responsible for hearing criminal charges brought against members of the public by the police (including the Native Police). They did not generally initiate proceedings against settlers for murdering Aborigines. Those who became Magistrates had served an average of five years in the force before appointment, but six individuals served less than two years. Charles Shortt Dicken, Alfred Henry, and James Hamilton Scott became Magistrates after very brief periods of service with the Native Police.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26} Shannon to Sergeant Whiteford, 13 September 1906, Police Staff File, Joseph Shannon, A/40161/06/16184. He was dismissed instead.
\textsuperscript{27} In 1866, Seymour declared that police could not marry until they had served for three years. A complete prohibition on marriage for Native Police officers was ordered in 1883, one month after the weddings of Constable James Whiteford and Sub Inspector James Lamond. Both families had children while living in Native Police camps. A/45259/66/212, \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} (3 October 1866: 83), \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} (25 June 1883: 120), and \textit{Queensland Government Gazette} (29 June 1883: 1699).
\textsuperscript{28} Appointment of Charles S Dicken as Police Magistrate at Springsure, \textit{Queensland Government Gazette} 13 (19 July 1872: 1045); Appointment of Albert Henry as Police Magistrate at Tambo, \textit{Queensland Government Gazette} 13 (18 January 1872: 74);
Police Magistrate for eight years, Dicken was appointed as Queensland’s Agent General at London.29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Officer(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>John Bligh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>George Murray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Frederick Nantes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>Thomas Thornton, Reginald Uhr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Aulaire Morisset, John Nutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Charles Dicken, Henry Alfred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Charles Nutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Walter Compigne</td>
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<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>William Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Henry Gough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Robert Johnstone, Lionel Towner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Robert Moran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>James Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Ernest Eglinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Brabazon Stafford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Native Police officers appointed as Police Magistrates in Queensland.

Only four of these men had any previous experience as Clerks of Petty Sessions before their appointment as magistrates. In 1885, twelve of Queensland’s fifty-seven Police Magistrates were former Native Police officers.30 These facts suggest how ‘talent thin’ colonial Queensland was, and how integrated the Native Police was with the whole law and order establishment.


29 *Queensland Government Gazette* 64 (1 October 1895): 786.

30 *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1885).
Other former officers later held responsible posts in various branches of the colonial public service. Former Sub Inspector Alexey Matveieff became Queensland’s Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs in 1880 after serving in the Native Police for one year from 1860.\(^{31}\) Ernest Scriven, who stayed in the force for one year from 1881, was appointed as the Chief Clerk of the Agriculture Department in 1889.\(^{32}\) It is likely that a few young men sought appointment to the Native Police as well as other government positions, but probably viewed the Native Police as a fallback position, not a first-choice. In 1862, Commandant Bligh recommended Edward Deshon for appointment as a cadet, but the Executive Council advised Bligh that he had ‘made other arrangements’; almost thirty years later, Deshon became Queensland’s Auditor-General.\(^{33}\)

One of the most revealing aspects that involved the officers of the Native Police was the method of their departure from the force. In the absence of routinely maintained and full personnel records, the few shreds of information on departures are important. According to assorted archival records, about a fifth (over thirty men) were dismissed from the Native Police for a range of disciplinary charges, including drunkenness, financial irregularities, incompetence and neglect of duty.\(^{34}\) There is evidence of other men being discharged on ‘reduction in the force’, and for indiscipline, and for other reasons.

\(^{31}\) *Queensland Government Gazette* 10 (22 April 1869): 518.
\(^{32}\) *Queensland Government Gazette* 48 (1 November 1889): 870.
\(^{33}\) Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 28 July 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A31/62/1915; Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 8 August 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q2/62/586; and *Queensland Government Gazette* 48 (4 December 1890).
\(^{34}\) See Table of Dismissals on page 101.
Dismissals were probably not surprising given the nature of the work involved, a point noted by at least one newspaper editor who noted that ‘not all officers are in love with their work’, as ‘the general body of them are of a high personal character’.\(^\text{35}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dismissals</th>
<th>Drunkenness</th>
<th>‘Reduction of the force’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Drunkennes</td>
<td>‘Reduction of the force’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Carr, 1866</td>
<td>Thomas Williams, 1875</td>
<td>William Hill, 1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrti Aubin, 1867</td>
<td>Hugh Galbraith, 1879</td>
<td>Frederick Nantes, 1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Wheeler, 1871</td>
<td>George Nowlan, 1881</td>
<td>Edward Seymour, 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Shairp, 1872</td>
<td>George Townsend, 1881</td>
<td>Lyndon Poingdestre, 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Carroll, 1876</td>
<td>Walter Jones, 1884</td>
<td>Robert Kyle Little, 1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Wheeler, 1876</td>
<td>Frederick Clerk, 1883</td>
<td>Walter Cheeke, 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Nichols, 1884</td>
<td>Cornelius Doherty, 1891</td>
<td>Alfred Smart, 1884</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Incompetence</th>
<th>Financial irregularities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marmaduke Richardson, 1863</td>
<td>Thomas Watterston, 1866</td>
<td>Thomas Watterston, 1866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant Harris, 1863</td>
<td>Otto Paschen, 1867</td>
<td>Thomas Barron, 1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Blakeney, 1866</td>
<td>Edward Dumaresq, 1875</td>
<td>William Armit, 1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred Wavell, 1874</td>
<td>W. T. Powell, 1861</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Brown, 1877</td>
<td>Horace Ramsay, 1862</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholson, 1880</td>
<td>Richard Crompton, 1872</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Armit, 1880</td>
<td>Edward Dumaresq, 1875</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brabazon Stafford, 1880</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Dismissals from the Native Police, by ‘reason’ and by date, as shown on records. Sources are given in Appendix 1: ‘A Nominal Roll of Native Police Officers’.

\(^{35}\) Editorial ‘Native Police’, *Brisbane Courier* (22 October 1888: 4).
Resignations were common too. Constables in Britain during the nineteenth century resigned in large numbers, and the high attrition rate was connected with the arduous nature of the work, the hostility and abuse of the public, and the strict rules and constant supervision.\(^\text{36}\)

David Philips notes that most early police forces experienced, as the Native Police did, difficulties in finding recruits who ‘would accept the discipline of a police force’\(^\text{37}\).

In Queensland, we have the example of Sub Inspector George Price, who complained in 1866 ‘I have now served for a period of nearly five years in arduous service’. He was transferred to the Justice Department two years later.\(^\text{38}\) Some officers were allowed to resign, rather than be dismissed or discharged, after being found guilty of various offences. Drunkenness and financial accountability were two of the biggest ongoing problems for the Commissioner of Police.\(^\text{39}\)

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\(^\text{38}\) Price to Colonial Secretary, 8 September 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A111/67/70.

\(^\text{39}\) After a survey of about 2500 Queensland police staff files, it appears that the observation that drinking was ‘the most common cause for action’ is correct, Finnane, ‘Governing the Police’, 215.
Drunkenness was, as historian Ross Johnston and others have pointed out, ‘not an uncommon problem among policemen’. The Native Police resembled other forces in this regard. At least seventeen officers in the force were dismissed, reduced in rank or disciplined for alcohol-related problems. There are many archival references, throughout the life of the force from the 1860s to the early decades of the twentieth century, to excessive drinking by police, and the consequences. Examples will suffice to show the extent of this issue, and the ways in which the records show that people on the frontier condoned drinking problems in the force. Second Lieutenant Marmaduke Richardson was dismissed in 1863 by the Executive Council for ‘becoming intoxicated while on duty and subsequently shooting a black boy whom he had in custody as a deserter from the force’. Commandant Bligh reported he was previously ‘made aware of Mr Richardson’s intemperance’ but because of ‘extenuating circumstances’ he did not report his behaviour to the Colonial Secretary ‘in the hope he might still prove an efficient officer’.

In 1909 Constable Jeremiah O’Grady was reported for being drunk and neglecting his duty as campkeeper at the Coen Native Police camp. Campkeepers were generally junior officers who took care of the clerical and administrative tasks needs of a detachment, and remained in camp. When reporting O’Grady’s breach of discipline, Sergeant James Whiteford stated ‘Coen is such a cursed place for drinking that it is hard

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for a man, if he drinks at all, to resist taking too much”43. After O’Grady was transferred to Cairns he was reported for drunkenness again, and said in his defence ‘As I have just left the bush the Cairns liquor took effect on me’. He was dismissed in early 1911.44

Often senior officers ignored the excessive drinking problems of their subordinates. Thomas Williams was appointed in 1861 and dismissed for drunkenness in 1865.45 However, during Seymour’s absence in 1872, Acting Commissioner Thomas Barron reappointed him and placed him in charge of the Tambo detachment. Six months later Williams and his troopers shot two ‘quiet’ Aboriginal men dead ‘in their beds’ on Bell and Dutton’s station.46 According to one witness, grazier Robert Bell found Williams after the killing and told him he would report him at Headquarters.47 Williams apparently asked Bell ‘whether he intended to report him for drunkenness or for shooting the Blacks’, to which Bell allegedly replied ‘for shooting the Blacks’.48 No records of any complaint, inquiry or charges in relation to this matter have been found to date.49 Inspector Fred Murray reported on Williams after most of his troopers deserted in 1875, saying ‘there can be no doubt but that his conduct has been at times disgraceful. He is

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42 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 21 September 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A44/63/2231.
43 Police Staff File, Jeremiah O’Grady, A/40215.
44 Police Staff File, O’Grady, A/40215.
45 Police Staff File, Thomas Spence Williams, A40194.
46 Inquest into deaths of Billy and Chow Chow at Tambo, JUS/N36/73/64a; ‘Deaths reported to the Police’, Chow Chow and Billy ‘supposed to have been shot by some person or persons unknown’, Queensland Police Gazette 9 (4 December 1872: 108); and 24 December 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A407/84/8140.
47 Deposition of P Le Nicholson, 31 October 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A407/84/8140
48 Deposition of Le Nicholson, COL/A407/84/8140.
49 According to one source, Bell and Dutton also killed Aboriginal people at Tambo; Scott-Cowen Manuscript, John Oxley Library, OM 71-23.
totally unfit to be in charge of a detachment by himself when within the reach of grog’. 50

Williams admitted that he ‘may have exceeded the bound of sobriety’ on one or two occasions, but denied ever neglecting his duty. Seymour recommended his removal from the force, and the Executive Council approved his dismissal. 51

Some men probably drank in an attempt to forget their part in frontier violence. George Nowlan began his career with the force as an Acting Sub Inspector in 1868. 52 After serving in camps at Cunnamulla, Springsure and Belyando, he was promoted to Sub Inspector in 1876 and was the longest serving Native Police officer in 1878. 53 That year he led a detachment to the Whitsunday Islands after the schooner Louisa Maria was wrecked and the crew attacked. The papers reported that troopers under Nowlan’s command spent a week executing ‘reprisal’. ‘The blacks evidently had not expected that the strong arm of the law would reach them in their stronghold’ on Dent Island. 54 There they were ‘permanently ‘dispersed’’, but according to one local author, ‘the true story will never be revealed’. 55 From what we know about frontier euphemisms like ‘permanent dispersal’, it is reasonable to suggest that the slaughter of many innocent people took place.

50 Police Staff File, Williams, A/40194.
51 Police Staff File, Williams, A/40194. Parliament investigated the Tambo killing in 1884 and ordered all papers connected with the matter to be published, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1884): 243, 269, & 691-5.
53 Police Staff File, George Denis Bowman Nowlan, A/40105. See an order for a list of all police officers, their length of service, ‘and their nationalities’ to be provided to the Parliament. Twenty-four of forty-six Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors were Native Police officers, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1878).
54 Brisbane Courier (21 September 1878).
55 One local historian says ‘various versions of the extent of the killings’ have emerged over the years, but despite ‘diligent searching’ at the State Archives an official report on
Having proved himself, Nowlan was then sent to the Barron River station in 1879 to replace Robert Little who was ostensibly discharged ‘on reduction of the force’, but who had been found guilty of financial irregularities.\(^{56}\) Little thought he had been dismissed ‘on account of a black mark’ against his name. ‘I was not aware of being guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer or gentleman during my service in the Native Mounted Police’.\(^{57}\) Horses were of little use to the Native Police in the impenetrable rainforests and steep ranges of North Queensland, so most patrolling was done on foot.\(^{58}\) Inspector John Stuart said Little was unfit for ‘walking’ duties in the North.\(^{59}\) From the Barron River camp, Nowlan led patrols to the Barron, Mossman, Mowbray and Mulgrave River valleys.\(^{60}\) During 1880 Stuart reported Nowlan was ‘not a physically strong man but since he came here he has done his best and punished the blacks severely on several occasions for committing outrages’. Nowlan was transferred to the McKinlay Downs Native Police barracks, but Inspector Frederick Murray reported from that post in late 1881 that Nowlan was drunk.\(^{61}\) Murray suggested giving him another chance at Eyres Creek camp near Birdsville where he would be ‘out of the way of all temptation, as ‘it

\(^{56}\) Police Staff File, Robert Kyle Little, A/40048.
\(^{57}\) Little to Colonial Secretary, 20 August 1879, A/40048/79/3034.
\(^{58}\) According to Loos, the effectiveness of the Native Police was ‘greatly diminished’ in the rainforest, Noel Loos, *Invasion and Resistance* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1982), 103
\(^{59}\) Stuart to Seymour, 13 September 1879, POL/12M/G2/79/239.
\(^{60}\) Police Inspector’s Office, Port Douglas, Letterbook, POL/12M/G2.
\(^{61}\) Murray to Seymour, 15 December 1881, Police Staff File, Nowlan, A/40105/82/106
would be a pity to see him dismissed’. Seymour disagreed and summarily dismissed him – a decision the Executive Council endorsed.  

For some men, heavy drinking continued or increased after they left the Native Police. Walter Jones, a former soldier, was appointed as a Cadet in 1880, posted to the Barron River camp, and promoted to Second Class Sub Inspector in 1882. After being stationed at the Dunrobin (Georgetown) and Norman River camps, he was dismissed in 1884 for drinking. Subsequently employed as a Customs Department Clerk in Brisbane, he drowned while heavily intoxicated at the seaside resort of Sandgate in 1893. According to writer George Essex Evans, who appeared as a witness at the inquest, he had often seen Jones ‘take off all his clothes and walk about his room’ after drinking. Evans recalled ‘He used to do many eccentric things at times’, and often spoke of ‘swimming flooded creeks when he was up North in the police’.

Another officer who liked to take off all his clothes when drinking was Sub Inspector Frederick Clerk. In 1882, Inspector Tompson wired to the Commissioner, saying Clerk had to be kept away from public houses. Tompson thought that Clerk, at the age of twenty-nine, would ‘eventually end in ruin’. The only Native Police station Tompson could send him to was Carl Creek but ‘not with Armit in charge of it, as he is

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63 Police Staff File, Walter Jones, A/38846 and promotion of Cadet Walter Jones to 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 7 July 1882, Executive Council Minute, COL/E50/82/33.
64 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 2 April 1884, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A385/84/2101 and dismissal of Sub Inspector Jones, 17 April 1884, Executive Council Minute, COL/E60/84/129.
65 Inquest into death of Walter Jones at Sandgate, JUS/N214/93/340.
66 JUS/N214/93/340.
67 Police Staff File, Frederick M Clerk, A/38742.
too much given the same way when opportunity offers, I believe’. Six months later, troopers reported Clerk took seven bottles of spirits on patrol and was ‘drunk while it lasted’. He was eventually dismissed after Sub Inspector Smart reported him for heavy drinking in 1883. ‘For the last two days he has been running about the camp in a state of nudity’.70

A number of Native Police officers were dismissed for fraud or for not keeping accurate records of their detachments’ finances.71 Several (Robert Kyle Little and Thomas Williams) were also sacked for drunkenness, and their cases have already been discussed. Two other examples are Thomas Watterston and Thomas Barron, who were dismissed in 1866 and 1881 respectively. Scottish-born Thomas Watterston joined the Native Police after his wife died in 1866. Seymour recommended his dismissal after discovering that Watterston had signed three separate orders for the same pay to cover a cash advance. The Commissioner’s recommendation was acted upon. Watterston was in difficult circumstances when he received his dismissal notice. ‘I have not only spent all the cash I had, but have given an order on my pay so that I will be penniless and a long distance in the interior without a friend or means to remove from here’.72 His statement is another reminder of the isolation that European officers faced.

68 A/38742.  
69 A/38742.  
70 A/38742.  
71 Charles Blakeney, Thomas Watterston, Otto Paschen, Robert Kyle Little, Thomas Barron and William Armit.  
72 Watterston to Colonial Secretary, 29 September 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A85/66/3127.
The case of Thomas Barron is more complicated.\textsuperscript{73} After spending thirteen years in the Indian Navy, Barron was appointed Police Magistrate at Warrego in 1864 and Inspector of Police in 1866.\textsuperscript{74} Thirty years after Barron’s ‘resignation’ in 1881, Commissioner William Cahill gave former Sub Inspector Walter Cheeke an interview about ‘certain circumstances connected with his service’. Cheeke claimed that Barron ‘made use of the power of attorney’ to involve himself and others in an ‘embezzlement scandal’ while Commissioner Seymour was ‘away in England’.\textsuperscript{75} Barron acted as Commissioner in Seymour’s place on four separate occasions, but when an audit report found £489 to be missing from the Commissioner’s Office Barron was dismissed.\textsuperscript{76} The Executive Council considered his case. ‘Under the circumstances’, the ‘irregularities with which he was charged took place’, but in view of his ‘long and faithful services and ill-health’, as well as the fact that he had paid all of the ‘deficiencies’ back, the Council decided to cancel its previous directive. Barron was allowed to resign and to retain his superannuation.\textsuperscript{77} He returned to England where he died six months later.\textsuperscript{78}

In summary, the first task, in looking at the Europeans who served, was to accurately identify the members of the force from surviving records. The names of one

\textsuperscript{73} In 1876, Sub Inspector Robert Johnstone said he named the Barron River in North Queensland ‘after the chief clerk of police’, ‘New Route to Thornborough’, The \textit{Queenslander} (21 October 1876: 15).

\textsuperscript{74} Resignation of Thomas Barron as Crown Lands Commissioner, 24 March 1866, Lands and Works Department Correspondence, LWO/A27/65/2770 and Queensland Police Gazette 3 (1 January 1866: 1).

\textsuperscript{75} Police Staff File, Walter Cheeke, A/38756.

\textsuperscript{76} Inquiry into fraud in the Office of Commissioner of Police, 7 July 1881, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A345/82/4944.

\textsuperscript{77} Resignation of Acting Commissioner Barron, 25 October 1881, Executive Council Minutes, COL/E45/81/343 and 81/352.
hundred and fifty men have been found to date. Staff files for about half – seventy-six – of these officers have been located. Issues of disciplinary breaches, especially alcohol-related, plagued the Commissioner, but the Native Police was no different from other police forces in this regard. Some of those who passed through the force without blemish were rewarded with judicial appointments. Sometimes, as we will see, former Native Police officers sat in judgement over charges against serving officers of the force. Lastly, the records revealed corruption at the highest levels of the force. Now we consider the structure of the force.

Command structure

The name for the lowest initial rank at the time of appointment to the Native Police changed over time. When Queensland took control of the force in 1860, the lowest rank in the officer-class of the Native Police was Second Lieutenant. From 1860 to 1863, nineteen men were appointed as Cadets, and between 1865 and 1869, sixty-three appointments to the force were made at the rank of Acting Sub Inspector. These two statistics show how the numbers of the force were ‘built up’ during the 1860s after Queensland took control and colonial expansion to the north increased.

The Native Police in Queensland had a very simple chain of command. The force’s Inspectors passed orders to the Acting Sub Inspectors and Sub Inspectors.

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78 Intestate file, Thomas Henry Bowman Barron, SCT/P75/2669. It is quite possible that Barron’s death so soon after his ‘retirement’ in disgrace was self-inflicted, although no
Inspectors reported to the Commissioner of Police, or to his delegated substitute. After serving a probationary period, Acting Sub Inspectors were usually promoted to the rank of Sub Inspector, and then Inspector. Some twenty-five individuals progressed through the ranks of Inspector, Chief Inspector, Commandant or Commissioner.

Men were appointed as Acting Sub Inspectors from 1867; previously camp sergeants had filled their role. Men at these entry points were not to go out on patrol without a senior officer, but ended up being sent because there weren’t enough ‘senior officers’. Records show that Acting Sub Inspectors were frequently in charge of detachments. After 1881, fourteen individuals were appointed as Cadet Sub Inspectors, with the last appointment at that rank being made in 1889.79 Individuals in the Native Police had different ranks from those in the ‘ordinary’ Police, because they were appointed as officers, while those in the ‘ordinary’ Police were sworn-in as constables.80

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### Command structure of Native Police under New South Wales control

- Commandant
- First Lieutenants (4)
- Second Lieutenants (10)
- Troopers (99)

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79 William Cooper was the last Cadet appointed to the Native Police, *Queensland Police Gazette* 26 (19 June 1889: 263).
80 The term ‘ordinary constables’ was used in the 1866 Native Police Regulations and Commissioner Seymour specifically used the phrase to differentiate the town police from the Native Police in 1874, see Police Commissioner, General Orders, 4 August 1874, POL/4/572.
Table 3: Command structure and numbers, 1859

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command structure of Native Police under Queensland control (1)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner of Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspectors (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Inspectors (12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Troopers (160)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Command structure and numbers, 1864,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command structure of Native Police under Queensland control (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commandant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspectors (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Inspectors (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Sub Inspectors (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troopers (141)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Constables were placed in charge of detachments in North Queensland from 1882, despite criticisms of this policy by some senior officers. ‘The system of Constables or Senior Constables being in charge of Native Police stations has seen the efficiency and tone of the Force steadily diminish’. It is worth looking at the Constables – ‘non-commissioned officers’ in military parlance – who were placed in command of Native Police detachments towards the end of the force’s history, if only for the reason that it is not generally known that police officers below the rank of Sub Inspector were in charge of patrols. They were the last men to serve in the Native Police, and the final group with personal memories of life in the force. After they retired, the force ceased to exist.

When the force began at Separation in 1859, the officers of the Native Police reported via the Commandant to the Colonial Secretary. In 1863, notice of vice-regal assent for the Police Act was advised. From 1864 the Commissioner of Police was specifically ‘charged with the superintendence of the Police Force of the whole colony including the Native Police Force’. So, from 1864, the Commissioner of Police was responsible for the force, and in turn answered to the Colonial Secretary, the Executive Council and Parliament. The Executive Council, consisting of ‘the Governor in Council’ with his senior ministers (usually the Colonial Secretary, and one or more ministers), was

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81 Marrett to Commissioner, May 1896, Home Secretary’s Correspondence, HOM/J22/07/967.
82 Queensland Government Gazette 4 (10 October 1863).
in control of the force. The Governor appointed the Colonial Secretary as the colony’s foremost public servant, answerable (through the Vice Regal office) to Her Majesty the Queen via the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London. In later years the occupant of the office was termed the Chief Secretary (later ‘Chief Minister’ and ‘Premier’). He was always more than just another elected colonial politician.

Some individuals in the Native Police tried to ‘go over the head’ of the Commissioner by appealing to the Colonial Secretary, and other Ministers, with mixed results. The officers who did so were usually disciplined, but some were only lightly chastised, and a few were apparently rewarded. Family connections often influenced relationships between high-ranking colonial officials and the officers of the Native Police. For example, in 1866 Sub Inspector Wentworth D’Arcy Uhr left his post in Queensland’s northwest and pursued a horse thief to New South Wales. The Executive Council paid his travel expenses from the Police Reward Fund. Uhr’s movements directly breached Rule 56 of the Native Police Regulations, stating officers were not permitted to leave their districts without permission in writing. Men without patrons could be dismissed for relatively minor infractions of this rule. Sub Inspector William Armit complained that he had been dismissed for the ‘the somewhat venial offence of leaving my district to report to the Inspector’. Uhr’s father was the Sergeant-at-Arms for the Queensland Legislature and used his position to secure his son’s appointment to

83 Uhr at Bourke, New South Wales to Commissioner, 2 October 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A84/66/2923, and approval of claim for expenses by Sub Inspector Uhr, 26 April 1867, Executive Council Minute, COL/E1/67/125.
84 Queensland Government Gazette (10 March 1866)
85 Armit to Colonial Secretary, 3 December 1884, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A409/84/8694.
the force. Uhr in fact left a record of his request. ‘Mr Herbert kindly promised me a
cadetship in the Native Police for one of my sons in the Native Police’. WD Uhr’s
brother, Reginald, joined the force three months after his father’s letter.

On rare occasions the chain of command was circumvented from above. In
November 1861, reports reached Brisbane that Aborigines had killed nineteen Europeans
at a location known as Cullin-la-ringo. Queensland’s first Colonial Secretary, Robert
Herbert, wrote personally to the officers in command of several Native Police camps, and
ordered the officers to attend the scene with their full detachments immediately, and to
‘efficiently patrol’ the district. Usually, however, colonial officials other than the
Colonial Secretary relayed all instructions to the force via the Commandant or, after
1864, the Commissioner.

Records of the large number of Native Police issues that came before the
Executive Council are worth special attention. They tell us which matters were senior
appointments, scandals, and dismissals. There are over three hundred documents relating
to the Native Police in the files of the colony’s most senior public managers. Successive
Governors, Colonial Secretaries, and Ministers of the Crown knew what was going on in
the Native Police. Even if they didn’t have a full awareness of the extent of the violence,
they knew who had been dismissed or disciplined for ‘unlawful killing’. The members of
the Executive Council evinced no apparent interest in controlling the force’s violence.
This suggests that the so-called ‘annual’ Parliamentary debate on the Native Police was

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86 *Queensland Government Gazette* (1 October 1864: 851).
87 Uhr to Colonial Secretary, 11 September 1862, LWO/A2/62/877; appointment of
Reginald Uhr as Cadet, 23 December 1862, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E6/62/52.
88 Colonial Secretary to Messrs Gregson, McIntosh & others, 11 November 1861,
Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/R2/61/893.
largely irrelevant to the operations of the force.\textsuperscript{89} ‘[O]nce a year, ever since Queensland has been a colony, there has been a debate in the Legislative Assembly on the Aboriginal question. It generally takes place when the estimates for the maintenance of the Native Police are asked to be voted’.\textsuperscript{90}

This section has shown that the Native Police in Queensland operated under the direct control of the colony’s most senior administrators – the Executive Council. The Governor, in council with the Colonial Secretary and other Ministers decided where to deploy the Native Police, and which officers to dismiss. No evidence has turned up during a long and thorough search that shows a member of the Executive or of the Legislature ever taking responsibility for what went on at the frontier. Members of the Executive were the best-informed people in the capital. It is most unlikely that they had no information.

By looking at the careers of these men, we are in a sense making some general observations about colonial life. The movement of men into other positions or from other positions into the Native Police indicates that perhaps the Native Police was not a secret, walled-off part of ‘the state’, but a part of ‘the State’ – though one that could be embarrassing. The Native Police was to be run on a shoestring, but men made careers in it, and moved into other government departments from it. Everything in the research material suggests the Native Police was vaguely modelled on the Irish Constabulary, but like other frontier forces operated with a tight budget that did not attract, train, or hold the

\textsuperscript{89} The Native Police were mentioned in Parliamentary debates on a number of occasions between 1860 and 1900. See 11 May 1864, 9 August 1864, 4 October 1867, 28 29 November 1867, 30 January 1868, 6 December 1868, 17 November 1870, 1 December 1870, 11 & 25 June 1874, 14 July 1874, and 1 & 21 October 1880.
\textsuperscript{90} ‘Aboriginal Reserve at Mackay’, clipping from unknown newspaper (22 July 1875).
best characters.\textsuperscript{91} Police in Ireland first used the force’s terminology. The rank of Sub Inspector was first introduced in the Irish Police in 1828.\textsuperscript{92} Cadet Sub Inspectors were first appointed to the Irish Constabulary in 1842.\textsuperscript{93} As well, like other frontier forces, the Native Police put its European ‘leaders’ in dangerous, and – for any moral individual – unsafe territory. Therefore, some men died or left.

\textbf{Who were they?}

Officers in the Native Police came from a range of backgrounds. Some were born in different parts of Great Britain, including the Channel Islands, and Ireland. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, men from colonial families were appointed to the force. Each man had a different experience in the force. Records for many have been found. How can the mass of data be organised to make any sense of the European members of the Native Police? One useful way to look at the officers of the force is to arrange them in ‘clusters’, according to the circumstances of their appointments, their careers in the police force, and their subsequent appointments (if any) after serving in the Native Police. For instance, the men who were appointed as Police Magistrates after serving in the Native Police would be worth closer examination because their records might be expected to be

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{92} Palmer, \textit{Police and Protest}, 255.
\textsuperscript{93} Donal J O’Sullivan, \textit{The Irish Constabularies, 1822-1922: A century of policing in Ireland} (Dingle: Brandon, 1999), 62.
\end{footnotesize}
exemplary from the government’s perspective. Thus, we should be able to gain some insight into the government’s expectations for this force. Since rarely did police commissioners or ministers write or say anything about the force, this direct evidence is valuable. The records of these men may also show how some individuals used the force as a ‘stepping stone’ for their public service careers. Useful clusters could also be constructed according to reasons for discharges, dismissals and resignations. Therefore, the records of individuals, arranged in clusters of rank, serve as a good starting point for further discussion on the officers of the Native Police.

The first group are the ‘Higher Ranks’ – Commissioners, Commandants, and Chief Inspectors. The ‘Inspectors’, and two groups of Sub Inspectors – the ‘Long-term men’ and the ‘Short-time men’ – follow these. Constables are the last of the clusters. These one hundred and fifty individuals were the total number of Europeans who served in or over Native Police detachments, between 1860 and 1910. These are the men for whom there are multiple references in the archival material, and therefore, those who can be positively identified as having been members of the force for lengthy periods.

Some exceptions do have to be noted. The clusters do not include some members of the force during the early 1860s whose careers cannot be followed. Those individuals who only remained in the Native Police force for very brief periods are also not included. For example, James Huband was appointed as a Cadet in 1862, but he failed to turn up for duty, and no further references to him have been found. Sydney Reed, apparently

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94 See Table 1 ‘The Magistrates’, page 96.
appointed as a Cadet, was dismissed in 1881 for ‘marrying without permission’. No more references have been found so far.\(^{96}\) His case reminds us that Native Police officers, like men in other police forces and military units, were generally not allowed to marry.\(^{97}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Clusters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Higher ranks</strong>: Commandants, Commissioners and Chief Inspectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Inspectors</strong>: supervised police districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Sub Inspectors</strong>: led the troopers on bush patrols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Constables</strong>: were in charge of detachments from the 1880s.</td>
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Table 6: The ‘clusters’ of Native Police officers.

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**The higher ranks**

The cluster consisting of Commissioners, Commandants, and Chief Inspectors is worth examining because it gives an insight into the management of British colonial frontiers, and the forces like the Native Police that operated on them. Analysis of the

\(^{96}\) No references to this appointment has been found, and the only record known to exist is a letter from him complaining about his dismissal, Sydney Reed to Colonial Secretary, 13 July 1881, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A317/81/3069.

\(^{97}\) In 1883, Native Police officers were advised that marriage would cause them to ‘cease to hold office in the Force’, *Queensland Police Gazette* (25 June 1883: 120) and *Queensland Government Gazette* (29 June 1883: 1699).
records reveals the diverse origins of officers; people moved and changed careers. The old regime of military as opposed to bureaucratic experience was still evident; Queensland ran on a ‘shoestring’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Higher Ranks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Barron (1865-81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bligh (1853-64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edric Morisset (1853-61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Parry-Okeden (1892-1905)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Seymour (1864-95)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: The ‘Higher Ranks’, with dates of service.

The individuals in this group all reached the rank of Chief Inspector or higher during their careers. These ten officers served for an average time of seventeen years, and include two thirty-year careers (John Stuart and David Seymour). Half this group came from military backgrounds: two, Henry Browne and David Seymour, had previously served in British army infantry regiments; two, Thomas Barron and Alexander Douglas, had served in the Indian Navy and with the Royal Navy in China respectively. The New South Wales government appointed three of this cohort (John Bligh, Edric Morisset and George Murray) before 1859.98

There were two Commandants of the Native Police between 1859 and 1864: Edric Morisset and John Bligh. They took charge of a force that had been established for eleven years under the control of the New South Wales government. The first Commandant,
Frederick Walker, was dismissed for drunkenness in 1854, and the second, Richard Marshall, resigned in 1855. The Queensland government appointed Edric Morisset as Inspector General of Police in 1860, and he retired in 1861.99 He was one of three sons of British army officer Lieutenant Colonel James Morisset who served in the Native Police. Colonel Morisset, who had seen active service in Egypt, India, Spain, and the Crimean War, was a ‘stern disciplinarian’, and his three sons (Edric, Aulaire and Rudolph) grew up in a strict military household.100 These three brothers all served in the Native Police, and confused clerks and historians. Even the family name is often misspelt.101

Morisset’s replacement as Commandant of the Native Police was John O’Connell Bligh, the grandson of Governor William Bligh, and the nephew of Sir Maurice O’Connell, a member of the Queensland Legislative Chamber.102 Bligh’s attitude to Aboriginal people was illustrated by an incident at Maryborough in 1860 when his detachment pursued several Aboriginal men through the township, and into the Mary River. Bligh and his troopers then obtained boats, chased the ‘suspects’ and shot them

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98 The New South Wales government also appointed the force’s first two Commandants – Frederick Walker and Richard Marshall.
99 Resignation of Commandant Morisset, 18 June 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A16/61/1478.
101 The ‘number of ways’ to spell the name was noted by one historian, who ‘followed the spelling in the Australian Dictionary of Biography’, David Denholm, Some Aspects of Squatting in New South Wales and Queensland, 1847-1864 (Doctoral thesis, Australian National University, 1972), 334.
102 John Bligh’s father, Richard, was the Crown Lands Commissioner for the Gwydir Pastoral District, New South Wales. John Bligh’s aunt, Mary Bligh (Maurice O’Connell’s wife), was the eldest daughter of Governor Bligh. John Bligh was also related to the Blakeney and Nutting families. Unknown, ‘Bligh Family History’, and Queensland Government Gazette 2 (10 July 1861: 340).
dead in the water. Soon after, these same troopers took other Aboriginal people to the Coopers Plains police barracks near Maryborough, and they were never seen again.

‘What honor can there be in occasionally slaughtering the naked, unarmed, flying savage?’ Bligh was presented with a sword by the townspeople of Maryborough, in gratitude for his efforts in bringing peace to the district. His death at Gympie in 1880, four years after the death of his wife, was probably self-inflicted.

One of the important changes that Queensland made when it took control of the Native Police was the creation of the position of Commissioner to superintend both the ‘ordinary’ Police and the Native Police. David Seymour was Queensland’s first Commissioner of Police, and occupied that office from 1864 to 1895. He arrived in Brisbane as the officer in command of an army detachment, and was soon appointed as the Governor’s Aide-de-camp. Seymour’s career and private life attracted controversy (beginning with his appointment). His passion for racehorses and turf clubs became public knowledge. He appears to have been distinctly uncomfortable with the

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103 Inquest into death of Darky at Maryborough, JUS/N1/60/6a.
105 Moreton Bay Courier (25 April 1861).
109 See the editorial on his appointment, and the editorial on his first Annual Report, saying the police ‘are nearly all Irishmen’ and given to horse-dealing, but Commissioner Seymour proposed to ‘remedy this great evil’ by ‘going into the horsey line himself’. See also ‘Government Appointments’ by ‘XX’, describing Seymour as ‘lacking even the
behaviour of some Native Police officers. For instance, when Lyndon Poingdestre wrote ‘the duty performed by me at Cape York conferred a lasting boom on the pearl shell industry’, Seymour added a notation to the report. ‘Drunk nearly all the time – did nothing’. Seven years later, when adverse reports about Poingdestre’s behaviour emerged, a furious Seymour demanded to know why successive Inspectors had failed to report his ‘misconduct’.110

Seymour’s comments on the force and his position are important, because he answered to the Legislature and the Executive with regard to the Native Police for thirty years. In 1868 he defended the force, about which he observed ‘a great deal has been said and written’; the failure of the Native Police to protect settlers was caused by lack of numbers rather than ‘the inefficiencies of the force’.111 When allegations of Native Police ‘outrages’ were published in 1874, Seymour reported to the Colonial Secretary in response to a memo from the Governor, that ‘the organisation of the Native Mounted Police is not that for which this Department is responsible’.112 Seymour was responding to allegations brought by Charles Heydon of ‘outrages’ committed by the Native Police on ‘The Aborigines in Queensland’.113 According to one source, Heydon first learnt of

trifling amount of cerebral development necessary for an aide-de-camp’, The Courier (5 January 1864), Brisbane Courier (26 June 1865) and, The Queenslander (9 November 1867: 5).

110 Poingdestre to Commissioner, 11 January 1882, Police Staff File, William Eddington De Margerites Armit, A/38710. Also see Lamond to Commissioner, 27 February 1889, Police Staff File, Lyndon John Agnew Poingdestre, A/40323.

111 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 4 February 1868, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A101/68/343.


113 ‘Black and White in Queensland’ by Charles Heydon, Sydney Morning Herald (2 February 1874: 3).
frontier killings in 1872 when he went to North Queensland after the Maria shipwreck.¹¹⁴ News of Heydon’s accusations reached Lord Canarvon in England, and he asked Governor Normanby to ‘find out’ the truth. Seymour concluded that if any ‘want of control’ had ever happened, it could be attributed to ‘the inexperience of the officers in the special duties of the service’.¹¹⁵ He wrote his report for the Colonial Secretary five days before the Report of Aboriginal Commissioners into the Organisation and Discipline of the Native Mounted Police Force was completed.¹¹⁶

When further comments emerged a year later, Seymour said it would have been his duty to take notice of any ‘atrocities’ and these charges ‘existed in imagination’ only. As previously noted, this statement stands at odds with his dismissals of a number of officers for ‘unlawful killings’. With regard to the European officers in the force, he said ‘it becomes frequently a matter of very great difficulty to find a suitable officer to fill a vacancy; though there has never been any lack of candidates’ for the ‘special duties’ of the force.¹¹⁷ The difficulty of finding appropriate officers was also noted by the second Commissioner Parry-Okeden, who said, in relation to North Queensland during 1897, there were ‘plenty of mounted men in the district but very few, if any, suitable for Native Police patrol’.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276.
¹¹⁶ Drew, Gregory and Coxen to Colonial Secretary, 6 May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276, and A/40291.
¹¹⁷ Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276.
The violent officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Officers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>John Bligh, Frederick Wheeler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>William Moorhead, Rudolph Morisset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Frederick Carr, Joseph Harris, Ralph Johnson, Marmaduke Richardson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Sergeant Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Arthur Beevor</td>
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<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Edward Seymour</td>
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<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Myrtil Aubin</td>
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<td>1870</td>
<td>Edward Wheeler</td>
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<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Thomas Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Aulaire Morisset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Alexander Douglas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>William Armit, John Carroll, Frederick Wheeler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Alfred Smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Roland Garraway, William Nichols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Lyndon Poingdestre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>John Affleck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>John Hoole</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Men recorded as being dismissed, or ‘allowed to resign’, or chastised, after being involved in ‘unlawful killings’ (For sources, see Appendix 1).

The Colonial Secretary, the Executive Council, and the Parliament decided which of Seymour’s recommendations regarding appointments and dismissals to adopt. Resources and finances were also largely outside his control. This might have been what he was alluding to in 1874. Even though he was nominally in command of the Native Police, he bowed to the policies and interventions of the Colonial Secretary and the Executive Council. There are definite signs of tension in the relationship between the Commissioner and some other colonial officials. The fact that some men managed to

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118 Lamond to Commissioner, Police Staff File, Michael Cuddihy, A/40267.
remain employed despite their misdemeanours suggests that politicians applied pressure.\textsuperscript{119}

Poingdestre’s case is a good example. Reported in 1897 by Inspector Lamond for living with three Aboriginal women at Highbury camp (one for fourteen years, and another for ten years), with a number of his children, he was allowed to resign on a pension in the same year.\textsuperscript{120} Poingdestre’s connections were powerful forces in colonial politics and society.\textsuperscript{121} By contrast, even Commissioner Seymour was quickly forgotten. After his death in 1916, there is no record of any form of acknowledgement, official or otherwise, of his lengthy service as the colony’s first Commissioner of Police in Queensland. Yet, on his retirement in 1895, Seymour had taken full credit for organising the Queensland Police.\textsuperscript{122}

Seymour occupied the office of Commissioner for over three decades. During this time, his ‘efficiency’ attracted comment. His distance from the frontier opened him to criticism from observers who lived in distant towns. Seymour’s long hold on office made him an obvious target of critics who looked to government for action. One correspondent referred to him in a Cairns newspaper as ‘the fossilised apex at the head of the Police Department’.\textsuperscript{123} Records show that Seymour only inspected the North Queensland

\textsuperscript{119} Seymour’s alleged dislike for ‘political interference’ with the Native Police is noted by one writer, Allan Hillier, \textit{If You Leave Me Alone I’ll Leave You Alone: Biographical Sketches, Reports and Incidents from the Myall War of the Queensland Native Mounted Police Force, 1860-1885} (unpublished manuscript, University of South Australia Library, 199?).
\textsuperscript{120} Lamond to Commissioner, 20 January 1897, Poingdestre, staff file, A/40323/97/960.
\textsuperscript{121} Poingdestre’s sister married AC MacMillan, a successful colonial engineer and pioneer sugar-grower. Jane Black, \textit{North Queensland Pioneers} (Townsville: Queensland Country Women’s Association, 1932), 71. I am grateful to Bill Kidston for this reference.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 32 (29 June 1895: 198).
\textsuperscript{123} ‘Police Requirements’, \textit{Cairns Post} (8 June 1887: 2).
stations three times in thirty years. In 1871, he went to Cardwell, where he reportedly collected ‘vegetation samples’. He visited Cooktown in 1874, and went there again in 1884 to ‘inquire into charges against the sub-inspectors’. Seymour was suspended as Police Commissioner in 1892 after he lost a lot of money through speculating in Mt Morgan gold mining shares. After a Public Service Board inquiry, he was allowed to retain his position. When Seymour went to Europe or to other colonies on leave, Inspector Thomas Barron acted in his place. It appears that Seymour’s absence gave Barron opportunities to make decisions that Seymour later countermanded. Of these, the re-appointments of Lyndon Poingdestre and Thomas Williams are notable, but others in the Native Police also possibly took advantage of Seymour’s absence as well. For instance, when Seymour went to Ireland in 1872, Frederick Wheeler was clearly so uninterested in telling Barron what he had done with an Aboriginal prisoner, that Colonial Secretary Arthur Palmer was obliged to caution him personally. From 1892 William Parry-Okeden, the Principal Under Secretary of the Colonial Secretary’s Office, relieved Seymour as Head of the Police Force. After Seymour retired in 1895, Parry-Okeden was appointed as Queensland’s second Commissioner of Police.

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125 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 24 February 1874, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A192/74/399, and ‘The Northern Blacks and Our Native Police Force’, *Queensland Figaro* (22 November 1884: 655).
126 Police Staff File, David Thompson Seymour, A/47922 and insolvency of Commissioner Seymour, 10 March 1892, Executive Council Minute, COL/E139/92/89.
127 Roland Garraway was reappointed to the Native Police in 1897 by the new Commissioner, William Parry-Okeden, after Seymour had rejected numerous appeals for his reinstatement since 1888, see Police Staff File, Roland Walter Garraway, A/40212.
128 See telegram from Colonial Secretary Palmer to Sub Inspector Wheeler, 16 October 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A170/72/1484.
129 *Queensland Police Gazette* 32 (1 July 1895: 204).
In 1865 it was decided that the remote camps and scattered stations of a colony the size of Queensland were probably too much for any one man to supervise on his own. The position of Chief Inspector was introduced in 1866. The records do not disclose any reason for the creation of this new rank, which simply appears in operational records. The position had initially been offered to Inspector John Marlow, but he declined the promotion, and resigned six years later, after a career spanning fourteen years. George Murray accepted the appointment in 1866, and held his position until 1872. Henry Browne, a former army officer, was appointed Western Chief Inspector in 1867, and retained this office, and that of Travelling Inspector, until his retirement in 1875.

Seymour, it seems, did not recommend any further appointments at this rank until 1890, when Inspector John Ahern was detailed to ‘minutely inspect’ the Police Force. John Stuart was appointed as Chief Inspector in 1896 after a twenty-seven year career that began when he joined as an Acting Sub Inspector in 1869. When Stuart retired in 1900, Alexander Douglas was promoted. The career of Douglas, which began with his

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130 *Queensland Government Gazette* 7, 169 (20 December 1866: 1).
131 While stationed in North Queensland, Marlow suggested that Aboriginal women and children should be confined on offshore islands as a means of controlling and stopping Indigenous resistance. His proposal was supported by local church ministers, but not by the government, see appointment of John Marlow as 2nd Lieutenant, 1 October 1860, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E2/60/45; *Queensland Government Gazette* 7 (20 December 1866: 1).
132 Appointment of Henry Browne as Chief Inspector for Southern and Western Districts, 1 January 1867, Executive Council Minute, COL/E1/67/63; *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1870: 17) and *Queensland Police Gazette* 9 (1 September 1872: 77).
133 *Queensland Police Gazette* 27 (1 March 1890:106 and 29 March 1890:133).
134 *Queensland Police Gazette* 33 (1 January 1896: 97). Inspector Stuart wrote to Commissioner Seymour, saying ‘Rome was not built in a day’, when questioned about Native Police finances, Stuart to Commissioner, 8 February 1879, Port Douglas Inspector’s Letterbook, POL/12M/G2/79/25.
appointment as an Acting Sub Inspector in 1872, extended over thirty years. In summary, this rank appears to have been reserved for men believed to have initiative (Marlow) or durability (Douglas and Stuart). After reviewing the surviving historical data on the men in the higher ranks, we have some idea of how this unusual force ‘fitted’ into the policing establishment of Queensland.

What happened to the Native Police officers after they left the force? We cannot reconstruct the fates of all the men in great detail, nor would that be illuminating unless guided by questions about how their subsequent careers or length of time in the Native Police revealed more about the place of this force in the larger society. With good questions and limited, but hard won information, we can discover a great deal about Queensland. We can now ask how many Native Police officers later assumed positions of respectability and power. Did they see the Native Police as a career? We will seek to answer these questions while looking at the Inspectors and Sub Inspectors of the force.

The Inspectors

Inspectors had command over Native Police districts. They exercised ‘constant personal supervision of their different stations’. They held enquiries into the efficiency, conduct and behaviour of lower-ranked officers, and often made recommendations to the Commissioner about them. Men who held this rank were vital to

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135 *Queensland Police Gazette* 9 (9 June 1872: 68) and *Queensland Government Gazette* 69, 1 (11 May 1898: 356).
Native Police operations. A closer examination of their origins and an examination of their careers can help us to understand how the Native Police ‘fitted’ into the security agencies of colonial Queensland. Twenty-seven men served as Inspectors in the Native Police, including six who reached the rank of Chief Inspector or higher. Seven individuals began their careers in the ‘regular’ Queensland Police as Constables, and then were promoted to Inspector, and became responsible for the supervision of Native Police detachments. Another fourteen men reached the rank of Inspector after starting their careers in the Native Police as Lieutenants, Cadets, Acting Sub Inspectors, or Sub Inspectors.

For men who began their police career as Constables, it took an average of twenty-three years to reach Inspector, but those who started as Cadets or Acting Sub Inspectors usually achieved the rank in twelve years. The junior officers in the Native Police took less time to reach this rank than those in the ‘ordinary’ police of Queensland. This is an important point, which highlights the ‘specialism’ of the Native Police force. On average, the Inspectors served for twenty-eight years in the Police, with ten serving over thirty years. The longest staff record was that of Hervey Fitzgerald, who stayed in the force for forty years (1865-1905). 137 Some Inspectors were shifted to the Justice

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136 Native Police Regulation 47, Queensland Government Gazette (10 March 1866).
137 Suspended and ‘severely reprimanded’ for publicly whipping an Aboriginal woman, the Executive Council decided that Fitzgerald ‘may serve in some other branch of the Public Service where his duties will not bring him into contact with Aborigines’, and transferred him to the Gold Escort in 1876. He was back in the Native Police by late 1879, and in command of the Cooktown detachments after the death of Mrs Watson at Lizard Island in 1881. Fitzgerald wrote about ‘attacks of scoundrels’ on Native Police officers in 1896, which he thought should be ‘met by an action for criminal libel’. Police Staff File, Hervey Fitzgerald, A/40291, and Resignation of Sub Inspector Fitzgerald, 5 October 1876, Executive Council Minute, COL/E20/76/757. For details of the Lizard Island affair, see John B Haviland with Roger Hart, Old Man Fog (Bathurst: Crawford.
Department. Four men, Maxwell Armstrong, Aulaire Morisset, John Nutting, and Thomas Thornton were appointed as Police Magistrates while they were serving members of the Police force.\textsuperscript{138} Several Inspectors had blemished careers. Inspectors John Isley and Frederick Murray were each reprimanded at retirement in 1895 for ‘misconduct’ and ‘monetary embarrassments’.\textsuperscript{139} Both had spent thirty years in the Police. The many paths to senior rank in the Native Police suggest that it was not regarded by the government as a force unto itself, as either an irregular force or an elite force. It seems from this angle to have been just another branch of the law and order apparatus.

Of the twenty-one Inspectors, nineteen staff files have survived. They provide good insights into their careers and backgrounds. Only two came from military backgrounds. Aulaire Morisset was the second son of Colonel James Morisset, and Fredrick Urquhart was the son of a British army officer.\textsuperscript{140} Urquhart, who had been promised ‘the first vacancy’ in the force by General Fielding, eventually reached the rank of Police Commissioner in 1917, by which time the Native Police had ceased to exist.\textsuperscript{141} Only one Inspector, David Graham, had previous police experience in the Irish

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\textsuperscript{138} Queensland Government Gazette 36, 1 (1 May 1885: 424); Queensland Government Gazette 12, 69 (7 July 1871: 1); Queensland Government Gazette 12, 94 (22 September 1871: 1); Queensland Government Gazette 12, 67 (29 June 1871: 1); and Queensland Police Gazette 6 (7 October 1869: 68).
\textsuperscript{139} Reduction of Inspector Isley, 22 May 1895, Executive Council Minute, COL/E177/95/177; and reduction of Inspector Murray, 25 September 1895, Executive Council Minute, COL/E181/95/371.
\textsuperscript{140} Police Staff Files, Aulaire Liddiard Morisset, A/40054 and Frederick Charles Urquhart, A/47932; Fielding to Urquhart, 17 January 1882, A/47932.
\textsuperscript{141} Police Staff File, Urquhart, A/47932.
Constabulary.\textsuperscript{142} Of the twenty-one officers in the higher ranks, fourteen retired. Four died while still serving. These were Inspectors John Ahern, Thomas Clohesy, Thomas Judge and Herbert Durham.\textsuperscript{143} The causes of Ahern and Judge’s deaths are unknown. Clohesy died after a brief illness, and Durham took his own life after a young Constable laid a charge of sexual misconduct.\textsuperscript{144} The Executive Council allowed John Murray, who joined the Native Police in 1852, to resign after charges of drunkenness, general misconduct and maladministration were brought against him in 1870.\textsuperscript{145} Frederick Wheeler was dismissed after being charged with murder in 1876.\textsuperscript{146}

More has been written about Wheeler than any other officer in the force. He has been described as ‘cruel and merciless’, ‘the most callous and brutal officer’, and called a ‘sadist’.\textsuperscript{147} Reconstructing Frederick Wheeler’s career in the Native Police is possible – despite the absence of a detailed personnel file – because numbers of his reports and other records about him have survived in the archives. Wheeler’s actions could be described as the inevitable creations of a society that sanctioned violence on the frontier. Furthermore, his own family history and experience may have combined to help make

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\textsuperscript{142} Police Staff File, David Graham, A/40286. Another former member of the Irish Police, George Dyas, joined the Native Police. Other officers, including Percy Galbraith, Duncan McNeil and Otto Paschen, had served with different colonial police forces. For details, see Appendix 1.
\textsuperscript{143} Queensland Police Gazette 30 (16 September 1893: 313); 16 (1 January 1879: 36); 29 (8 January 1892: 26); and Police Staff File, Hurbert Rowland Pasley Durham, A/38785.
\textsuperscript{144} Inquest into death of Herbert Rowland Pasley Durham at Hughenden, JUS/N365/06/503 and Durham staff file, A/38785.
\textsuperscript{145} Report from Commander Heath, Royal Navy on ‘certain charges preferred against Inspector John Murray, 13 October 1870, Executive Council Minute, COL/E6/70/265.
\textsuperscript{146} Supreme Court Records, SCT/CG7/372.
\textsuperscript{147} Bill Rosser, \textit{Up Rode The Troopers} (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1990), 93; Hugh MacMaster, \textit{Mostly Murder} (Rockhampton: Central Queensland University Press, 1999), 68; and Marie Reid, \textit{Emerald: A Place of Importance} (Emerald: Emerald Shire Council, 2001), 7-8.
\end{flushleft}
him the most notorious character in the Native Police. The son of a London merchant and a Sicilian noblewoman, he was educated at the Westminster School on the northern banks of the Thames.\(^{148}\) Commandant Morisset recommended his appointment to the Native Police, which the New South Wales Executive Council approved in December 1857.\(^ {149}\) After his detachment deserted at Rockhampton, and a caution was delivered about his ‘inappropriate’ language, Wheeler was ordered to set up a new Native Police camp at Sandgate in 1859.\(^ {150}\)

From Sandgate, Wheeler’s detachment patrolled north to Maryborough, south to the Tweed River, and west to the Great Dividing Range. In 1860 he was called to give statements at two separate inquests into the deaths of Aborigines at Fassifern and at Flinders Peak near Ipswich.\(^ {151}\) The government decided, despite evidence of his involvement, to gently admonish him that he should ‘for the future, use every exertion to perform his duty with circumspection and humanity’.\(^ {152}\) In 1865 he was sent to Western Queensland and to Central Queensland a year later.\(^ {153}\) In 1874 he resigned from the Native Police. One Rockhampton paper said Wheeler ‘inspired the aborigines with such a

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\(^{148}\) Lord Edmund Ironside, Frederick Wheeler’s great-grandson, to author, 2001. I am grateful to Lord Ironside for this reference and for other information on the family.

\(^{149}\) Government Resident at Moreton Bay, JC Wickham, to the New South Wales Colonial Secretary, 3 November 1857, New South Wales Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, A2.39/57/4471.

\(^{150}\) See Skinner, Police of the Pastoral Frontier, 355; New South Wales Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, A2.41; and McConnel Papers, John Oxley Library, OM 79.017/18.

\(^{151}\) Inquest into deaths of three Aboriginal men at Fassifern, JUS/N3/61/1 and Inquest into death of Tommy at Mount Flinders, JUS/N2/60/71.

\(^{152}\) Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 23 October 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q1/61/1318.

\(^{153}\) Wheeler’s eldest daughter died at sea when the Fiery Star caught fire off New Zealand in 1865 while enroute to England, and he appears to have gone completely ‘off the rails’ after this event. See news item ‘Burning of Fiery Star, including passenger list showing
wholesome dread’ that it was only necessary to mention his name and ‘they would go yelling pell-mell into the bush’. One year later, he was reappointed and placed in charge of the Native Police camp at Mistake Creek on Banchory station near Clermont. It was here, in 1876, that the brutal and fatal beating of a young Aboriginal man named Jemmy took place. Wheeler was dismissed, charged with murder and released on bail, but absconded. He died in Java in 1882.

Another Inspector, about whom much is also known, was a Scot, James Lamond. Like Wheeler, many of his reports to the Commissioner have survived, and they show he played an important part in the later years of the Native Police. First appointed in 1879, Lamond reached the rank of First Class Inspector in 1904, five years before retirement. He married the daughter of squatter Francis Shadforth in May 1883. Their children, including son HG (Henry) Lamond, lived at Native Police camps in June 1885. Henry Lamond became a successful writer. According to him, his father and Chief Inspector Alexander Douglas ‘pulled a couple of strings’ to have Douglas appointed as the next

‘Second Cabin – Miss Ida Wheeler and servant’, Brisbane Courier (27 May 1865) and McConnel Papers, JOL, OM 79.017/18. I am grateful to Stephanie Ryan for this reference.

Dismissal of Sub Inspector Wheeler, 20 April 1876, Executive Council Minutes, COL/E18/76/556; Governor to Colonial Secretary, 20 June 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A227/76/2698 and Supreme Court Records, SCT/AB105, SCT/CG7/372 and CCT/7/N32.

Personal communication, Lord Ironside. According to journalists Lack and Stafford (probably passed down from Archibald Meston), a Queenslander visiting London saw Wheeler several years later, Clem Lack and Harry Stafford, The Rifle and the Spear (Brisbane: Fortitude Press, 1965), 132-134. Another ‘version’ of the Wheeler story, claiming he either went to America or was killed by Aborigines, is mentioned in a recent novel, Peter Watt, Cry of the Curlew (Sydney: Macmillan, 1999), 639-640. Shadforth was the grandson of British army officer, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Shadforth, John Dymock, Something Deep and Rich (1993).
Commissioner after Parry-Okeden retired in 1905, but Inspector Frederick Urquhart ‘was better at pressing keys and pulling wires’. Douglas subsequently retired and Lamond was sent back to the Gulf district. Urquhart was appointed as Chief Inspector in 1905, and reached Commissioner in 1917.

The men who reached the rank of Inspector are important figures in the history of the Native Police. Their long service meant they helped continue many of the practices adopted by the force in the early years. They were also delegated with the responsibility of implementing big changes to the force during the 1880s and 1890s. Although it is possible to find some details of their backgrounds and careers in the force, we only know a small part of their experiences in, and their thoughts on, the Native Police. Notations on files and occasional sentences in reports to the Commissioner are the only insights we have into their experiences as senior officers in the force.

**The Long-term Sub Inspectors**

About ninety men served as Sub Inspectors in the Native Police. Almost forty individuals had lengthy careers (that is, more than five years) in the force. Staff files for half (twenty-three) of these men have survived. The average length of service was eleven

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158 Lamond, best known for his ‘outback’ novels, such as *Big Red* (1953) and *Sheep Station* (1959), was a regular contributor to *The Bulletin* and *Walkabout.*


160 Staff File, Urquhart, A/47932.
years, with Henry Gough and John White each serving for twenty-nine years. Gough, Stanhope O’Connor and William Armit were the only men with a military background. Gough and O’Connor both belonged to Irish military families. O’Connor led a detachment to Victoria in an unsuccessful attempt to catch Ned Kelly. After Gough’s death in 1896, his father asked that gold watches be given to Mr Seymour and Mr Persse ‘in remembrance of their kindness to him’. Belgian-born Armit had been a soldier, and later became a journalist, and was the special correspondent for the Melbourne Argus on an expedition to New Guinea in 1883. He became the private secretary of New Guinea administrator William MacGregor in 1893, led a retaliatory party in New Guinea during 1894, and was a Resident Magistrate in New Guinea from 1899. Two long-term Sub Inspectors had previously served in other police forces – George Dyas in Ireland and Percy Galbraith in New Zealand.

Nearly a fifth of this group of forty (seven) died while on active service. Sub Inspector Henry Finch took his own life in 1875; Sub Inspector George Dyas died during

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161 Intestate file, Henry Bloomfield Gough, SCT/P330/9419; and Police Staff File, John Warren White, A/40349.
162 O’Connor’s salary was paid by the Victorian Government during the Kelly Gang pursuit in 1879 and 1880, Police Staff File, Stanhope O’Connor, A/40117.
163 Squatter Fitzpatrick de Burgh Persse (Seymour’s cousin) was the Parliamentary Member for Fassifern, SCT/P330/9419 and DB Waterson, A Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929 (Canberra: Australian National University, 1972), 149.
164 Armit was also briefly the Secretary of the Cooktown Chamber of Commerce, and wrote asking for a Native Police station to be opened on the Palmer River, Armit to Colonial Secretary, 12 June 1891, A/41229/91/6529.
an Aboriginal attack in 1881, and the deaths of two others – Sub Inspector Robert Little, 1889; and Sub Inspector George Warby, 1889 – were caused by illness.¹⁶⁶ Three men died from unknown causes: Sub Inspector James Gilmour in 1874, Sub Inspector Mathew Collopy in 1880, and Sub Inspector Robert Sharpe in 1886.¹⁶⁷ Five of the forty Sub Inspectors retired after long careers. Seventeen resigned from the Police, and nine were dismissed. The dismissals and the probability that some resignations followed reprimands, means that the men who occupied this significant supervisory position include a substantial number with problems or troubles or unconventional behaviour. That again raises questions of how men got into the force.

Some individuals used colonial family connections. A few examples will illustrate what we mean. Sub Inspector William Armit was dismissed in 1882 for ‘discipline and financial irregularities’ after he was involved in a bitter personal dispute with Sub Inspector Lyndon Poingdestre.¹⁶⁸ Poingdestre, who admitted that in 1882 that he had ‘co-habited’ with an Aboriginal woman for a number of years, was then placed in command of the Norman River camp. He was implicated in the killing of several Aborigines at Kimberley in 1887.¹⁶⁹ Poingdestre’s connections helped him escape any form of charges.

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¹⁶⁶ Finch – Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 19 July 1875, POL/4/590 and Intestate file, Henry Zouch Finch, SCT/P38/1301; Dyas – Police Staff File, A/38770; and Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 20 January 1881, POL/4/616; Little – Intestate file, Robert Kyle Little, SCT/P172/5628; Warby – Police Staff File, George T Warby, A/40195.

¹⁶⁷ Gilmour – Queensland Police Gazette 11 (10 June 1874: 76); Collopy – Queensland Police Gazette 17 (2 February 1880: 41); Sharpe – Intestate file, Robert Barrington Sharpe, SCT/P117/4090.

¹⁶⁸ Staff files, Armit, A/38710 and, Poingdestre, A/40323.

¹⁶⁹ Inquest into deaths of Aboriginal men at Kimberley, JUS/N150/87/551, and staff file, Poingdestre, A/40323. For details, see Mark Finnane and Jonathan Richards, ‘You’ll Get
Sub Inspector Charles Blakeney, the nephew of Queensland’s Registrar-General, was fired in 1866 for failing to patrol his allotted district.\(^{170}\) He was reassured that the government would ‘endeavour to find other employment’ for him.\(^{171}\)

Three men were dismissed as a result of their violence towards Aboriginal people. Sub Inspector Edward Wheeler, the younger brother of Frederick Wheeler, was sacked in 1871 after a complaint was made that his detachment had killed several Aboriginal people on the Barcoo River.\(^{172}\) Sub Inspector Charles Shairp commanded a detachment at the Herbert River in 1872 when an investigation revealed that his troopers had murdered an Aboriginal woman.\(^{173}\) The government dismissed him. Sub Inspector William Nichols was charged with murder after the Irvinebank massacre of 1884, and dismissed from the Native Police. The criminal case was dropped.\(^{174}\)

More detail emerges on other individuals. Five men, including Thomas Williams (1875), George Nowlan (1881) and Alfred Smart (1884), were dismissed for drunkenness.\(^{175}\) Brothers Edwin and George Townsend were both sacked for habitually

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\(^{170}\) Dismissal of Sub Inspector Blakeney, 29 November 1866, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E14/66/67.
\(^{171}\) ‘General conduct of Sub Inspector Blakeney’, Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 23 July 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A92/66/2008. No record of Blakeney being given another government job has been found.
\(^{172}\) Police Commissioner, General Order, 21 June 1871, POL/4/523.
\(^{173}\) Inquest into death of unknown Aboriginal woman at Herbert River, JUS/N35/72/218 and Police Commissioner, 31 October 1872, General Order, POL/4/552.
\(^{174}\) Inquest into deaths of four Aborigines at Irvinebank, JUS/N110/84/511 and dismissal of Sub Inspector Nichols, 5 December 1884, Executive Council Minute, COL/E64/84/416. See also Geof Genever, \textit{Failure of Justice: the story of the Irvinebank Massacre} (Eacham: Eacham Historical Society, 1997).
\(^{175}\) Police Staff Files, Williams, A/40194; Nowlan, A/40105; and Alfred Smart, A/40154.
‘nipping’ in 1881; Edwin Townsend’s file was also marked ‘refusal to obey orders’.\textsuperscript{176}

As previously mentioned, Acting Sub Inspector Williams was also found guilty of financial irregularities. Commissioner Seymour noted that Williams had already been dismissed for drunkenness once before.\textsuperscript{177}

This group, the ‘core’ of Native Police in many ways, included numerous names of men that have most often been mentioned in the published literature. Men such as Poingdestre, Dyas, Armit, Little, and O’Connor are mentioned in a number of secondary sources.\textsuperscript{178} The historical transmission of selected names of men in the Native Police can be traced from primary sources to published books via newspaper items, magazine articles and university theses. For example, pioneer drover Gordon Buchanan mentioned ‘Inspector Poindestre taking his faithful boy Jimmy’ as a trooper in his 1934 book \textit{Packhorse and Waterhole}. Hector Holthouse in \textit{Up Rode the Squatter} quotes Buchanan, and Holthouse is listed as a source in Noel Loos’ \textit{Invasion and Resistance}.\textsuperscript{179} Anyone ‘chasing’ the Native Police in Queensland history is invariably led to books by popular authors such as Buchanan, Holthouse and others. In a second example, Reginald Spencer

\textsuperscript{176} Police Staff Files, Edwin J Townsend, A/40172 and George Robert Townsend, A/40207.

\textsuperscript{177} Inspector Frederick Murray to Commissioner, 23 February 1875, staff file, Williams, A/40194.


\textsuperscript{179} Gordon Buchanan, \textit{Packhorse and Waterhole} (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1934) 43; Hector Holthouse, \textit{Up Rode The Squatter} (Adelaide: Rigby, 1970); and Loos, \textit{Invasion and Resistance}. This incorrect spelling was used by others, including one pastoralist who also said the Native Police ‘were kept simply to shoot blacks’, see \textit{Diary of RM Watson}, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University, N31/1(i), 13.
Browne’s *Reminiscences of A Journalist* gives the names of a number of officers from the force. Stanhope O’Connor was one. Without knowing his first-name, Browne described O’Connor as ‘a very distinguished looking chap, a splendid bushman, and well experienced with the Native Police’, and he claimed, ‘a relative of the Governor, Sir Arthur Kennedy’.  

Another pioneer referred to O’Connor as ‘a cultured Irish gentleman’.  

So, some useful information is available on the men who served for lengthy periods as Sub Inspectors of the Native Police. This group includes the men generally best known in popular literature on the Native Police. They had strong linkages with the rest of colonial society, and some also had connections with other colonies in the British Empire. Their careers are relatively easily followed. The hardest careers to track are those of the men who left the force after short periods of service. It is this group that must now be considered.

**The Short-time Sub Inspectors**

One important detail that has emerged from the research material is the fact that some men served as Sub Inspectors in the Native Police for periods of less than five years. Nearly fifty individuals, out of a total of about 150, can be identified as ‘short-time’ members of the force, including six who died while on active duty, and sixteen who

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were dismissed. Three officers in this cluster (Acting Sub Inspector Cecil Hill, Sub Inspector Henry Kaye and Cadet Marcus Beresford) were killed during Aboriginal attacks on their detachments in 1865, 1881 and 1883.\textsuperscript{182} In each case, superior officers identified lack of experience as critical.\textsuperscript{183} Three others also died while on duty, Second Lieutenant Charles Phibbs, Second Lieutenant John Darley and Acting Sub Inspector Denis McCarthy.\textsuperscript{184} Phibbs drowned when he rode into a lagoon in the dark on the way back to his barracks after drinking heavily in Rockhampton. Darley died of illness after less than a year’s service, but details are lacking on McCarthy’s death. He had been suspended for unknown reasons six months earlier.\textsuperscript{185}

Twenty-eight of the short-term members of the force were appointed during the 1860s. The high number suggests many officers discovered the risky and unpleasant character of the work in this early period of colonisation, and preferred other appointments. Another reason for this large number of appointments at that time was the expansion of the force, with little care being taken in the selection of officers. After a period of rapid expansion, the reliable men were ‘settled in’ by the 1870s.

\textsuperscript{181} Another writer claimed that O’Connor’s cousin, Sir Hercules Robinson, was the Governor of New South Wales, WH Corfield, \textit{Reminiscences of Queensland, 1862-1899} (Brisbane: AH Frater, 1921), 59 and 64.
\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Brisbane Courier} (3 June 1865) and WRO (William) Hill, ‘The Death of My Brother Cecil’, \textit{Forty-Five Years’ Experiences in North Queensland, 1861 to 1905} (Brisbane: H Pole & Co, 1907), 31-33; inquest into death of Henry P Kaye at Woolgar, JUS/N77/81/259; and Police Staff File, Marcus Gervais La Poer Beresford, A/38720.
\textsuperscript{184} Inquest into death of Charles Hamilton Phibbs at Rockhampton, JUS/N3/61/73; salary owed to late Lieutenant Darley, Executive Council Minute, 19 August 1861, EXE/E4/61/35; and \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 10 (8 December 1872: 8).
\textsuperscript{185} Murray to Commissioner, 8 April 1872, Midlands District Inspector’s Letterbook, A/36335.
Some of the short-time men came from military or police backgrounds: Rudolph Morisset was the third son of Colonel Morisset, and the brother of Edric and Aulaire Morisset, all of whom have been previously mentioned. Henry Kaye, the son of an Indian army officer, was killed while on patrol five years after joining the force as a Sub Inspector in 1876. Walter Jones, who had ‘many years military service in India’, only lasted four years before his dismissal for drunkenness in 1884 (his death has already been mentioned). According to Sub Inspector Ernest Carr, Jones was ‘not suited for the work’ in the Barron River district as most patrols were on foot and Jones was ‘not a young man’. Marcus La Poer Beresford, descended from an old Anglo-Irish military family, and formerly a member of the New South Wales Police, died on patrol near Cloncurry in 1883. Duncan McNeil, formerly in the New Guinea Police, served for three years from 1889. He married one of Commissioner Seymour’s daughters in 1887, and a year later was appointed as the Governor’s aide-de-camp.

Dismissals were higher in this group than in other groups we have discussed. Sixteen were removed: two for drunkenness, and two for financial irregularities. In three cases, the position was abolished. Nine dismissals occurred due to indiscipline. These included a case of killing a trooper, incompetence, inefficiency and neglect of duty. Nine men appointed during 1862 either resigned or were dismissed within four years. Six officers appointed in 1865 left the force within four years. Most of the ‘short-time men’

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186 *Queensland Police Gazette* 13 (1 January 1876: 13); Police Staff File, Kaye, A/38864; and Inquest into death of Henry Kaye, JUS/N77/81/259.
187 Jones to Isley, December 1881, Police Staff File, Walter Jones, A/38846.
188 Police Staff File, Beresford, A/38720.
189 Police Staff File, Duncan Alexander McNeil, A/40097.
190 Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages records and *Queensland Government Gazette* 45 (27 October 1888: 710).
from the 1860s were dismissed, discharged or dead (Darley and Hill) by the 1870s. Four out of the nine short-timers appointed in the 1870s resigned. Three others were discharged for disciplinary reasons, and two died. During the 1880s, two short-term members resigned, one (Beresford) died, and two were dismissed for drunkenness. Three officers resigned during the 1890s after serving for short terms.

Despite the force’s ‘unsavoury’ reputation, some former officers managed to move across to the colonial Civil Service. Four of the short-time group later held responsible Public Service positions in Queensland: John Baker (Clerk of Petty Sessions and Acting Police Magistrate), Frederick Nantes (District Registrar, Clerk of Petty Sessions, and Land Agent), Alexander Dorsey (Goldfield Warden and Clerk of Petty Sessions), and Lionel Towner (Gold Warden and Acting Police Magistrate).191

Fifteen of the officers who served for short periods in the Native Police were named in the records as being connected with violence against Aboriginal people or troopers.192 This figure suggests that this was the most ‘brutal’ group of the officer-class, and thus the most likely to be dismissed for disciplinary reasons or character problems.

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192 These were John Affleck, Myrtil Aubin, Arthur Beevor, John Carroll, William Cave, Maitland Day, Edward Dumaresq, Eugenius Genatas, Joseph Harris, John Hoole, Ralph
This is a particularly important point of historical detail that the research has uncovered. Records show that some short-term Sub Inspectors led detachments that killed Aboriginal people, and several were dismissed because of these events. Other junior officers killed troopers. This is unsurprising, considering the basic function of the force. The historical material clearly shows the place of the Native Police in colonial Queensland. Many contemporaries labelled it a ‘necessary evil’. ‘They did as they were told to do. They did their duty’. A number of examples, in chronological order, provide us not only with evidence of Native Police violence, but also records of government actions after these events were uncovered. The examples conclude this discussion on the ‘short-term’ cluster.

Second Lieutenant Joseph Harris was dismissed in 1863 for allowing his troopers to patrol unsupervised. They killed an Aboriginal man. Later that year, Second Lieutenant Marmaduke Richardson was dismissed after he shot a deserting trooper dead. A trooper died during a ‘fight’ with Aboriginal men in the Warrego district in 1864, and Sub Inspector Ralph Johnson was ‘allowed to resign’. Johnson’s father was the assistant clerk in the Legislative Assembly at the time, which may help to explain

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why Johnson was allowed to ‘resign’ rather than be dismissed.\textsuperscript{198} After leaving the force, Ralph Johnson was appointed as a government clerk, and as Land Agent at Bowen in 1869.\textsuperscript{199} He then became a surveyor, and worked at Townsville and Cooktown.\textsuperscript{200}

In other cases, the removal of men from the force may have been connected with barbarous actions that became public knowledge. It is important to emphasize that what led to dismissal may not have been an act of killing, but the publicity it attracted. Acting Sub Inspector Edward Seymour brutally killed an Aboriginal woman in 1866, and was discharged ‘on abolition of his position’ two years later.\textsuperscript{201} The Executive Council decided to pay him, and any others whose ‘appointments have been suddenly abolished’, a sum equal to three months salary.\textsuperscript{202} Sub Inspector Myrtil Aubin was dismissed after his detachment killed ‘quiet Blacks’ at Morinish, near Rockhampton, in 1867.\textsuperscript{203} There was a full investigation and Inspector George Murray reported:

There is nothing in the evidence to show whether Mr Aubin was justified or not in firing on the blacks but from his own report and taking into consideration the whole of the circumstances, I cannot see that that officer could have acted

\textsuperscript{198} Appointment of Ralph Godsball Johnson as Clerk to the Government Resident at Moreton Bay in 1856, RES/A7/56/741; dismissal of Sub Inspector Ralph Cholmondeley Godsdall Johnson for ‘culpable neglect’, 30 September 1864, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E10/64/55; and the notice that Sub Inspector Ralph Cholmondeley Godsdall Johnson ‘resigned from the Native Police on 31 August 1864 rather than being discharged as advised on 7 December 1864’, \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 2, 1 (11 January 1865: 2). See also Anonymous, \textit{Godschall Johnson Family in Australia}, www.geocities.com/lordrichardcholmondeley/family8.htm

\textsuperscript{199} Blue Book, \textit{Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings} (1870).

\textsuperscript{200} Anonymous, \textit{Godschall Johnson Family}.

\textsuperscript{201} A witness said he ‘left her in the agonies of death’. Seymour told him ‘she riled him’, Inquest into death of an unknown Aboriginal woman at Banana, JUS/N12/66/87.

\textsuperscript{202} Compensation for former Sub Inspector Seymour, 4 March 1868, Executive Council Minute, COL/E2/68/60.

\textsuperscript{203} Dismissal of Acting Sub Inspector Aubin, 11 July 1867, Executive Council Minute, COL/E1/67/172.
otherwise [as] had he not fired at the time he did the Blacks would have killed some if not all of his party. It was clearly Mr Aubin’s duty to disperse that mob of Blacks and it is very much to be regretted that they did not do so quietly. 204

The finding condemns him, not for ‘unlawful killing’, but for indiscretion. News of the killing was already public knowledge in Rockhampton and some colonists were complaining, so the Executive Council directed his immediate dismissal. 205 Aubin, who only lasted two years in the Native Police, disappeared from the records.

Some men were removed from the Native Police for ‘inefficiency’ in ‘crushing’ resistance. Otto Paschen, formerly in the Victorian police with ‘good references’, was ostensibly dismissed for ‘financial irregularities’ in 1867 after two year’s service. However, Commissioner Seymour had recently chastised him for ‘very much exaggerating’ the number of ‘collisions’ his detachment had experienced with Aboriginal people in the Dawson River district. 206 Former Colonial Secretary Herbert said Paschen had been ordered to ‘punish the murderers of Acting Sub Inspector Hill’, and ‘performed to the full satisfaction of the colonists and of the Government’, but the Secretary of State for Colonies in England requested further information about reprisals after Hill’s death. 207 This query apparently led to closer scrutiny of Paschen’s actions, and caused Seymour to report ‘the collisions in the report of the Native Police Officers, refer in a majority of cases to a few spears thrown, and a few shots fired at a distance with little or

204 Murray to Commissioner, 13 July 1867, Midlands Inspector’s Letterbook, A/36335/67/113.
205 Murray to Aubin, 6 August 1867, Midlands Inspector’s Letterbook, A/36335/67/112.
207 Memo from Herbert, former Colonial Secretary, in Despatch from Governor Bowen to Lord Canarvon, 20 June 1866, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/25/66/61.
no loss to either side’. Paschen was suspended after a forged ration order was discovered. An official inquiry probed his official expenditures. Despite his protestations of innocence, the Executive Council accepted Seymour’s recommendation, and dismissed him. 209

In other cases there was no doubt about the officer’s part in violence towards Aborigines. Acting Sub Inspector John Carroll was allowed to resign after he was charged with the assault and murder of a trooper at Aramac in 1873. 210 The Police Magistrate who heard the matter, Alfred Compigne, the uncle of Sub Inspector Walter Compigne, dismissed the case. 211 Carroll wrote to newspapers five years later to argue that the Native Police force would be ‘a cheap and effective protection to the Australian pioneer for many years to come’. He added ‘there are no officially written orders relating to native police duty, those are given verbally by the Inspector who I have understood, receives his orders from the Commissioner’. 212 Apparently, the perception that there was no control over the force (as mentioned earlier) began with this former officer’s letter. 213 Carroll’s assertion was misleading. Written orders were the main form of communication, and officers were dismissed for breaching orders. Moreover, it has been suggested that Carroll’s detachment was responsible for a number of killings during the three years he was with the force. In a diary kept by one pioneer grazier, there is a note

208 Seymour to Governor, 15 June 1866, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/25/616/61.
209 Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 31 January 1867, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q4/67/83.
210 Dismissal of Sub Inspector Carroll, 10 August 1876, Executive Council Minute, COL/E19/76/679.
211 Aramac Court Records, A/5117.
212 ‘Commission of Police Proceedings in the Case of JW Carroll’, 29 June 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A320/81/3821, and Carroll’s ‘Letter to the Editor’, Townsville Herald (23 July 1881).
saying ‘Inspector Carroll’s Native Police’ from Aramac ‘slaughtered all the males they came across’ at Elderslie station on Western River.\textsuperscript{214}

A number of individuals in the force were probably unsuited to the rigours of life on the frontier, particularly as European colonisation expanded into northern Queensland. The demands of the job, particularly with regard to ‘working the troopers’, may have defeated a few men. For example, Acting Sub Inspector Edward Dumesq was dismissed in 1875.\textsuperscript{215} His detachment had been involved in a number of killings at the Bloomfield River during 1874, while attempting to find a shorter route from the coast to the Palmer River goldfield.\textsuperscript{216} It appears that an inquest deposition brought about his removal from the force. Less than six months before his dismissal, Dumesq had testified that he was unable to ‘follow up’ the blacks on the Palmer River, because ‘the greater part of his detachment’ had deserted.\textsuperscript{217}

Some officers were determined to prove their worth on the northern frontier. Cadet John Affleck resigned in 1889 after shooting trooper Peter dead in 1888.\textsuperscript{218} At the inquest held by Police Magistrate (and former Sub Inspector) Ernest Eglinton, Affleck said that he was on patrol with six ‘boys’ when he found trooper Peter ‘chopping into a tree’. He ordered trooper Peter to stop, but he refused. Affleck then ‘gave him a kick’ and Peter attacked him with a tomahawk. According to Affleck, Peter ‘took his rifle’ and was loading it with a cartridge when Affleck said to him ‘If you cock that rifle you are a dead

\textsuperscript{213} See previous discussion in Chapter 1, footnotes 218-220.
\textsuperscript{214} Diary of RM Watson, 1-2, Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University, N31/1(i).
\textsuperscript{215} Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 31 January 1875, POL/4/583.
\textsuperscript{216} ‘News from The Palmer’, The Queenslander (4 April 1874: 8).
\textsuperscript{217} Inquest into death of Cornelius Hurford at Palmer River, JUS/N41/74/225.
\textsuperscript{218} Queensland Police Gazette 27 (25 August 1889: 44).
man’. Peter allegedly said ‘You too frightened’. Affleck shot him dead.\(^{219}\) One month later, Affleck ‘accidentally’ shot himself through his wrist. His hand was amputated.\(^{220}\) He was discharged from the force with a gratuity six months later. According to one of his brother officers, ‘if Affleck had had serviceable boys he would not have had his accident and shot himself’.\(^{221}\) There is no way that this odd remark can be understood fully today. However, the writer was an idealist who joined in hopes of protecting Aboriginal people, and he seemed to call attention to Affleck’s poor relations with his troopers. Brooke said, when he applied for appointment to the Native Police, that he wanted to help ‘protect the aborigines’ in the North.\(^{222}\)

Men who served for short periods in the Native Police generally only reached the rank of Sub Inspector. They led patrols, and were often in sole command of isolated camps throughout Queensland. Three of this group were killed during Aboriginal attacks. Many were dismissed, and a large number were implicated in extremely violent episodes. Several were accused on incompetency, and dismissed from the force after brief careers. Our final cluster, the Constables, was the last group to serve in the Native Police.

\(^{219}\) Inquest into death of trooper Peter at Barron River, Police Staff File, John de Linden Affleck, A/38716/89/9119.

\(^{220}\) Police Staff File, Affleck, A38716/89/9119.

\(^{221}\) Sub Inspector Brooke to Commissioner, 23 April 1889, Police Staff File, Jocelyn Brooke, A/38719/89/5908.

\(^{222}\) Brooke to Colonial Secretary, 9 May 1881, Police Staff File, Brooke, A/38719/81/2303. Brooke also wrote to Victorian ethnographer AW Howitt saying, ‘I find that by being [in the Native Mounted Police] I am better able to protect them and I consider it my duty to both protect and punish them with fairness’, Brooke to Howitt, 12 October 1882, *Notes on the Kiabara*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 69.
The Constables

The policy of placing Constables rather than Sub Inspectors in charge of detachments was a late modification, and perhaps reflects attempts in the latter part of the nineteenth century to ‘normalise’ the Native Police by ‘giving’ the force some ‘white’ troopers and a common label. Twenty men who served in the Native Police were appointed as Constables of the Queensland Police Force, and the highest rank they achieved (with one exception) was Sergeant. The only man promoted through the ranks from Constable to Sub Inspector was Michael Portley, who was in charge of the Mossman River Native Police camp from 1887 to 1890.223 The last man who had served his entire police career in the Native Police of North Queensland was Sergeant James Whiteford, who retired in 1911. He began his career as a Constable thirty years earlier.224 When Sub Inspector Portley retired in 1916, he was the last man in the Queensland Police to have served for a lengthy period in a Native Police camp.225

With an average service of sixteen years, all in North Queensland, the men from this cluster served in the last nine Native Police camps.226 These outposts included the Mulgrave and Mossman River camps that closed in 1891 and 1893, and the Musgrave camp on Cape York Peninsula, which shut down in 1899. Highbury camp, the last station on the Palmer River, closed in 1903. Three more camps, the ‘Eight Mile’ near Cooktown, Nigger Creek near Herberton, and Turn Off Lagoon near Burketown, were closed in

223 Police Staff File, Michael James Portley, A/40521.
224 Police Staff File, James Whiteford, A/40348.
225 Police Staff File, Portley, A/40521.
226 See Appendix 2 for a full list of Native Police camps and stations.
1904. The camps at Laura and Coen became ‘ordinary’ Queensland Police stations, albeit with several trackers at each, from about 1910.

Records show interesting detail of the careers of some men in this cluster. Police staff files for seventeen Native Police constables are held in the state archives. Senior Constable Alfred Wavell, appointed in 1872, was killed at Lawn Hill station in 1889 when trying to arrest an Aboriginal fugitive named Joe Flick. Wavell had been a campkeeper for Sub Inspector Poingdestre at the Norman River camp, and was actively patrolling the district before his death. Campkeepers sometimes took charge of patrols when other officers were ‘busy’ or in ‘short-supply’. Wavell’s death has been the subject of a number of articles and chapters, including mentions in Gordon Buchanan’s *Packhorse and Waterhole*, and former Police Commissioner Norm Bauer’s ‘Tragedy at Lawn Hill’.

The careers of some other men were almost as sensational. That of Constable Charles Hansen, the only Danish-born individual in the Native Police, is a good example. He was posted to the Atherton station, and then to the Nigger Creek camp near Herberton. Inspector John Stuart thought Hansen had ‘done more in civilizing and getting in the wild aborigines on the Barron waters than the Barron River detachment has done in years’. However, Inspector James Lamond reported that Hansen ‘as a Native Police officer had been most indiscreet in taking civilians on patrol with him and in also talking

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228 Police Staff File, Alfred Wavell, A/40191.
230 Stuart to Commissioner, 16 May 1889, Police Staff File, Charles Hansen, A/38828.
in a most reckless manner’.231 Perhaps the two views are not inconsistent – one states a ‘fact’ or outcome from a settler perspective, and the other a concern that the methods used for the outcome would become public. Inspector Lamond recommended his transfer to ‘prevent a public scandal’ as ‘his Danish countrymen threaten all sorts of exposures’, and he was sent to the Mossman River Native Police camp.232 Hansen resigned a year later, but then was reappointed. He died of consumption in 1896.233

Three Constables who served at the Native Police station at Turn Off Lagoon near Burketown died between 1900 and 1911. Constable Richard Alford, who had been reduced in rank from Acting Sergeant and charged with ‘neglect of duty’ at this camp, died of heart disease while on transfer to Bundaberg.234 Acting Sergeant George Smith died from chronic alcoholism; he had been transferred to the Turn Off Lagoon station from Coen after Inspector Lamond reported ‘He is no good as an officer in charge of a Native Police or any other station’.235 Constable Edward Smith hung himself after receiving notice of a transfer.236

One other member of this group died tragically after leaving the Native Police. Ex-Constable John Kenny died in 1918 during a cyclone at the Hull River Aboriginal

231 Lamond to Commissioner, 13 December 1890, Police Staff File, Hansen, A/38828.
232 Lamond to Commissioner, 13 December 1890, Police Staff File, Hansen, A/38828.
234 Police Staff File, Richard Henry Alford, A/38791.
235 Lamond to Commissioner, 13 December 1897, Police Staff File, George Inkerman Smith, AF/40158.
236 The inquest finding for Edward Smith’s death was ‘temporary insanity’, but his wife said he was nervous after hearing that he was to be transferred from Turn Off Lagoon, see Police Staff File, Edward Patrick Charles Smith, A/40335.
Mission where he was the Superintendent.\(^{237}\) Kenny, formerly stationed at the Eight Mile camp near Cooktown, was on patrol with four troopers in 1899 when a cyclonic storm surge hit Princess Charlotte Bay and killed several hundred pearlshellers.\(^{238}\) The Queensland climate was just one of the challenges faced by European members of the Native Police.

Two men with the family name of Whelan caused great sorrow for Aboriginal people and some confusion for historians. Daniel and Edmond Whelan were unrelated, but both attracted their share of complaints. Edmond Whelan, sworn in during 1879, was appointed as the Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions at Cairns in 1884, but complaints of gambling, fraud and drunkenness were made a year later.\(^{239}\) Whelan was then ordered to take charge of the newly formed Mulgrave River Native Police camp near Cairns, a position he held until 1890.\(^{240}\) According to historian Noel Loos, Whelan, in doing so, as a ‘member of the ordinary police was now performing functions of the Native Police’.\(^{241}\) How great was the difference between the two forces at this point in time? The easy movement of police like Edmond Whelan from one to the other suggests very little.

\(^{237}\) Police Staff File, John Martin Kenny; A/38868, Hull River Aboriginal Mission, A/8725; and Constable O’Regan at Cardwell to Police Inspector at Townsville, March 1918, Cardwell Police Letterbook, POL/12F/G1/30/18.

\(^{238}\) Northern Protector of Aboriginals Walter Roth to Home Secretary, 9 April 1899, HOM/A23/99/5252. See also Harold Outridge, *The pearling disaster 1899: a memorial* (Brisbane: Outridge Printing, 1899).

\(^{239}\) Appointment of Edmond Whelan as Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions at Cairns, 7 August 1884, Executive Council Minute, COL/E62/84/282; and Cairns Post (11 June 1885: 2).

\(^{240}\) Police Staff File, Edmond Whelan, A/40186.

\(^{241}\) Loos, *Invasion and Resistance*, 107.
Whelan took to his new duties, aggressively patrolling the Cairns district until demoted for an unknown reason in 1887. He resigned soon after.242

Daniel Whelan, appointed as a Constable during the 1890s, and initially stationed at Ayton on the Bloomfield River, was the officer in charge of the Palmer River Native Police station from 1902.243 The Northern Protector of Aboriginals, Walter Roth, reported him to the Commissioner in 1903, claiming he was ‘forcibly recruiting’ for the Native Police on the Mitchell River.244 No further details are known of this particular episode. He was transferred to the Coen camp, where he served until his death in 1911. One senior officer described Whelan as having ‘performed his arduous duties faithfully’.245 Whelan’s death represented the closure of frontier policing in Queensland. By the beginning of the Great War, the Native Police had finally ‘disappeared’.

Conclusion

Archival files concerning the one hundred and fifty European officers in the Native Police reveal much about their backgrounds, their problems, and their careers. The birthplaces of about half the men are known. Over twenty officers died while on active service, including five killed during Aboriginal attacks. Fifteen died from accidents and diseases. Three took their own lives. Records also show us details of disciplinary

242 Police Staff File, Whelan, A/40186.
243 _Queensland Police Gazette_ 34 (10 April 1897: 199); Garraway to Commissioner, 18 June 1902, POL/J21/02/10305.
244 Roth to Home Secretary, 11 August 1903, A/58783.
breaches, and the ‘unlawful killing’ of Aborigines. Both were given as grounds for dismissal, as was drunkenness and not properly keeping financial accounts. Some men went on to responsible positions in the Public Service, while others left in disgrace. Some had long careers in the Native Police, but others only lasted for a few weeks.

The easing out or outright removal of officers for ‘excessive violence’ indicates that the Commissioner or the Government or both had qualms about the conduct of the force. Men were not put on trial, however. Rather the Commissioner – very likely with the knowledge of the government – endeavoured to keep matters quiet. But at times what Seymour told the government did not reflect the actual condition of the force or the degeneration of the officer class. His public statements about the Native Police are essays in denial; privately, he appears to have said even less. Morally weak, the Commissioner may still have felt shame or even repugnance on occasion. His comments in 1876, on learning of Hervey Fitzgerald’s misbehaviour, show his feelings. ‘Your case is hopeless.’ Yet, Seymour was ultimately powerless to effect any major changes in the policing of frontier culture in Queensland. Caught between the liberal rhetoric of urban politicians and the harsh realities of the Queensland frontier, he could do little about the Native Police but practise expediency, and hope the men under his command would all remember the need for discretion and circumspection on their special duties.

245 Inspector Malone to Commissioner, 6 January 1911, A/40348/11/810.
246 ‘Your case is hopeless and doubly so since Wheeler’s affair’, Commissioner to Sub Inspector Fitzgerald, 8 April 1876, A/40291.
247 See memo advising that ‘an officer of energy and discretion’ will replace Lieutenant Powell, Colonial Secretary to George Dalrymple, 11 January 1861, A/71730.
Now it is time to see what can be found in the records about the Aboriginal members of the force, the troopers. There is no evidence of any close or affectionate relationships between the European officers and the Indigenous men they commanded in the Queensland Native Police, unlike that which apparently existed in Frederick Walker’s original 1848 Corps. Yet all officers were meant to be able to ‘control’ the Natives on the force, as well as those ‘wild Myalls’ their detachments encountered. There is ample evidence that some officers were hopeless at gaining the compliance of their troopers, let alone dealing in any sort of civilised fashion with the Aboriginal people the force was dispossessing. As the next chapter shows, the troopers had their own reasons for joining the force and often had their own agendas as well.
Chapter 3: the troopers

‘Barbarians taken from another part of the country’

The blacks were at the base of a cliff. Suddenly a body of troopers appeared on top of the cliff and without warning they opened fire on the defenceless party below. Only two were killed, an old man and a gin. Those sheltered under the cliff could hear the talk of the black troopers who really did not want to kill but who tried to impress upon the white officer the big number they had slaughtered.

The whole question of working Native troopers, for good or bad, is a matter of leadership, control, discipline. To condemn the Native Police as unfit to be brought into contact in any way with their fellows, because in the past under some cruel, cowardly, or inefficient officer they have done wrong, is absurd. It is a well-known fact that the only control possible to be obtained at the outset and

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maintained over wild or uncivilised blacks is by the exercise and exhibition of superior force by people whom they recognise as capable of competing with them in their own tactics, tracking, bush cunning, lore or living, and by whom they know they can be followed and found when ‘wanted’.

The above quotations illustrate the range of comments about, and attitudes towards the Aboriginal troopers of the Native Police. The reference to the troopers as ‘barbarians’ was made in a long letter by pioneer settler Charles Ogg, who added ‘I do not, however, seek to disparage the service they render; without them in the interior the country would have to be vacated’. The second, made by a member of the Collins family from the Logan River in Queensland’s southeast, was based on the recollections of an Aboriginal elder (Bullumm) who was associated with the family for most of his life. The Collins family enjoyed very good relations with local Aboriginal people. Frederick Wheeler led the Native Police detachment mentioned in this story.

The last quote comes from the report prepared by Queensland’s second Commissioner of Police, William Parry-Okeden, in response to Archibald Meston’s assessment of relations between the Native Police and the Aboriginal people of North Queensland. While Meston, the government’s Special Commissioner on Aborigines, favoured the complete disbanding of the force, Parry-Okeden believed it should continue to exist as ‘the friend of the blacks’ under the leadership of appropriate officers. These quotations illustrate the complexities of settler attitudes towards the Native Police; some

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pastoralists sheltered runaway troopers while others feared them. This chapter examines records and reminiscences relating to the troopers.

How much is known about the Aboriginal troopers, based on the records located thus far? What can we know about the reasons why young men joined the force and participated in the killing and dispossession of other Indigenous groups? Is it possible to determine what they gained from serving in the force? What follows is a general discussion on the use of Indigenous military and police recruits in a range of Australian colonial settings, followed by an examination of the material relating to the troopers found in historical records. The violent methods used by the Native Police are detailed in the next chapter.

Any worthwhile discussion of the troopers must first revisit the question: was the Native Police a military or a civil institution? The issue of Aboriginal agency must also be considered, even if for no other reason than to dispel the tendency of some writers to blame the troopers for the force’s violent and sadistic reputation.4 Many examples of this attitude exist. Popular historian Glenville Pike, for example, wrote that ‘the Native Police got out of hand occasionally. If any atrocities did take place, I think the blackboys themselves were the only ones responsible’.5 Writer HG (Henry) Lamond likewise claimed that ‘the thin veneer of civilization in the aboriginal troopers was a flimsy thing’.6 Keith Windschuttle recently claimed that ‘Most colonists were Christians to whom such actions [indiscriminate frontier murders] would have been abhorrent’, which

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seems to absolve the colonising Christians of any blame.\textsuperscript{7} By default, if any unlawful killing of Aborigines did take place (Windschuttle denies they did), then the troopers must have been responsible.

Aboriginal service in the Native Police force was subject to the same conditions and restrictions as in other colonial police and armed forces.\textsuperscript{8} There is no recorded evidence, furthermore, of any trooper ever swearing an oath to uphold the law or carry out any other duties (for example, walking the beat, or appearing in court) usually associated with policing. No trace of a staff file for any Aboriginal member of the Native Police has been found. Aspects of troopers’ experiences such as discipline and desertion can be explored to a certain degree, but many important questions remain unanswered.

Yet, in spite of the limits of the archival record, as with most other aspects of the history of the Native Police in Queensland, the myths and legends surrounding the troopers have often been given more credibility than the archival records have. The absence of any form of personnel records for all Aboriginal policemen, including the troopers and trackers, means that evidence must be gleaned from ‘alternative’ archival sources such as routine correspondence, newspaper accounts and personal letters.

To date, no first-hand account of the actual recruiting process has been located in the records. The reasons why Aboriginal men joined the Native Police are also not recorded and any analysis of personal motivations must, therefore, remain speculative.

\textsuperscript{7} This argument emerges periodically, without any evidence. Windschuttle is the latest proponent, Keith Windschuttle, ‘The Historian as Prophet and Redeemer’, \textit{Quadrant} (December 2002: 9-10).

\textsuperscript{8} The organisation of the Police force in Ireland was based on a similar premise. ‘Being Irish themselves, they know the country and the people well and are able to deal with local problems’, Johann Georg Kohl, \textit{Ireland} (London, 1844) cited in Jim Herlihy, \textit{The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Short History and Genealogical Guide} (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), 46.
However, such speculation is based on the experiences of colonisers around the world, fragments of revelatory evidence in Queensland sources, and an analysis of these two bodies of information. Some useful details about service in the Native Police can be extracted from the archival records. Evidence from similar formations in other colonies (and in other empires) is one way of understanding the motivation of Indigenous men, and the practices of colonial administrators.

There were a number of precedents – both military and civil – for the use of Native troopers as a permanent police force, and each tells us something about Indigenous experience in colonial armed forces. For example, Central Queensland squatter William Archer, while giving evidence to a New South Wales parliamentary inquiry, provided one credible version of the recruiting process.

I know a little of their language, and I would go about talking to them, taking an interest in their manners and customs; and at a convenient time I would propose to them what they were required for, and the country to which I wished them to go. I would take the jackets and trousers with red stripes, to show them, and put them in uniform.⁹

Although we lack details on the recruiting of troopers for the Native Police, Archer’s suggestion seems credible, and he was generally a reliable witness.

Native policemen and soldiers

The use of Indigenous soldiers (mostly from subjugated provinces) in armies of invasion and occupation began with the Assyrians, Greeks and Romans. Most imperial systems and empire-builders have used, and continue to use, ethnic or Indigenous recruits as Native auxiliary troops. Generally, Native forces were used in the early stages of campaigns as scouts and later, when territorial conquest had been successfully achieved, as garrison forces. During the next stages of colonisation, they were also used as police. The Native Police troopers of Queensland were used in each of these ways.

Queensland administrators used the Native Police for the same reasons that Indigenous soldiers were used in other colonial settings. Queensland, like many colonies, experienced shortages of appropriately skilled and experienced Europeans. Moreover, Indigenous men were able to operate in difficult conditions such as, for example, tropical swamps and impenetrable scrub generally considered ‘impossible’ for Europeans. Most Indigenous people also had exceptional tracking abilities. Native forces could also be used for tasks that Europeans ‘might feel squeamish about’. All these factors meant that Native troops and police were often preferred for frontier defence, rather than Europeans. Governor Bowen spoke of the Native Police as contributing to the defence of the British Empire, saying ‘the inland boundary of Queensland is the boundary also of the Empire, which it is necessary to protect from the numerous and hostile savages of this portion of

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Native recruits who had far lower death- and disease-rates than Europeans (especially in the tropics), and who could understand or speak local languages and dialects were favoured in colonial settings because they cost less than Europeans.13

Native forces also had a reputation as fearless and determined fighters. One English officer, who served in India, Afghanistan and South Africa, observed that ‘irregular [i.e. Indigenous] warriors possess the cunning which their mode of life engenders’. Colonial officials knew that Native soldiers were particularly fierce when they were ordered to fight another Indigenous community.14 Certain Native groups were identified as ‘martial races’, and recruited because they were seen as more disciplined and efficient. The recruiting, training and arming of Indigenous soldiers (and police) was only tolerated by White settlers when they were satisfied that such practices offered no threat to their own survival and expansion.

This expectation was sometimes tenuous. When it appeared that the faith of the colonisers was misplaced, a restoration of confidence required occasional well-publicised, dramatic, and severe acts of discipline. For example, Queensland settlers were alarmed when news emerged that a European woman (Fanny Briggs) had been raped and murdered at Rockhampton in November 1860.15 Many colonists initially believed that local Aboriginal people were responsible for her death, but troopers Toby and Gulliver

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15 Inquest into death of Fanny Briggs at Rockhampton, JUS/N2/60/61.
were arrested and charged with the murder. Native Police trooper Ballantyne was also charged in December 1860 but later released. Gulliver was shot dead while escaping after he had admitted his part in the murder. Trooper Alma, also implicated but never charged, was shot dead while attempting to escape from Rockhampton Gaol. Toby was dismissed from the force with orders that he be ‘removed to a distance from Rockhampton’. An alleged deserter who was ‘implicated in the murder of Fanny Briggs’ (probably Toby), was captured but ‘escaped in the bush’, and was shot dead by Lieutenant Rudolph Morisset in early 1861. ‘Shot while trying to escape from custody’ was a common cause of Indigenous deaths on the Australian frontier. The fears of the European population were only allayed after the troopers suspected of being involved in this episode were removed, in one way or another, from the force.

16 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 24 November 1860, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/B1/60/2200.
17 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 January 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A11/61/84.
18 See evidence of travelling map salesman Henry Babbitt to the Select Committee on the Native Police, saying he was told ‘it was one of those things which ought not to be talked about’, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1861: 33), and Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 January 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A11/61/84.
19 Inquest into death of trooper Alma at Rockhampton, JUS/N3/61/14.
20 Report from the Commandant of the Native Police, 3 December 1860, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E2/60/56, and Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 14 January 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q1/61/46.
21 Moreton Bay Courier (24 January 1861 and 16 March 1861); also the Maryborough Chronicle (31 January 1861 and 4 April 1861).
22 Commandant Morisset gave evidence to the 1861 Select Committee that Toby ‘was passed through the district and turned loose’. Rockhampton historian JTS Bird said Toby died in the bush but local historian JE Murphy, who said he found documents from the Briggs case, claimed Toby died in jail. To date, no record has been found of this death. ‘Report from the Select Committee on the Native Police Force’, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1861: 143); JTS Bird, The Early History of Rockhampton, (Rockhampton: Central Queensland Family History Association, 1999), 92, and JE Murphy, ‘Gulliver’s Gambols’, The Bulletin (8 April 1953): 27.
The prospect of Aboriginal troopers turning against their colonial masters was a frontier anxiety. In 1904 Rockhampton historian JTS Bird said the death of Fanny Briggs ‘served only to accentuate the hatred previously entertained for the treacherous natives’. The level of fear felt by colonists on the frontier is a subject worth more analysis. Historian David Denholm’s note that ‘only half a sentence in an official letter to the Queensland Government betrays the panic and fear among the lower orders upon the Aboriginal murder at Rockhampton of a white woman’ points to the panic that resulted in retributive violence. 23 Crown Lands Commissioner Wiseman wrote ‘Morisset wants to have all the Blacks at Stations dismissed, and in this he is supported by the fear and the fervency of hatred in the masses’. 24

**Recruiting**

Archival references to the high rate of desertions by new recruits suggest that many budding troopers quickly realised what their new uniforms and guns meant, and changed their minds about serving with the force. Some probably left the force because of the excessively violent treatment they were forced to endure. By the time Queensland came into existence in 1859, the use of armed Indigenous forces was a well-established colonial practice – not just in the parent colony of New South Wales, but elsewhere in the

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British Empire. The same issues (recruiting, discipline, and loyalty) that plagued Native formations throughout the various European empires also worried Queensland colonial officials. The records show that concerns with finding sufficient recruits, retaining them, and keeping them supplied with sufficient stores to prevent mass desertions, presented ongoing problems for the officers commanding detachments of Native Police.

Recruitment persisted as a problem from the beginning when Queensland assumed responsibility for the Native Police from New South Wales. Commandant Edric Morisset reported to Colonial Secretary Robert Herbert in 1860, saying the force was not yet at full strength because of the ‘difficulty recruiting men adapted to the service and because it is absolutely necessary to recruit in a district as far as possible from that in which the men have to serve’. Morisset recommended that a recruiting party be sent to the Darling River. The recruiting expedition to the Darling River, led by Lieutenant Robert Walker (the brother of the first Commandant of the Native Police, Frederick Walker), managed to ‘secure’ eleven recruits in one week, but as a sign of things to come, they all deserted soon afterwards. Walker’s party tracked the absconders, recaptured them, and proceeded to Queensland. The records do not show how long these troopers remained in the force.

Native Police troopers in the northern districts of New South Wales (present day Queensland) were all recruited in the southern colonies before 1860, and until about 1870 many of the troopers came from Victoria and New South Wales. One newspaper story in 1862 claimed that ‘nearly half of the black police’ were ‘men belonging to the tribes of

25 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 24 December 1859, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A4/60/859.
26 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 12 June 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A16/61/1492.
the Murray district’. The 1861 Parliamentary Select Committee into the Native Police recommended that ‘recruits should be procured at as great a distance as possible from the districts in which they are stationed’. Recruits from different parts of Queensland were supposed to be regularly ‘swapped’ by officers, but there is no record of this happening. Apart from being a part of the ‘divide and rule’ tactic, the recruiting of troopers from distant places was likely proposed to reduce desertions. This was also a practice inherited from the Irish Constabulary.

For the first few years of the Queensland force troopers continued to be secured in southern parts of Australia. In 1863 Commandant John Bligh reported:

A large number of recruits [are] required to fill up existing vacancies for the protection of the daily extending frontiers of Queensland. These should be procured, if possible, from the Upper Murray and conveyed to Rockhampton by sea with a view to prevent desertions, which have been frequent of late.

The troopers from the Murray, Bligh said, were ‘smart, intelligent and superior to any other tribes on the continent’. Ex-Lieutenant John Murray, he said, possessed the ‘qualification’, based on his ‘long experience principally with Murray River troopers’, to recruit them. The men from this distant location had long been the mainstay of the force, but, as the Aboriginal population declined, fewer volunteered to wear the coloniser’s blue uniform. The desperate need for troopers compelled local recruiting to continue. Two

29 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A39/63/944.
30 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2733.
months later Bligh reported that 2nd Lieutenant Wheeler had ‘procured’ thirteen recruits from the Logan and Darling Downs, and Lieutenant Carr had recruited four men. Bligh said more recruits were needed but they could only be ‘procured’ from the Condamine, Logan and Darling Downs ‘and these are always likely to desert’. The shortage of recruits plagued the force for decades and forced many detachments to operate short-handed. Official statistics often disguised this shortfall, although successive Annual Reports noted the ongoing deficiency in trooper numbers. There are discrepancies between the number of troopers listed in official published reports and those mentioned in internal correspondence.

The Queensland Government moved in 1864 to deal with the problem of recruiting by appointing John Murray, who had been a Lieutenant in the Native Police before Separation, as Inspector for Recruits, and sending him to the southern colonies for troopers. The Executive Council noted that ‘the best recruits are to be obtained from the southern districts of New South Wales or border of Victoria and South Australia’, and Murray was ordered to recruit 100 men. He returned to Brisbane by sea with twenty men from the Murray River several months later, and went south on a second trip in 1865.

A second group of twenty recruits arrived at Brisbane in late 1865, and Murray’s comments were reported in the newspapers.

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31 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 1 July 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A42/63/1557.
32 Police protection, 9 August 1864, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E10/64/36.
33 Brisbane Courier (23 November 1864) and Native Police Recruiting, 27 May 1865, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E11/65/31.
Those obtained from this neighbourhood last year he states are thoroughly satisfied with their new home, and [he] considers that during the past twelve months they have been the means of saving some £50,000 worth of property, to say nothing of lives which might otherwise have been sacrificed.34

One Queensland paper said the new recruits were ‘fine strong looking men’, and commented that it was hard to imagine that ‘they belong to a race that is fast dying out. It is reasonable to think that troops of similar numbers might be trained to road making, clearing and fencing, and kindred employment’.35 Like colonisers with their ‘projects’ everywhere, Queenslanders complained there was never enough servile labour. The frontier labour shortage was obliquely noted in 1866. ‘If we had known how useful these blackfellows could be, we should not have shot so many of them’.36

Local recruiting continued and outpaced recruitment from the south. Economy, the persistent fact in the force’s history, explains the preference. In 1866 The Queenslander remarked ‘this [local recruitment] is certainly a more sensible way than sending recruiting officers to New South Wales and Victoria to entrap the natives there for the service’ – the troopers from the south cost some £20 per head, while local recruits ‘can be had for under £2 a head’.37 Details of the actual recruiting process on the Murray River are obscure. Commissioner Seymour reported to the Governor in 1866 that troopers were recruited ‘at a distance’ and an officer was sent every year to obtain recruits in

34 Darling Downs Gazette (23 August 1865).
35 Darling Downs Gazette (16 September 1865).
36 From a speech by the Bishop of Sydney sending ‘A Warning to the Destroyer of Aborigines’, The Queenslander (15 September 1866: 10)
37 ‘Recruiting at Maryborough’, The Queenslander (2 June 1866: 7).
southern New South Wales. However, the only recruiting trips found in the records were those led by Robert Walker in 1861, and by John Murray in 1864 and 1865.

What Commissioner Seymour reported to the Queensland Parliament in Brisbane’s quiet streets and ordered corridors was one thing. The realities of frontier policing were another. In practice, Seymour often ordered Native Police officers to recruit troopers while on patrol. He ordered one Sub Inspector from the Barcoo River, in the colony’s southwest, to bring five or six recruits back to Brisbane on his annual visit to the Colonial Stores. He instructed him to ‘procure them from as low down the western fall of the water as you possibly can’, and to ‘select young, light, active men’. He ordered another officer, on his arrival at the Gulf of Carpentaria (in Queensland’s northwest), to recruit troopers ‘who do not belong to the district’.

Certain parts of the colony became known as preferable places to find new Aboriginal volunteers. A newspaper item about Native Police recruiting at Maryborough, published in 1872, reported that a trooper ‘acting as a recruiting sergeant’ had persuaded eight youths to join the Native Police and ‘disperse their countrymen in the Northern swamps and scrubs’. The paper described the recruits as ‘evidently proud of their dark

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38 Commissioner Seymour to Governor, 15 June 1866, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/25/66/61.
39 Report from Lieutenant John Bligh, including journal kept by Lieutenant Robert Walker while recruiting on the Darling River forwarded by Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 12 June 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A16/61/1492. Appointment of John Murray as Recruiting Inspector, and authority for him to obtain 100 recruits, 9 August 1864, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E10/64/36; and authorising £250 for his expenses, 27 May 1865, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E11/65/31.
41 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 8 June 1868, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A106/68/1788 and Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 25 June 1868, COL/Q5/68/392.
blue jackets, military caps and striped trousers’, and noted that ‘we have always heard in
the West that the Wide Bay boys made very smart and serviceable troopers’.42

Despite the fact that local recruiting continued, Police Commissioner Seymour
noted, in his 1872 Annual Report, that ‘recruiting within the Colony is not desirable, as
the troopers, when tired of service, return to their tribes’. He recommended that
‘Aboriginals be recruited from the Southern Colonies and returned to their country’ after
serving ‘a certain period’.43 This recruitment from outside simply was not done. In 1873
the Executive Council began approving remissions of sentences for Aboriginal prisoners
who agreed to join the Native Police, a process that continued during the 1880s.44 Some
had been serving lengthy terms for violent crimes. Many colonial armies had ‘volunteers’
who were given a choice by a local Magistrate – either a jail sentence or joining an armed
forces unit.45 How many settlers in Queensland knew about this practice? The gap
between official rhetoric and frontier practice continued to grow.

In 1874, allegations about the way the Native Police ‘procured’ troopers appeared
in the Sydney papers, leading Commissioner Seymour to declare:

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42 ‘Maryborough News’, The Queenslander (2 March 1872: 11).
43 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 15 January 1873, Colonial Secretary’s
Correspondence, COL/A188/73/2320.
44 Sentence remission approval, 20 December 1873, Executive Council Minute,
COL/E12/73/285. Inspector Morisset to Colonial Secretary, 21 June 1882, Colonial
Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A339/82/3366. Acting Superintendent Townley to
Colonial Secretary, 14 September 1882, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence,
COL/A345/82/4917. Inspector Morisset to Colonial Secretary, 7 January 1885, Colonial
Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A415/85/1100.
45 Many of the garrison soldiers of the British colonies in West Africa were ‘soldier-
convicts’, whose sentences were commuted in return for ‘volunteering’, Peter Burroughs,
‘The Human Cost of Imperial Defence in the Early Victorian Age’, Victorian Studies
Regarding the Native Police system, there is nothing in the shape of slavery attached to it. The men are recruited in the usual way, and are discharged and sent back to their own districts when the term of their engagement expires. In some instances, if they have proved themselves good, useful troopers, they have been re-engaged usually for an additional term of years, receiving a small bonus. The pay is £36 per annum, with clothing. Deserters are not hunted down and shot, nor does the work kill the men in six or eight years. There are some men now in the force with fifteen years service.46

In May 1875, Aboriginal Commissioners Drew, Gregory and Coxen noted ‘There is no organised system of recruiting the aboriginal Troopers, and no Depot where either officers or troopers can be instructed in their duties prior to being employed on active service’. The report also stated ‘There is no established term of service at the expiration of which the troopers may return to their Tribes; or, if such a rule does exist, it is not in all cases adhered to’. The Commissioners recommended that:

The aboriginal Troopers be engaged for a definite term of service, say three years, at the expiration of which they may re-engage for a similar, or other term, or return to their tribes or the districts from which they enlisted, and that they be provided with means of transit, and protection from hostile tribes on the route home.47

There is no evidence of this suggestion being adopted by the Native Police. There is no evidence in the official records of ex-troopers returning to their own country.

Newspapers carried stories about the recruiting of troopers, but none on their discharge. In 1875, papers reported that Reginald Uhr, a former Commandant of the

46 Police Commissioner Seymour to Colonial Secretary in reply to memo from Governor Normanby, 31 July 1874, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1875): 625-627.

47 Report ‘on Organisation and Discipline in Native Mounted Police Force’ from Aboriginal Commissioners WLG Drew, AC Gregory and Charles Coxen to Colonial Secretary, 6 May 1875, A/40291.
Native Police and Police Magistrate at Taroom, had personally recruited eleven troopers, ‘the pick of the tribe’, for the force.48 In 1879, an article by ‘An Ex-Officer’ appeared in the *Town and Country Journal*, saying the troopers were ‘enlisted for five years’. They came from ‘the semi-civilised tribes most renowned for pluck and tracking prowess – the Brisbane River, Dawson, Burnett, Wide Bay, Frazer Island, and Burdekin supplying the chief proportion’.49 These areas, and the Darling Downs, certainly appear to have provided the majority of troopers for the force during the 1860s and 1870s.

As colonisation moved further north, the troopers came from other places, but Native Police officers sometimes complained about the northern recruits. Sub Inspector Jocelyn Brooke reported from the Barron River barracks in 1889 that most of his troopers, from the Prince of Wales Island in Torres Strait were ‘more used to the sea than land’. They could not track and were ‘useless in the bush’. He described them as ‘inefficient’, and said all – except one – were ‘raw recruits [who] could hardly ride’. He was ‘ashamed to take them out on patrol’, but said he had been told to take them to his camp, despite his having ‘too many of the kind here now’.50 Soon after Brooke wrote ‘rather than ride round the country and not doing work, I prefer to forward my resignation’.51

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50 Brooke to Commissioner, 23 April 1889, Police Staff File, Jocelyn Brooke, A/38719/89/5908.
51 Police Staff File, Brooke, A/38719.
Service

For Aboriginal men, service in the Native Police was dominated by considerations other than patrolling and violence. Rations, pay, and access to Aboriginal women figured prominently. Pay was a particularly sensitive issue. The troopers were initially paid five pence per day, but in 1862 this was reduced to three pence. The members of the Executive Council reversed their decision after officers fearing desertions complained of dissatisfaction among the troopers.

The Council noted that ‘desertions would not only harm the force, but also ‘will eventually prove a serious evil to the community, as it is a well-ascertained fact that discharged or absconding troopers by their knowledge of firearms and acquaintance with the movements of the force can do much mischief when associated with the wild blacks’. Colonial officials saw the issue of runaway troopers as a major problem with serious implications.

The first Commandant of the Native Police (Frederick Walker) stated in 1848 that ‘if properly officered by white persons, the natives of this colony would make as good troops as the natives of India’. Not all agreed. One newspaper correspondent wrote in 1867 that the troopers ‘are more difficult to manage than trained whites would be’. William Parry-Okeden, Queensland’s second Commissioner of Police, argued in 1897

52 The cost of rations was a vexed issue for the government. See correspondence relating to the supply of rations in the Nogoa district and a warning that a contract will be abandoned unless the price is reduced, see report on price of rations, 10 June 1862, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E5/62/26 and Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 2 June 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A30/62/1519.
53 Troopers pay, 6 August 1862, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E6/63/34.
54 ‘Letter to Editor’ by Frederick Walker, Moreton Bay Courier (29 June 1850).
55 ‘What is to be done with the Blacks?’, The Queenslander (23 February 1867: 8).
that the character of individual officers was crucial, saying ‘the whole question of working Native troopers, for good or bad, is a matter of leadership, control, discipline’.  

The cost of the force was always contentious, and taxpayers constantly damned the Native Police as a drain on the public purse. Public attitudes towards troopers ranged from those who thought they were wasteful and grossly inefficient to others who saw them as treacherous and highly dangerous. A few defended the actions of the Native Police. Some colonists criticised the force as ‘inefficient’, claiming that the troopers’ only real talent lay in the rapid consumption of expensive rations, and ‘the blacks would fear a small detachment of armed women much more than the aboriginal army of Her Majesty’. Other settlers agreed, saying, for example, that the force was ‘inefficient in itself as a protection to the settler, but entails even greater risk from the rascality of those half-civilized natives, called by courtesy – policemen. They appear obedient to no command and capable of any atrocity’.

Discipline of troopers was always an important consideration for Native Police officers, and this factor reinforces the military nature of the force in colonial Queensland. In 1861 Lieutenant Frederick Wheeler brought his detachment from Sandgate to Brisbane so they might witness the execution of an Aboriginal man convicted of rape, ‘as a salutary effect will possibly be the result of the witnessing of the extreme penalty of the

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57 See, for example, a letter from Phillip Sellheim, who thought all blacks were dangerous, *Rockhampton Bulletin* (2 February 1861).
59 ‘The inutility of the Native Police’ by ‘One who has seen too much of the Native Police’, *Moreton Bay Courier* (17 January 1861).
law for an offence of such a nature’.60 Officers also used more positive approaches. Commandant John Bligh obtained permission in 1863 for the ‘purchase of articles of amusement and recreation, such as cricket bats and balls’ using unexpended funds of £7/4/5 previously allocated to wages for troopers who had deserted.61 According to one writer, Sub Inspector Stanhope O’Connor provided ‘money prizes for shooting [competitions] amongst his troopers’ from his own private income.62 The extremes of witnessing punishment and of providing recreation illustrate how much the Native Police was like a military unit. These sorts of things were part of standard army routine.

Commissioner Seymour’s claim that a bonus was paid to some troopers can only be verified for a small number of men during 1866 and 1867.63 A bonus of £2 was paid to a number of Central Queensland troopers who re-enlisted in 1866. Two troopers received £4 after re-enlistment in 1867.64 Seymour reported that only ‘good and efficient troopers’ were paid, and noted in 1867 that the annual cost (in rations, uniforms, and wages) of each trooper was £92/18/6. When a bonus of ‘six pence per diem for the current year’ was granted to all members of the Police force (below the rank of Sub Inspector) in 1873,

60 Colonial Secretary to Wheeler, 29 November 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q1/61/1489.
61 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 29 October 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2650. Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 11 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q2/63/910.
62 WH Corfield, Reminiscences of Queensland, 1862-1899 (Brisbane: AH Frater, 1921), 64.
63 Inspector George Murray to Commissioner, 22 February 1866, General Correspondence, POL/J37/66/632. Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 8 March 1866, General Correspondence, POL/J37/66/731. Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 6 December 1866, General Correspondence, POL/J37/66/2868, COL/Q4/67/204. Troopers’ bonuses, 29 November 1866, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E14/66/67.
64 Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 15 March 1867, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q4/67/204.
Seymour specifically noted that this did not include Native Troopers. In his 1875 Annual Report, Seymour noted that troopers were paid £36 each per year.

Not all Native Police officers accepted the prevailing argument that Aboriginal people did not understand the value of money. In 1897, Inspector James Lamond wrote from Cooktown, recommending an increase in Native Police pay. He referred to a memo from the Commissioner ‘in which you compare Native Police pay with what good blackboys can earn on stations or other work’, saying the current pay was ‘a very low rate of wage’. Lamond suggested that increased pay (£1 per month for troopers, and £1/10/- for Corporals) was deserved ‘considering the work they do and the many hardships they undergo’, but thought it should only be paid to ‘old tried boys’ and not to ‘recruits and short service boys’ who would continue to receive 13/6 per month. His proposal was not adopted. Interestingly, even at this late date in the history of the Native Police, the officers distinguish between the experienced men and short service troopers.

Some were satisfied with the force and commented on its ‘success’. In 1882, Catholic scientist and author Julian Tenison-Woods wrote to the newspapers describing his visit to False Bay (near Cairns) with Sub Inspector Carr and six troopers from the Barron River camp (about forty miles from Cairns). Tenison-Woods described the troopers as ‘a splendid set of fellows’. When the party landed, the troopers ‘divested

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65 Commissioner to all Inspectors, 25 July 1873, Police Commissioner, General Orders, POL/4/561.
67 Lamond to Commissioner, 31 May 1897, Police Commissioner, General Correspondence, POL/J37/97/7084.
themselves of everything except their shirts and foraging caps’, and he said ‘I cannot convey to my readers what a martial and yet wild appearance these men had’.

Much was (and is) made of the personal relationship between the European officers and the Aboriginal troopers of the force, but the evidence is complex and often contradictory. For example, one fictitious account mentioned a ‘stern, merciless’ officer named ‘Tiger Tanner’ and said ‘his men adored him’. Former Acting Sub Inspector Edward Kennedy described a patrol with ‘a handful of trusty boys’ as ‘truly fascinating’. Very little evidence exists of any long-standing or affectionate relationships between troopers and their European officers, but ample proof of animosity and distrust survives. According to Henry Lamond, the Native Police was ‘probably the only military unit in the Empire in which the officers did not lead their men’. By that remark he meant they did not ride ahead of their men. The reason for this practice, ‘usually given and generally accepted’, related to distrust.

The thin veneer of civilization in the aboriginal troopers was a flimsy thing, semi-dormant, and the hunting strain which was instinctive in the black could not allow an unarmed and unsuspecting white man to ride in front of him, his back turned, without the hunter taking advantage of it.

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However, Lamond thought that the officer’s prestige in the eyes of his troopers was ‘the most vital thing in his armament’, and to this end it was ‘infinitely easier’ to allow the troopers to follow the track first. Still, records show that there were always tensions between officers and troopers. There are other aspects to consider. The peculiar term ‘Marmy’ (or Mamee or Mahmy) meaning ‘Master’) as a familiar form of address by the troopers towards their officers, is given as evidence of a close relationship, yet it appears to have been mainly used by writers. ‘Mammy’ was apparently first used in books such as Charles Eden’s *My Wife and I in Queensland*, in AC Grant’s *Bush Life in Queensland*, and in Carl Lumholtz’s *Among Cannibals*.\(^\text{73}\) It is only rarely found in archival records and the earliest ‘official’ use of the term is recorded (as ‘Mamy’) in 1889.\(^\text{74}\) After being used in Edward Kennedy’s 1902 book, *The Black Police of Queensland*, the term has been passed down by writers and historians.\(^\text{75}\)

Some colonial writers referred to the Native Police ‘hunting’ Aborigines in the bush. One episode illustrates the issue of patrol discipline, and the way in which myths about the troopers were invented and circulated. But the other aspect of this story that cannot be ignored is its characterisation of the episode as one of hunting game. According to an 1865 newspaper article:

\(^\text{74}\) Police staff file, Robert Kyle Little, A/40048
Smith a well-known and highly valued trooper, having treed a nigger, was invariably in the habit of challenging thus, with gun presented and finger on full-cocked trigger, One, two, three, in the Queen’s name come down, and at the word down, a report, and the fall of the unhappy black game, was simultaneous. But our black example is richer still. Charley, as he was called, in the excitement of a Native fray, had dropped his nigger like a bird, without repeating the orthodox pass, when with instant recollection and a triumphant smile, he turned to his officer and calling attention to the prostrate writhing form of his half dead victim, sang out with carbine at the present ‘Almost mine been forget it; in the Queen’s name surrender’. 76

The same story had a second incarnation soon afterwards in Charles Eden’s My Wife and I in Queensland, although this time it went ‘My word, Marmy, close up mine been forgot say “Stop in Queen’s Name!”’. 77 It emerges again in 1877 via the journal of Hugh Massy, a Royal Navy officer on the Australian station in the 1870s, who described the troopers as ‘blood thirsty’.

They have instructions to summon the Natives three times to surrender in the name of the Queen before they fire, and I was told a story of a zealous Black Trooper who hailed his victim in these words: “In de name of de Queen surrender – One, Two, Three”. Bang, and the poor fellows rolled over dead. 78

Grazier Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh said the trooper called ‘Queen’s name three times, by cripes, close up mine been forgotten that fellow’. 79 Frederick Richmond, who wrote Queensland in the Seventies, claimed this story was an example of ‘our polish and his savagery, in curious juxtaposition’, and said he was told that the man shot dead was a deserter. According to Richmond, the words were ‘My word me nearly forget. One, two,

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76 ‘Shooting Without Challenging’, Darling Downs Gazette (31 May 1865: 3).
77 Eden, My Wife and I in Queensland, 118.
78 Hugh Massy, Four Years on the Australian Station (1877), National Library of Australia, MS 8520. I am grateful to Paul Turnbull for this reference.
79 Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh, After Many Days (Sydney: John Andrew & Co, 1918), 232.
three, stand in the Queen’s name’. In 1945, an article was submitted to the Queensland Police before publication in *Walkabout* magazine, and an ‘offending’ passage was struck out. The passage read as follows.

An instruction was issued to the ‘boys’ that when chasing offenders they were to call on them three times to ‘stand in the Queen's name’. But the poor devils knew no English and had never heard of Her Majesty. One black trooper, realising the folly of the regulation, suggested to his officer that it would be ‘more better shoot him first time, Queen's name three times behind’.

There are later versions of this and similar myths, none of which can be supported by archival material. This particular anecdote has been passed down to the present day, and, while it is possible that the original 1865 story was based on actual events, it is clear that the story has been passed down from writer to journalist until it became accepted ‘fact’.

Service in the force was supposedly controlled by strict rules, namely those listed in the *Queensland Government Gazette*. But, there were other rules in the field. In fact, the 1865 story and the much later variations on it suggest that the troopers operated, though possibly quite loosely, under some formal rules of engagement which required them to shout a warning before firing. Other rules also guided the force, including those intended to ensure that the detachments were free from any form of local control. Native Police Regulation 11 stipulated that:

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80 Frederick Richmond, *Queensland in the Seventies* (Singapore: F Richmond, 1927), 91.
82 See Appendix 5 ‘Native Police Rules and Regulations’.
The officers are not to allow any person unconnected with the Native Police Force to interfere with or accompany them, or give orders to any of the troopers under their command.\(^{83}\)

This rule was designed to prevent the public from knowing about Native Police tactics, and to deter squatters from riding along and giving directions. Some officers flouted this rule with apparent impunity. In 1866 Frederick Wheeler appointed James Merry Gilmour as an Acting Sub Inspector.\(^{84}\) Wheeler had no authority to do this. Gilmour took seven troopers on patrol near Roma ‘with a view to arresting bushrangers’. Very occasionally, troopers were used to police Europeans.\(^{85}\) Possibly, Wheeler’s improper action represented his way of dealing with the risk to his career if he let his troopers patrol alone.\(^{86}\) Second Lieutenant Joseph Harris and Sub Inspector Ralph Johnson had been sacked for allowing their troopers to patrol unsupervised in 1863 and 1864.\(^{87}\)

\(^{84}\) Seymour initially noted the file, ‘It would be unfair to the Acting Sub Inspectors to appoint Gilmore over their heads and he is hardly suited to the appointment of Acting Sub Inspector, but later added ‘Appointed as Acting Sub Inspector, Native Police’, Gilmour to Colonial Secretary, 25 November 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A76/66/549;
\(^{85}\) Troopers assisted in the arrest of bushranger Frank Gardiner in 1864, and Native Police left Bowen in pursuit of three bushrangers later that year. When bushrangers held up the Condamine mail in 1865, Lieutenant Wheeler ‘kindly volunteered his assistance’ in capturing the culprits by ‘surrounding the North Road Hotel with his troopers’, *The Courier* (14 March 1864); Police Magistrate at Bowen to the Colonial Secretary, 21 April 1864, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A55/64/1696; *Brisbane Courier* (25 April 1864 and 15 June 1865).
\(^{86}\) Wheeler claimed that he was unable to ‘stir from the camp’ because he had no officer with him, Wheeler to Commissioner, 25 November 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A76/66/549. As noted in Chapter 2, Wheeler, apparently devastated by the death of his daughter, was transferred to Western Queensland in 1865.
\(^{87}\) Case of Lieutenant Harris, 16 May 1863, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E7/63/22, and Conduct of Sub Inspector Johnson, 30 September 1864, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E10/64/55.
Another rule required officers to be ‘very careful of the health of their men; not to allow them to wear their jackets in hot weather; not to allow them to put on their newly-washed clothes before they are dry; nor to camp in low spots conducive to fever and ague’; nor to ‘camp upon ground wet from rain’, but ‘cause them to strip bark to put under them’. A few references to the health of troopers surface in the archival records. Officers were also expected ‘Whenever an opportunity occurs, such as a day or two’s rest, or a short stage, to practice the troopers in the usual drill and no other’.88

The public learned about the force’s peculiarities and practices from hearsay, letters to newspapers and magazine articles. In 1877, ‘Old Chum’ said he often stayed at Native Police camps, and claimed an officer said to him ‘It is very difficult to manage these boys. They must be made to fear you, and they will do anything for you’.89 In his second article, the writer said ‘the officers were at the mercy of their troopers’.90 One officer (Charles Brown) accused his troopers of ‘leading him astray’, and some people believed the troopers actually controlled the force.91

One letter-writer claimed, during the infamous newspaper debate of 1880, ‘How We Civilise The Blacks’, that discharged troopers were ‘not the best of station boys’.92 The Native Police was not, he said, a good training school for pastoral workers. According to the letter’s author, very few troopers died from wounds and there ‘is an

89 ‘The Native Police’ by ‘Old Chum’, *Brisbane Courier* (27 January 1877: 3), and *The Queenslander* (27 January 1877: 12).
90 ‘The Native Police Officer No II’ by ‘Old Chum’, *Brisbane Courier* (3 February 1877: 3).
92 ‘How We Civilise’, *The Queenslander* (3 July 1880: 18). See Commandant Morisset’s comments on trooper Toby’s fate in footnote 22.
unwritten rule according to which refractory troopers are disposed of. It was called ‘passed out of the district’ – a euphemism for ‘taken to a secluded spot and shot’, also called ‘giving him a run for it’ or ‘rheumatism’.93 There is evidence in the records to support this claim. Ten troopers are recorded as having been shot dead by Police officers; at least four of these were deserters (see Table 9).

Former Sub Inspector John Carroll wrote to the Townsville Herald in 1881, claiming ‘there are no instructions as to the punishment for insubordination and breaches of discipline, which evidently must occur amongst a lot of men recruited from savages and trained to the use of arms’.94 Yet, the 1866 Native Police Regulations, published in the Government Gazette, specifically mentioned in detail the control and discipline of the troopers.95 The regulations, under which the force operated during the early 1860s while the Queensland government was still being established, had been issued in 1858. The new rules that were promulgated in 1866 stressed that officers were accountable for the actions of their subordinates. Carroll, who had been dismissed in 1876, was not a reliable witness.

93 The Queenslander (3 July 1880: 18).
94 John Carroll, ‘Native Police Force’, Townsville Herald (23 July 1881), and Inspector Armstrong to Colonial Secretary, 29 June 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A320/81/3821.
95 Despatch No 25 from Governor Cairns to the Earl of Carnarvon regarding the Native Police, 18 April 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A227/76/2698. Correspondence regarding the dismissal of Sub Inspector Carroll, 23 November 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A320/81/3821. Dismissal of Sub Inspector Carroll, 10 August 1876, Executive Council Minute, COL/E19/76/679. Governor Cairns to Colonial Secretary regarding the result of proceedings against Fitzgerald, Wheeler and Carroll, 11 September 1876, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/71.
Troopers recorded as being shot dead by police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date and place</th>
<th>Circumstances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gulliver</td>
<td>1860, Dee River</td>
<td>Shot dead by Lt Walter Powell while escaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma</td>
<td>1860, Fitzroy River</td>
<td>Shot dead by Constable Canning while escaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacky</td>
<td>1863, Tieryboo</td>
<td>Shot dead by Lt Frederick Carr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallace</td>
<td>1863, Yatton</td>
<td>Shot dead by Lt Marmaduke Richardson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echo</td>
<td>1875, Mt Cornish</td>
<td>Shot dead by Sub Inspector John Carroll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackey</td>
<td>1877, Clarke River</td>
<td>Shot dead by Sub Inspector Reginald Macneill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ned</td>
<td>1877, unknown</td>
<td>Shot dead by unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandy</td>
<td>1880, Norman River</td>
<td>Shot dead by Constable Hedges by mistake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>1880, Herbert River</td>
<td>Shot dead by unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>1888, Barron River</td>
<td>Shot dead by Cadet Affleck.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Troopers shot dead (Alma, JUS/N3/61/14; Brandy, JUS/N69/80/81; Echo, A/5097; Gulliver, COL/A11/61/84; Jackey, JUS/N52/77/65; Jacky, COL/A38/63/683; Ned, Brisbane Courier (3 February 1877); Peter, A/38719/89/9119; Sam, The Queenslander (24 July 1880); Wallace, COL/A44/63/2231).

In the later decades of the nineteenth century, newspapers began criticising the tactics used by the force. The troopers were often blamed for the violence and other illegal activities.\(^96\) An editorial ‘Police Protection in the North’, published in December 1877, said ‘wherever a Native Police camp was formed, the troopers will indiscriminately shoot all the men that cannot get out of range of their sniders quickly enough’. The detachment may catch ‘a terrified baby boy as a present’ but will not try to sell the girls because ‘a transaction of this kind at Cooktown at the beginning of the year caused a scandal’.\(^97\) No record of this particular event has been found in the archives, but there is significant documentary evidence of a trade in stolen Aboriginal children by police and

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\(^96\) According to one grazier, his father ‘never wanted the native police near the place’, because all the troopers ‘thought about or talked of was the number of niggers they had shot’, Donald Gunn, *Links with the Past* (Brisbane: John Mills, 1937), 42-43.

\(^97\) Editorial ‘Police Protection in the North’, *The Queenslander* (8 December 1877).
others. In 1865 grazier Charles Scott wrote [referring to Inspector George Murray] ‘Murray has brought up a black gin for Charlie, rather a nice little one’. WH Corfield, writing of Cooktown in the 1870s, said O’Connor’s troopers ‘picked up’ a ‘little fellow about six years of age’ when ‘dispersing some blacks’. Knowing I had no blackboy’, O’Connor ‘gave me the little fellow’. In 1874 the Police Magistrate at Normanton, Alfred Henry, reported that the ‘running down and forcible detention of gins and children’ was ‘a recognised custom’ in the district. Commissioner Seymour commented on the report. ‘The mere fact of having a black boy or gin as a servant is no offence. The “forcible detention” or “running down” is a very difficult thing to prove’. Apparently nothing was done about the practice. When Inspector Isley reported in 1881 that five Aboriginal children had been brought to Port Douglas by a Native Police patrol, he asked the Commissioner ‘what to do with them’. The government’s response to Isley’s telegram is unknown. One well known case of child abduction was that of the young Aboriginal boy named Oscar who drew sketches of ‘dispersals’; grazier Augustus Glissan of Rocklands station near Camooweal said he ‘got him at Cooktown in 1887’ from the Police. In 1891 a miner named John Cook wrote to the Colonial Secretary claiming

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98 See ‘The Right to Live’ by ‘Humanity’, *The Queenslander* (1 May 1880) and *Queensland Parliamentary Debates* (21 October 1880).
101 Henry, a former-Native Police officer, enclosed a list of cases with his report, Normanton Police Magistrate to Colonial Secretary, 28 October 1874, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A200/74/2424.
102 Isley to Commissioner, 31 January 1881, General Correspondence, POL/J19/81/472.
that Senior Constable Kean of Ravenswood was keeping a thirteen-year old Aboriginal boy from returning to his family at Cooktown. According to Cook, the boy said ‘Missa Whitefoot’ (probably Native Police Sergeant James Whiteford) took him from Cooktown to Geraldton (Innisfail), and Constable Kean then took him to Ravenswood.  

Some blamed the government for the sins of the troopers. ‘Humanity’ wrote to the Cooktown papers in 1880. ‘The ravishing of gins, the stealing of children and wholesale slaughter of the savages by these half-civilised demons’, are ‘indirectly and directly encouraged by white officials and Government patronage’. The writer suggested disbanding half the Native Police ‘who are merely hewers of wood, carriers of water, boot-blacks, grooms, and general household servants for Government officials’. Records show that troopers provided a range of servant tasks for various colonial managers.


104 John Cook to the Colonial Secretary, 26 August 1891, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A674/91/11522.

105 Reprinted from the *Cooktown Courier, The Queenslander* (1 May 1880: 562).

106 Native Police troopers were used for Gold Escort duties at Rockhampton in 1864, and at other places; trooper Johnny ‘of the gold escort’ was accused of murder in 1879; ‘Rockhampton News’, *Brisbane Courier* (23 April 1864), and Inquest into death of Marmaduke at Ravenswood, JUS/N63/79/146.
mail contractor looking for three lost bags of mail. ‘Native troopers should never be allowed to hold any intercourse if possible with any private individuals, and it is one of the hardest duties of a Native Police officer to keep his troopers from doing so’. 107

Evidently Douglas regarded mail contractors as a different kind of official to mining wardens and other government agents.

During the nineteenth and early parts of the twentieth centuries, much blame for the force’s violent reputation was thrown onto the troopers by popular authors and writers. This accusation has endured, with many later writers blaming the troopers for the infamous reputation of the Native Police. Explorer-journalist Ernest Favenc, who was in a position to comment on the frontier after his journeys into the colony’s northwest, contributed a widely read assessment of trooper savagery and officer innocence, in his _History of Australian Exploration_. 108

The one vital fault that people constantly overlooked in their condemnation of the use of black troopers was the habit of letting them get out of personal control. Few people, unless, like myself, they have had personal experience, knew anything about black dispersing by the police. The fault was this: when pursuing the blacks in rough, impracticable country (which was, of course, nearly always the case), the boys would be sent on by themselves on foot, while the white officer stopped with the horses. Now, you can never eradicate the savage from an Australian aboriginal. Remove all restraint, and he is primal man once more. That there are plenty of white men the same I know, but it comes easier to a blackfellow. 109

107 Sub Inspector Douglas to Inspector Isley, 1 March 1878, Cairns Inspector’s Letterbook, POL/12M/G1/78/35.
109 Undated article in _Favenc Papers_, Mitchell Library, Q 930.1F.
Favenc’s description of the officer remaining with the horses suggests he was blameless.\textsuperscript{110} His account was consistent with the idea that officers didn’t lead. Favenc continued:

The boys, with nothing on but a shirt and cartridge belt, used to go on alone, and the white man with them only got the report of what happened from the lips of the black corporal. (In those days the police had quite a semi-military get-up). Of course, when the boys got by themselves they became irresponsible savages at once; the half-disciplined black trooper, with some sort of discipline about him, disappeared like a whiff of smoke. I have known many cases when boys forgot to use their carbines properly, and smashed the stocks up making clubs of them. There were many capital troopers amongst the boys, and as long as they were under the eye of their officer it was all right, but the habit of letting the boys go on by themselves was fatal.\textsuperscript{111}

The breaking of weapons may be some form of protest that Favenc failed to recognise. Favenc may have had ‘blood in his hands’ too. According to one literary historian, the evidence that he participated personally in dispersals is overwhelming.\textsuperscript{112}

These sorts of Native Police ‘stories’, dutifully passed down from writer to writer, have eventually entered state lore as truthful and accurate historical accounts. At the very least, they should be compared with other accounts alleging that troopers had little interest in wanton violence. The incident on the Logan River mentioned by Collins at the beginning of this chapter is one example of a witness of troopers’ reluctance to kill. Another avoidance occurred on Cape York Peninsula in 1893, when ten troopers wasted all their ammunition rather than attack Aboriginal people. Initial newspaper reports said a

\textsuperscript{110} It has been noted that Favenc ‘denied knowledge of any atrocities committed against the Aboriginal tribes of North Queensland’, Cheryl Taylor, \textit{Tales of the Austral Tropics: Ernest Favenc} (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1997), xlvii.

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Favenc Papers}.

\textsuperscript{112} Cheryl Frost, \textit{Last Explorer: The Life and Work of Ernest Favenc} (Townsville: Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, 1983), 3; and Roberts, \textit{Frontier Justice}, 244.
'sharp engagement’ was heard to take place, and suggested that the troopers had been ‘completely routed’.113 One week later it was reported that five troopers had escaped but ‘the other five are presumed to have been killed’.114 When they all emerged unscathed after staging what may have been a sham engagement, the papers said they survived ‘a very rough experience’ and were ‘evidently trustworthy allies’.115 Rule 22 of the Native Police Regulations in 1866 stipulated that ‘under no circumstances are blacks, not being troopers, to be allowed in the police camp’; no communication ‘whatever’ was permitted between the troopers and ‘the aborigines of the district in which they may be stationed, or through which they may be passing’.116 This policy was reversed after Queensland’s second Police Commissioner, William Parry-Okeden, presented his report ‘North Queensland Aborigines and the Native Police’ to Parliament in 1897. This is the document generally credited with bringing an end to the Native Police.117 But it had no such impact. The force continued. As Queensland began to emerge from the frontier period and urban liberal politicians took control of Parliament, there were increasing calls for an end to the force. However, Parry-Okeden’s recommendation for the Native Police to continue operations in northern districts, albeit in a new role, was accepted.

113 Torres Straits Pilot (16 December 1893).
114 The Queenslander (23 December 1893: 1235-6).
116 Native Police Regulations, Queensland Government Gazette, 10 March 1866.
Although the number of detachments had fallen dramatically from the mid-1880s, several stations remained active on Cape York Peninsula until the Great War of 1914. Contrary to popular belief, the force was never officially ‘wound up’ but instead gradually disappeared as Native Police camps were closed. In 1897 Parry-Okeden gave special verbal orders to officers in charge of northern detachments in lieu of certain clauses of the old ‘Instructions’, which had been issued in 1866, and never rescinded. Officers were formerly enjoined to ‘use every exertion to prevent their troopers from having any communication with the aborigines in their districts’ and they were ‘at all times and opportunities to disperse any large assembly of blacks without unnecessary violence’. Now Parry-Okeden ordered them to ‘establish friendly relations between whites and blacks’.\(^{118}\) In fact, troopers – and indeed a number of officers – had enjoyed ‘friendly relations’ with Aboriginal women for decades despite the prohibitions. The changing of the rules was obviously intended to create a new position for the force as Aboriginal Protectors, and to signal the change to a more conciliatory policy through dialogue.\(^{119}\)

\(^{118}\) Parry-Okeden, ‘Report on North Queensland Aborigines’.

\(^{119}\) But the Aboriginal Reserves that were an integral part of the ‘Protection’ era were nothing more than prisons without walls; see Rosalind Kidd, *The Way We Civilise* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1997), 46.
Women

One of the major disciplinary issues that officers had to deal with involved troopers’ conduct with respect to Aboriginal women usually referred to in the records by the derogatory term ‘gins’. Some officers allowed women to accompany troopers on deployment to northern and western parts of Queensland, but a number of government officials condemned the practice as bad for discipline.\(^{120}\) By the end of the century, most Native Police troopers and trackers were married, and single troopers were not wanted. Troopers (and some officers) unquestionably abducted, seduced and abandoned women throughout Queensland. Evidence from the records is incomplete, but still highly suggestive. At the 1861 Select Committee hearings, Lieutenant Frederick Wheeler testified that the police were ‘not in the habit of taking gins’ except with his approval. Generally, he said, ‘the gins had to be flogged to stop them following the troopers’, and he claimed that ‘some of the gins are very much in love with the Police’.\(^ {121}\) Wheeler’s comments, in the light of his own record of sexual indiscretion, must be seen as disingenuous half-truths, because while perhaps not in love with the police, some women could have followed for payment.\(^ {122}\)

\(^ {120}\) One of the most vocal was George Dalrymple, who complained bitterly about three women who accompanied the troopers on the expedition to establish Port Denison (Bowen) in 1861; see Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 14 March 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A14/61/801 and Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 18 March 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q1/61/318.


\(^ {122}\) Frederick Wheeler’s daughter, an Aboriginal child, was born in 1860 at Tamrookum south of Brisbane, Pamela Tomes, letter to author, June 1999.
In 1866, the Colonial Secretary gave permission to the Police Commissioner to set aside part of the Native Police troopers’ rations allowance to pay for the supply of rations to their wives.\footnote{Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 5 May 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A66/65/1044 and Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 16 May 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q3/65/384.} The subject of troopers’ ‘gins’ was specifically mentioned in the Native Police Regulations: Sub Inspector Reginald Uhr was chastised in 1867 for allowing a trooper to ‘have a gin without the necessary authority’, contrary to Native Police Regulation 22.\footnote{Chief Inspector George Murray to Inspector Wheeler, 26 November 1867, A/36335/67/192.}

Colonial officials realised that competition over women could cause tension between troopers and local Aboriginal men. Thus, for example, the Executive Council noted in 1867 that several British military officers had recommended that Black troopers could effectively replace the European constables at Somerset on the isolated tip of Cape York Peninsula. The Council disagreed:

\begin{quote}
It is generally agreed that it would be utterly unsafe to place a detachment of Native troopers at a distance of several hundred miles from the control of a European population. At Cape York, they would probably mutiny or desert, and certainly carry on an internecine war with the neighbouring aborigines for the sake of their women.\footnote{‘Papers Respecting the Removal of the Detachment of the Royal Marines from Cape York’, Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings (1867).}
\end{quote}
The European constables sent to Somerset resigned en masse in 1867, and were replaced with Native Police troopers in 1868.\textsuperscript{126} Troopers from such isolated outposts, as the Executive Council predicted, did indeed fight with local men over Aboriginal women.\textsuperscript{127}

Not surprisingly, the terms negotiated by the women, or by others who had influence over them, never appear in any formal report or informal reminiscence. That negotiations took place seems irrefutable. However, women were sometimes taken against their will too. Daniel Emmerson of Bowen wrote in 1870 saying troopers ‘carried away’ a number of Aboriginal women and gave them articles of police clothing.\textsuperscript{128} He said that a troop camped at his run on their return from the Mackay races, and they took ‘several young gins’ from his run. When Emmerson complained, Inspector John Marlow defended his troopers, saying:

> Although it is contrary to the spirit of the Native Police Regulations for an officer to permit his men to have intercourse with blacks allowed in on stations unless it is done at certain times, no information would ever be received by a patrol officer as to the whereabouts of the rest of the tribe and their actions.\textsuperscript{129}

There is no evidence in the records of Marlow being reprimanded on this occasion.

\textsuperscript{126} Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 6 September 1868, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A111/68/2928; Police at Somerset, 10 September 1868, Executive Council Minute, COL/E2/68/244; Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 10 September 1868, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q5/68/604.

\textsuperscript{127} See examples at Sub Inspector Tompson to Commissioner, 31 May 1882, Police Staff File, Lyndon John Agnew Poingdestre, A/40323/82/3234; James Howe to Inspector Murray, 1 August 1883, Police Staff File, Robert Kyle Little, A/40048/83/5666; Sub Inspector Stafford to Inspector Murray, 2 June 1888, Police Staff File, Dominick Heavey, A/38829/88/4226 and Daniel Hart to Colonial Secretary, 14 March 1889, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A579/89/3383.

\textsuperscript{128} ‘The Native Police’ by DR Emmerson, \textit{The Queenslander} (19 November 1870).

\textsuperscript{129} ‘Lieutenant Marlow and the conduct of his black troopers’ by Daniel Emmerson, \textit{The Queenslander} (26 November 1870: 2-3).
Negotiations for sex have not been recorded, but violence could provoke a complaint and thus reports of the relations between Aboriginal women and troopers sometimes became known. One 1874 letter-writer said the troopers were ‘savages, and are encouraged in ill-using the gins. The latter seems their only delight’; the same correspondent noted that troopers were ‘allowed to keep wives’. Governor William Cairns reported to London in 1875 on charges against the Native Police, including an accusation that the troopers were ‘maltreating [the Aborigines] in the most brutal and barbarous manner, shooting down the males and only sparing the females to submit them to outrage’. In his report, he mentioned that he had asked the Colonial Secretary for an explanation. Commissioner Seymour denied all charges against the force, saying ‘any officer who permitted his men to behave in the manner described would at any rate be dismissed and if sufficient evidence could be procured would be proceeded against criminally’. There is no evidence of disciplinary charges against troopers relating to sexual misbehaviour.

Critics of the force claimed some officers were worse sexual predators than the troopers. In 1876, Alfred Davidson of Brisbane wrote to the Aborigines Protection Society in England saying ‘Inspector Wheeler’ had whipped a quiet Banchory station Black stockboy to death, which was believed to be on account of ‘jealousy of gins’.

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130 ‘Circumspection and secrecy have dominated the sexual aspect of ‘contact’, Gillian Cowlishaw, *Black, White or Brindle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 95. For a recent discussion on the connections between sexual violence and settler-colonialism, see Andrea Smith, ‘Not an Indian Tradition: The Sexual Colonization of Native Peoples’, *Hypatia* 18, 2 (2003).
131 ‘Native Police’ by ‘Caranga’, *The Queenslander* (23 May 1874: 9).
132 Governor Cairns to Colonial Secretary, 5 April 1875, Governor’s Correspondence, GOV/71.
133 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, May 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A209/75/1276.
(Native wives)’. He added ‘The allusion to the jealousy about gins is to the commonly believed opinion that both the Native Police and sometimes the officers also possess themselves of Native women for their own use’. There is sufficient documentary evidence to support this allegation. Two Native Police officers, Archibald Mosman and Lyndon Poingdestre co-habited with Aboriginal women.

The troopers captured some Aboriginal women. Sub Inspector Douglas reported in 1878 that ‘his troopers captured a ‘half-caste gin, about 14 or 15 years old’ while patrolling on the Mossman River and kept her overnight in camp. Douglas released her next morning with a message to her tribe, saying that ‘the police had no intention to disturb or interfere with them, so long as they did not spear horses or cattle’. What cannot be established is how the troopers treated this young woman during her night in camp. White officers kept silent or spun innocuous accounts of relations between the men of all ranks and Aboriginal women. This episode appears to highlight another dimension since it implies that Douglas captured women for hostage purposes, a different rationale from that of the troopers. In 1879, three articles by ‘An Ex-officer of the Native Mounted Police’ were published in the *Town and Country Journal*. He claimed that the killing of

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135 As noted in Chapter 2, Inspector James Lamond reported that Sub Inspector Poingdestre was living with three Aboriginal women at Highbury camp in 1897, Police Staff File, Lyndon John Agnew Poingdestre, A/40323. In 1903, former Sub Inspector Mosman, who left the Native Police in 1890, admitted that he had been living with an Aboriginal woman for ‘over ten years’, Chief Protector’s Correspondence, A/58750.
women was ‘repugnant to nine-tenths of the troopers’, who chose wives to increase their language skills.\textsuperscript{137}

Some of the most distressing records found concern the abduction from Moreton Island of a ten-year old Aboriginal girl called Torloo. Henry Blakesley of Cooktown took her to sea in the schooner \textit{Flirt} ‘with a number of her countrymen and relations’, who ‘all ran away’ near Cape Tribulation (North Queensland) and returned home on the \textit{Young Australian}. Torloo did not get away and stayed with Blakesley for five years sailing on various boats until he returned to Cooktown. Unable to pay her passage home, he left her in the care of Mr Weir at the Steam Packet Hotel, Cooktown while he went to Thursday Island.

On his return he found she had ‘been decoyed away by the Native Police’, but later returned to Weir’s where she told Blakesley ‘the troopers intended taking her away’. She asked to be sent home. By complaining to the government about how the Native Police had nearly deprived him of a servant, Blakesley precipitated a flurry of correspondence that revealed what could happen when officers and troopers collaborated in taking an Aboriginal woman. ‘She was taken away by the troopers about a week ago’, had been ‘knocked down and beat’ when she refused to go with them. Inspector John Isley reported to Commissioner Seymour, saying the girl was found at Sub Inspector Hervey Fitzgerald’s house, and ex-trooper Gilbert ‘wanted her’ as his wife. Isley said Sub Inspector Brabazon Stafford had told him that she had ‘turned up’ at Oakey Creek after walking forty-five miles to reach his camp. Although this case was mentioned in the

Brisbane papers during the Native Police debate of 1880, the fate of Torloo is unknown. The file was noted ‘No action necessary’.\(^{138}\)

The seizure of women apparently continued. Sub Inspector Robert Little reported to the Commissioner in 1883 from Southwest Queensland, after a complaint had been made about his having ‘interfeared with the station blacks’. Once again, the probable sexual dimension had been covered up by claims of the necessity for acquiring language. Little explained frankly that ‘the gin in question was given to me by the former manager at Marion Downs and married to trooper Tallboy’.\(^ {139}\) Similarly, Inspector Fitzgerald reported in 1884 that Corporal Hero, of the Gold Escort at Cooktown, had taken a gin seven years ago and he now ‘speaks the language fluently’.\(^ {140}\)

Occasionally, there are signs of positive or protective attitudes towards Aboriginal women in records of the Native Police. Constable Dennis Donovan was suspended in 1880 after he ‘interfered with the gins’ and struck one named Dinah. Inspector Isley reported ‘troopers and gins never complain as a body without some good cause’.\(^ {141}\) In 1886 campkeeper Constable John Page, at the Dunrobin barracks near Georgetown complained to Sub Inspector Ernest Carr that he was ‘grossly assaulted by one of the Dunrobin gins named Jessy’ during the absence of Sub Inspector George Warby. Page said he had reported the matter to Warby, who dismissed the complaint. Page resigned, saying he was ‘unaccustomed to being ruled by Blacks’. The context for the ‘assault’ can

\(^ {138}\) Isley to Commissioner, 24 September 1879, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A283/79/3470.
\(^ {139}\) James Howe to Inspector Murray, 1 August 1883, Police Staff File, Robert Kyle Little, A/40048/83/5666.
\(^ {140}\) Fitzgerald to Commissioner, 17 April 1884, A/58851/84/2856.
\(^ {141}\) Isley to Commissioner, 2 April 1880, Port Douglas Inspector’s Letterbook, POL/12M/G2/80/32.
be understood from Carr’s report to the Commissioner. ‘I think with Mr Warby that Constable Page exceeded his duty in pulling the bed clothes off the gin Jessie and deserved what the gin gave him’.  

Deserting

The greatest difficulty for the Native Police was desertion. Records suggest that, at times, troopers fled the force faster than they could be recruited. Runaway troopers were a perennial theme in the Police Commissioner’s Annual Reports from 1863 to 1900. The desertion of entire detachments, clearly a serious issue, brought discredit on the officer in command. In 1875, for example, the Executive Council dismissed Acting Sub Inspector Edward Dumaresq after all his troopers ran away.  

Desertion was potentially a double-edged danger for settlers. It reduced the strength of detachments deployed to crush Aboriginal resistance, and it could simultaneously enhance the ability of Aboriginal people to resist colonisation. That, at any rate, was a recognised risk that concerned the government.

When one of the natives had learned the white man’s ways and the use of his weapons, a rifle in his hand made him a friend, and when he turned against the white man he struck terror into the heart of every pioneer, however brave he was.  

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142 Constable Page to Sub Inspector Carr, 29 January 1886, Police Staff File, John Page, A/40120/86/1436.  
143 Dismissals, 1 January 1875, Police Commissioner, General Orders, POL/4/583.  
144 ‘Sundowner’ (Glenville Pike), North Queensland Register (13 March 1948).
Dissatisfaction amongst troopers after their pay was reduced in 1862 from five pence to three pence per day caused officers to worry about possible desertions, and the Executive Council reversed its decision in order to avoid the risk of runaway troopers joining ‘the wild blacks’.145 ‘Old Chum’ agreed, saying in 1877, ‘the escaped troopers, if not brought back, are more to be dreaded by the settlers than the real myall’.146 The articles by ‘An Ex-Officer’, published in 1879, claimed that ‘of all marauding aboriginals, the very worst for daring are those who, semi-civilised, have run away from the Native police or station employ’.147 In a previous article, the writer had described the troopers as ‘tame human sleuth hounds’, and said they were keen to kill.148

One example of a former trooper’s ‘criminal career’ is revealed in records relating to the death of a European. Paddy Morris died at Windah station in 1876, but no inquest into his death has been located. The Colonial Secretary was informed that an Aboriginal man named Sandy, a former trooper, had killed Morris.149 Sandy, who apparently had deserted from Frederick Wheeler, outran his pursuers and escaped. Soon afterwards, Sub Inspector Mathew Collopy of the Rockhampton police advised they had arrested ‘Sandy’s gin’ at Duaringa, and had also found a double-barrelled gun that Sandy took

145 Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 1 July 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A31/62/1823; Troopers’ pay, 6 August 1862, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E6/62/34; Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 16 August 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q2/62/613; Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 8 October 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A34/62/2512.
146 ‘The Native Police’ by ‘Old Chum’, Brisbane Courier (27 January 1877: 3) and Queenslander (27 January 1877: 12).
149 The Queenslander (8 July 1876).
from Morris. They also advised that he was ‘very active, well built’ and ‘more like an
Italian brigand than a Queensland Black’. The Police Magistrate at Rockhampton,
Theophilus Pugh, asked the Colonial Secretary if a reward could be offered for Sandy’s
capture. Pugh said that ‘people living along the railway [were] in a state of terror’, but the
Colonial Secretary noted that it did not appear that ‘anything would be gained by a
reward being offered’. Sandy was eventually arrested, tried and imprisoned. In 1879,
Stephen Egan wrote from Rosewood requesting that Sandy be ‘prevented from returning
to the district after he is released from Brisbane Gaol for the murder of Paddy Morris’.¹⁵⁰
Egan asked if Sandy can be sent to the Native Police, to the Palmer, or “disposed of in
some way”. The letter was noted by Acting Commissioner Barron ‘The prisoner when
discharged from St Helena to be taken in charge by police pending further
instructions’.¹⁵¹

There are a number of reasons why Aboriginal men decided to leave the force.
Mostly, as the following evidence shows, they seem to have done so soon after joining.
Some were encouraged by relatives to return home, while others found their new
employment unpleasant and not what they had been promised as recruits. This also
prompts the question of whether the troopers from the Murray River and other southern
recruits were less prone to desertion, but without detailed personnel records it is
impossible to tell. Regardless of the origins of the troopers, officers in Central
Queensland had difficulty retaining the full complement of their detachments.
Commandant Morisset reported in 1860 that Lieutenant Alfred Patrick’s troopers,

¹⁵⁰ Stephen Egan to Colonial Secretary, 26 April 1879, Colonial Secretary’s
Correspondence, COL/A284/79/3513.
¹⁵¹ Stephen Egan to Colonial Secretary, 26 April 1879, Colonial Secretary’s
Correspondence, COL/A284/79/3513.
recruited on the Balonne River, deserted after meeting some countrymen at Albinia Downs 400 kilometres away. 152 Six months later, Morisset wrote to inform the Colonial Secretary that several more new recruits had run away from the Palm Tree Creek (Dawson River) barracks. 153 Six new recruits from the Logan River district deserted within a week of their arrival by steamer at Rockhampton in 1861, and were not recaptured despite an attempted pursuit by Lieutenant Eugenius Genatas. 154

The case of Georgey, who deserted from Rockhampton and walked back to the Darling Downs, became public knowledge in 1863. Grazier WH Coxen of Bendemere protected Georgey from Lieutenant Frederick Carr who threatened to shoot the trooper on sight. 155 Georgey, who was known to the Native Police as ‘Macbeth’, absconded twice but agreed to surrender if he was protected from Carr. 156 The Executive Council decided to release him, not for any humanitarian reason, but because ‘the force is not yet constituted or recognised by law’. 157 The passing of the Police Act, later that year, rectified this anomaly. 158

In 1863 seven troopers recruited in the Wide Bay and Maryborough districts deserted from the Upper Burdekin detachment and Commandant Bligh ordered

\[\text{\[152\text{ Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 14 December 1860, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A9/60/2331.}\]
\[153\text{ Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 12 June 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A16/61/1492.}\]
\[154\text{ Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 12 June 1861, COL/A16/61/1492.}\]
\[156\text{ Petition from Georgey to Colonial Secretary, 6 May 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A39/63/934.}\]
\[157\text{ Petition of Georgey, 6 May 1863, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E7/63/22.}\]
\[158\text{ Assent for Victoriae Reginae No 11, ‘An Act to Consolidate and Amend the Laws relating to the Police Force’, Queensland Government Gazette 4 (10 October 1863).}\]
Lieutenant Marmaduke Richardson to pursue them.\textsuperscript{159} Pursuit failed, and Richardson was himself charged with the murder of deserter Wallace. The Executive Council heard that Richardson had been ‘intoxicated while on duty’ and shot the trooper who was ‘in custody as a deserter from the force’. Richardson was dismissed without having been tried. The Attorney General may have determined that there was insufficient evidence for a successful prosecution, particularly if the only witnesses were Aboriginal.\textsuperscript{160}

In 1863 Commandant Bligh asked for permission to recruit eighty troopers, although only fifty were required. The extra number was necessary, he thought, to allow for ‘possible desertions and discharges of incurable invalids, etc’.\textsuperscript{161} This is a valuable piece of evidence because it suggests the desertion rate. Bligh recommended that recruits should be obtained from the Upper Murray district of southern New South Wales because the recruits that had been ‘procured from the Logan, Clarence, Condamine and Wide Bay districts have proved difficult to keep’ and those from the Darling were, he said, ‘a very inferior and almost useless race’.\textsuperscript{162} It would be almost two years until Bligh’s suggestion was acted upon.

In 1863, nine new troopers sent from Sandgate to Rockhampton deserted within three days of their arrival, and Bligh reported that this was the third batch that had run away after their arrival from Brisbane. He said it was ‘useless to send any more recruits from the Logan and Clarence rivers unless arrangements are made for shipping them

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{159} Commandant to Richardson, 17 June 1863, Justice Department Correspondence, JUS/A4.
\textsuperscript{160} Dismissal of Lieutenant Richardson, 26 September 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A44/63/2231 and misconduct of Richardson, 10 October 1863, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E8/63/41.
\textsuperscript{161} Similar attrition rates were found in other police forces. Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2733.
\textsuperscript{162} Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2733.
\end{flushleft}
direct to Port Denison. They might be much less inclined to desert’.\footnote{Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 11 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2737. This was most probably the first group that walked 1000 kilometres home. Others were to follow, Michael Jones, Country of Five Rivers: Albert Shire, 1788-1988 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 33-34.} The first detachment taken to Rockingham Bay (Cardwell) in late 1864 deserted en masse, and a second group recruited in Brisbane for the same station abandoned their posts in early 1865.\footnote{‘Rockingham Bay News’, Brisbane Courier (17 December 1864); Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 7 February 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A64/65/557 and ‘Cardwell News’, Brisbane Courier (15 April 1865).} Distance did not necessarily stop desertion. The officer in command, Charles Blakeney, was suspended but later reinstated.\footnote{Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 3 July 1866, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A92/66/2008.} Commandant Bligh wanted authority to apprehend and punish deserters, and complained to the Government that squatters who needed Aboriginal labour protected runaway troopers.\footnote{Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2733.} The Colonial Secretary replied ‘When dissatisfaction is found to exist among the troopers of any detachment steps should always be taken to separate the men by drafting them into other detachments which must supply others in their place’.\footnote{Colonial Secretary to Commandant, 21 January 1864, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/Q3/64/48.} Again, the rhetoric of the quiet corridors in Brisbane was not so easily implemented on the frontier, and there were very few transfers of troopers recorded.

There is evidence of settlers sheltering deserters and other fugitive Aborigines. According to historian Luke Godwin, the Dutton brothers protected Aborigines from
Native Police in 1861, and one, Henry, reputedly held a revolver to an officer’s head.\textsuperscript{168} Complaints about squatters who protected runaway troopers continued for years. Bligh asked the Executive Council for authority to enable officers to apprehend deserters, citing the example of squatter Henry Coxen of Bendemere station on the Condamine River. This was the individual, said Bligh, who ‘has threatened to resist any attempt, on the part of Lieutenant Carr, to retake a deserter now on Mr Coxen’s station’.\textsuperscript{169}

Six months later, Bligh wrote saying squatters were sheltering deserters to secure labour ‘knowing they can do so with impunity’.\textsuperscript{170} He anticipated ‘further desertions from amongst the oldest and best troopers, unless some regulation or order is speedily put in place’. Inspector George Murray wrote to the Colonial Secretary in 1865 asking what authority he had to ‘stop persons from encouraging troopers to desert from the Native Mounted Police and afterwards employing them’.\textsuperscript{171} When Native Police Regulations finally appeared in 1866, two extra clauses added by the Attorney General were approved by the Executive Council ‘to meet the case of persons who may encourage desertion from the force or employ known deserters’.\textsuperscript{172}


\textsuperscript{169} Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A9/63/944.

\textsuperscript{170} Commandant to Colonial Secretary, 7 November 1863, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A46/63/2733.

\textsuperscript{171} Inspector George Murray to Colonial Secretary, 31 August 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A70/65/2390.

\textsuperscript{172} Native Police Regulations, 28 October 1865, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E12/65/66.
Recorded mass desertions of troopers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Native Police camp or barracks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Albinia Downs, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Palm Tree Creek, Central Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Sandgate, Southeast Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Mackenzie River, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Upper Burdekin, North Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Rockhampton, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Rockingham Bay, North Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Rockingham Bay, North Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Marlborough, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Somerset, Cape York Peninsula.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Marlborough, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Broadsound, Central Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Palmerville, North Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Cape River, North Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Somerset, Cape York Peninsula.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Belyando River, Central Queensland.</td>
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<td>1879</td>
<td>Fourteen</td>
<td>Barron River, North Queensland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Upper Laura, Cape York Peninsula.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Barron River, North Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Norman River, Northwest Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Normanton, Northwest Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Cooktown, Cape York Peninsula.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Mass desertions of troopers (Sources, COL/A9/60/2331; COL/A16/61/1492; COL/A35/62/2996; COL/A42/63/1557; COL/A46/63/2737; COL/A47/63/2995; COL/A64/65/557; COL/A92/66/2008; A/36335; COL/A163/71/2915; COL/A170/72/1484; The Queenslander (25 October 1873); COL/A208/75/1001; The Queenslander (27 May 1876); COL/A230/76/3440; A/40173/78/4176; POL/12M/G2/79/88; COL/A296/80/3846; POL/12M/G2/81/83; A/38846; COL/A385/84/2500 and POL/13A/2).

In 1876, Sub Inspector Lionel Towner charged Henry Dutton with ‘interfering and obstructing him in the course of his duty’ by aiding and abetting a deserter named Peter at Tambo station. Towner claimed that Dutton said ‘if I catch any troopers here I will kick them off the ground; I never knew a good man in the force yet; they are all

173 The Queenslander (29 January 1876: 6).
crawlers’. According to Towner, the troopers were ‘frightened’ of Dutton and refused to follow the deserter. The court found Dutton guilty of ‘obstruction’ and fined him £2. It is impossible to know if squatters were looking to recruit station hands, or if the aid was a humanitarian gesture.

In 1872, the entire Broadsound detachment deserted; a second group of troopers under Sub Inspector Alexander Douglas deserted ‘from [sic] no ostensible reason’ in 1873. According to newspaper reports, Douglas was ‘close on their heels’, and it was believed that ‘certain people in the district’, despite the risk of ‘a heavy penalty’, were sheltering the deserters.

Commissioner Seymour was forced to send an officer to Cooktown with a group of new troopers in 1875 because the ‘last lot of recruits, being unaccompanied by an officer, all deserted the day after they arrived’. By the 1870s, the ‘procuring’ of troopers from distant localities in an unsuccessful attempt to curtail desertions had almost ceased. When four recruits from Maryborough deserted from Central Queensland in 1870, Chief Inspector George Murray ordered Frederick Wheeler to ‘keep up the numbers of your different detachments by enlisting boys in your district or other eligible ones [who] can be procured handy’. Soon after, Wheeler sent a telegram to the Commissioner in Brisbane asking ‘would you re-enlist deserted runaway troopers; some

174 Colonial Secretary to Acting Commissioner, 1 November 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A170/72/1484.
175 ‘Northern News’, The Queenslander (25 October 1873: 10).
176 Commissioner to Attorney General, 4 December 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A215/75/3095.
are running amongst the blacks. How many required?178 The Commissioner’s response to his question is not known.

Aboriginal prisoners, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, were used as troopers from the 1870s. Five, who had been serving long sentences for violent robberies, were sent to the remote Somerset settlement on Cape York Peninsula in 1870.179 In 1871, Frank Jardine reported from Somerset that the troopers had all deserted, taking guns and ammunition. Police later shot one dead when he attempted to rob the settlement’s store, Jardine captured two and the remaining three were reported killed – ‘shot in resisting their arrest’.180

One month after Jardine’s report was published, a second story appeared in the papers, saying a ship’s captain had found a canoe off the coast of North Queensland. An Aboriginal man in the canoe could ‘speak tolerable English’, and said he originally came from Maryborough. Apparently he was one of the troopers who had absconded from Somerset, and told the ship’s crew he had ‘travelled down the coast with the idea of reaching Maryborough’. The other escapees had died on the way, and the captain took the sole survivor on board. When the ship reached Townsville the runaway trooper ‘bolted into the bush’, and was never seen again.181 It is possible that the three who were reportedly shot had in fact escaped, though two of them were seriously wounded and later

178 Inspector Wheeler to Commissioner, 9 January 1871, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A170/72/1484.
179 Prisoners’ pardons and their safe arrival at Somerset, 23 February 1870, Executive Council Minute, COL/E5/70/60; and John Oxley Library, MLC 1791-18/3.
180 Jardine to Colonial Secretary, 31 March 1871, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A163/71/2915 and ‘Somerset News’, The Queenslander (20 May 1871).
181 ‘Northern News’, The Queenslander (3 June 1871: 2).
died. Six more convict troopers were released from the St Helena Gaol to serve in the Native Police in 1874.\footnote{Remission of sentences for prisoners who joined the Native Police, and discharge of seven Aboriginal prisoners from St Helena Gaol, Executive Council Minute, 20 December 1873, Executive Council Minute COL/E12/73/285 and \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 11 (1 January 1874: 14).}

Runaway troopers upset authorities but spurred settlers into action. Colonists sometimes formed themselves into parties of ‘specials’ in attempts to capture them. Two ex-troopers killed two stockmen (one European and one Aboriginal) near the Cloncurry River, south of Normanton in 1871, and news from Cloncurry of a band of ‘outlaws’, including an ex-trooper, reached Brisbane in the same year.\footnote{Inquest into death of Archibald McLeod at Dalgona near Normanton, JUS/N34/72/112.} According to press reports, Messrs Uhr, Armstrong, Cox and Halpin ‘volunteered to do the duty of ‘specials’ in restoring security to life and property’. The newspapers reported that the ‘posse’ did not catch the runaway trooper, but found weapons and homemade ammunition.\footnote{‘Warrego News’, \textit{The Queenslander} (14 October 1871).}

Sometimes desertions occurred as a result of misunderstandings about the duration of service. It is impossible to know if the misunderstanding owed more to the deceptions of officers when explaining the terms of employment or problems of interpretation. In either case, the recruits may have left when they believed their terms were finished. What is clear is that there were misunderstandings. An entire detachment deserted from Somerset in 1876. When captured four months later, they said they had only enlisted for six months.\footnote{Henry Chester to Colonial Secretary, 4 July 1876, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A230/76/3440 and ‘Cooktown News’, \textit{The Queenslander} (7 October 1876).} In 1879 fourteen troopers deserted from the Barron River camp in North Queensland. Inspector John Stuart attributed the desertion of the fourteen
to ‘the very injudicious conduct’ of Sub Inspector Douglas in ‘promising the old troopers their discharge when leaving the district’. Even if they were caught, he thought it would be ‘useless keeping the old troopers here’, and concluded ‘I cannot attach blame to Sub Inspector Carr for it is evident the old troopers had this made up and took the first opportunity when they were all in the camp to bolt’. Commissioner Seymour said ‘The old troopers were promised their discharge and should have been let go when the recruits arrived’.\footnote{Inspector John Stuart to Commissioner, 7 March 1879, Port Douglas Inspector’s Letterbook, POL/12M/G2/79/88.}

Sub Inspector Stafford’s entire detachment deserted at Upper Laura in 1880, and one trooper attempted to kill him.\footnote{Inspector Fitzgerald to Commissioner, 2 July 1880, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A296/80/3846.} Stafford was dismissed after the Executive Council heard he was ‘unfit’ for command of a Native Police detachment. One year later, Acting Police Commissioner Thomas Barron and miner Ernest Henry supported his appeal for reinstatement. ‘Mr Stafford finding that his troopers had mutinous intentions was marching them unarmed to Cooktown on the road when dismounting for the purpose of camping, he was suddenly seized and narrowly escaped with his life’.\footnote{Dismissal of Sub Inspector Stafford, 22 July 1880, Executive Council Minute, COL/E39/80/245; Police Staff File, Brabazon Richard Stafford, A/40147/80/3010 and A/40147/81/676.} Stafford was reappointed in 1881, and remained in the force until he was appointed as Police Magistrate at Thargomindah in 1888.\footnote{Appointments, \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 18 (14 February 1881: 33); appointment as Police Magistrate, 25 May 1888, Executive Council Minute COL/E95/88/322 and \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 25 (25 May 1888: 223).}
In 1883, the Police Magistrate at Ingham, Charles Pennefather, wrote to the Colonial Secretary complaining of firearms in the possession of blacks. Pennefather said ‘a number of the blacks in this district are now in possession of arms and ammunition, and as several discharged troopers are amongst them, unless measures are taken to stop the supply of arms and disarm those already in possession of them, serious consequences are likely to ensue’.

The Attorney General responded that ‘There is no law that I am aware of which prohibits blacks to carry firearms. All I can suggest is to take the weapons away from them (by force if necessary) and make them some compensation for the deprivation’. Commissioner Seymour noted ‘It will not be an easy matter to disarm the blacks. Lives will probably be taken. Am I justified in going so far if necessary?’ Colonial Secretary Samuel Griffith replied ‘Life must not be taken or endangered but the arms must be got if possible’. This is an important episode, showing the use of force when the law failed, and it would be useful to know more. However, like so many tantalisingly documented incidents that deal with the Native Police, this particular one leaves no further paper trail. But it does reveal the ongoing importance of desertion and the chilling effect the prospect of armed Natives had on settlers.

The desertions, therefore, bring to the surface a tension in the position of the Native Police on Queensland’s frontiers. As we will see in Chapter 4, the rumours of desertions, and of the troopers’ unreliability, served the aggression of squatters. Troopers could put a shiver of fear down the spine of the very people who found it such a

190 Walter Scott to Charles Pennefather, Police Magistrate at Ingham, 7 August 1883, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A370/83/5223.
191 Colonial Secretary to Commissioner, 19 November 1883, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A370/83/5223.
convenient instrument. The fact was that the Native Police was neither perfectly convenient nor a perfect instrument. Its relations with local Aboriginal women and the substantial desertions made it inconvenient, disruptive, and even dangerous at times. With respect to cheapness and bush skills, it was an alluring solution to the colonisers’ goals of inexpensively mastering a strange and hostile land.

**Case studies**

The absence of a rich, single vein of readily mined records has frustrated the efforts of many amateur and professional historians to analyse, with little research effort, the history of the Native Police, an institution intrinsic to Queensland’s nineteenth century history. Quick explorations into the extensive collections at the state archives will not, and have not rewarded authors, but tenacious digging and collecting can recover much of the record. We close this chapter with an illustration of that claim. The lives of two troopers can be partially recreated from the archival and newspaper records, partly because they committed crimes and these were recorded. These cases show that sometimes expediency mattered more than ability or trust.

Trooper Bromby, recruited at Bowen in 1875, was stationed at the Herbert River in 1880 where, according to an anonymous complaint, he killed an old man near Cardwell.\(^{192}\) If true, the case was never acted upon. But Bromby seems a peculiar type of person to retain in a police force. In 1885, Inspector Aulaire Morisset recommended that

\(^{192}\) *The Way we Civilise* by ‘JC’, *The Queenslander*, (7 August 1880).
Bromby be released from Townsville Gaol, where he was imprisoned for ‘absconding from hired service’ and stealing a rifle while under the command of Sub Inspector Stafford. 193 The Executive Council remitted the remainder of his sentence, and Bromby rejoined the force. 194 Three years later he deserted from the East Normanby camp near Cooktown but was recaptured. 195 His movements for the next years are unknown, but in 1897 he was convicted of manslaughter and served a three-month sentence in Normanton Gaol. 196

The disturbing career of a second trooper, Jackey Norman or Norman Jackey, was even better recorded. At the age of twenty Jackey was given a fifteen-year prison sentence for the murder of his wife at Gatton in 1882. 197 Gatton residents submitted a petition for his release in 1886, and he was sent on remission to serve as a trooper with the water police at Thursday Island in 1887. 198 In 1891 Jackey was convicted of rape and jailed again. A recommendation from the Superintendent of St Helena, suggests that

193 Queensland Police Gazette (20 June 1885: 170) and Inspector Morisset to Colonial Secretary, 7 January 1885, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A415/85/1100.
194 Remission of sentence, 27 February 1885, Executive Council Minute, COL/E65/85/60.
195 Inspector Frederick Murray to Commissioner, Cooktown Inspector’s Letterbook, 20 July 1888, POL/13A/H1.
196 Committals, Court convictions, Prison discharges, Queensland Police Gazette 34 (July, October, December, 1897: 261, 374 and 452).
197 Prison Admission Register, PRI/1 and The Week (1 July 1882: 9).
198 Petition from Gatton residents to Colonial Secretary, 19 July 1886, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A475/86/5973; Report on Native Police at Thursday Island, 15 July 1890, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A623/90/8096. Duties of Native Police troopers at Thursday Island, 22 September 1887, Executive Council Minute, COL/E87/87/328.
Jackey or Norman would make an excellent Native Tracker. Colonial Secretary Horace Tozer noted in the file ‘Gaol evidently did this man no good – no action’.  

In late 1894 news reached Brisbane that ex-trooper Norman had killed Constable Edward Lanigan at Montalbion near Herberton. Constable John Higgins from Atherton arrested him with the assistance of three troopers and local Aborigines. Norman was committed for trial and sentenced to life imprisonment rather than hanging because the court found that the police had ‘made an unlawful arrest’. A newspaper account of his trial described the prisoner as ‘tall, of slight build, not repulsive looking’. Norman was sent to St Helena Gaol, and the revolver he used to kill Lanigan was sent to the Police Museum in 1895. Whilst we have an excellent description of Norman at his admission to the prison, later records about his death or release are missing. This is the only case known when a trooper (or in this case an ex-trooper) killed a police officer. These profiles may be exceptional, but there is something disturbing about the government officials employing, and then arming dangerous and violent men, for the alleged purpose of protecting life and property.

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199 Petition from prisoner Jacky Norman, 26 May 1893, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A736/93/6137.
200 Herberton Police to Colonial Secretary, 6 September 1894, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A780/94/10390; and Brisbane Courier (7 September 1894).
204 Police Museum Files, A/45277/95/1181.
205 Described as ‘a stockman, aged 32, with a height of 5 foot 9inches and a quarter, dark complexion, black hair, brown eyes, two bullet wounds in the left knee, two bullet wounds in the left thigh, and one bullet wound right calf’. Presumably some of these occurred during his arrest, as none were mentioned during his previous admission in 1882, Prisoner Description Registers, PRI 1/4 and PRI 1/6.
Conclusion

Indigenous forces have been consistently used throughout all European colonial empires, because they were cheap and were ‘reputed to be’ particularly savage towards other Native peoples. Records relating to individual Aboriginal troopers in the Native Police are rare and incomplete, and superficial recollections are biased, but by putting together the flawed pieces of an immense puzzle we can see an outline. Moreover, documents on general policies and practices have survived. What the records reveal is a state habituated into cheap, expedient, risky conduct. Police officers and members of the public often expressed their opinions about the troopers, and some blamed them for the violence attributed to the Native Police. The surviving historical records allow us insights into attitudes towards the employment of Indigenous men in the force, and some of the circumstances that framed their work. Records show that many troopers deserted soon after being recruited, and the force was almost permanently short-handed. Discipline, access to women and desertion were major concerns for most Native Police officers. The question of violence towards Aboriginal people, and the involvement of the troopers in sanctioned killings, is dealt with in the next chapter.
Chapter 4: Native Police operations

‘preserving order by terror’\(^1\)

Introduction

How much do the archival and historical records reveal about Native Police operations and the violence they inflicted? Was the reputation of the force as the greatest destroyer of Aboriginal people in Queensland justified? The discovery of large numbers of documents has revealed a history of violence beyond what was previously known.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Editorial ‘The Native Police, The Queenslander (8 March 1879: 305).
\(^2\) The material in this chapter is mainly drawn from about 300 items of correspondence to and from the Colonial Secretary, and over 200 articles, editorials and letters to the editors published in the newspapers of Brisbane and other Queensland towns between 1860 and 1900, including the classic frontier report saying ‘the blacks were dispersed by rifle in the usual manner’ from ‘Georgetown News’, The Queenslander (28 February 1874: 4). For a general discussion, see Ross Woodrow, ‘Afraid of the dark: The image of the Aborigine in the Queensland popular press 1860-1900’, Glenn R Cooke (editor), Art Off Centre, (Brisbane, Griffith University, 1997), 23-34.
However, the incomplete nature of the evidence means we will never how exactly how many people were killed by the Native Police. All that can be found in the archival records and newspapers is the number they reported that they killed, and those they killed that settlers reported. Some Native Police officers exaggerated the number of violent ‘collisions’ with Indigenous groups, just as some newspapers increased settlers’ fears by erroneously reporting deaths that never occurred.³

These ‘clerical errors’ compounded a frontier culture based on secrecy, discretion and suspicion, masking the true extent of the violence. The combination of all these factors means the task of accurately calculating the impact of the force’s violent tactics is impossible, but there are sufficient documented massacres in the archival records and newspapers to confirm the reputation of the Native Police as the major agent in the destruction of Aboriginal people in Queensland. It is possible that squatters were more destructive but there are virtually no records of ‘private’ killings and reprisals.⁴ As Richard Glover notes, Queensland correspondents for EM Curr’s investigation of Aboriginal population decline invariably mentioned ‘the quite unmysterious activities of the Native Police’.⁵

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³ Examples of erroneous or exaggerated reports are easily found. Alleged deaths and subsequent retractions are listed in Appendix 4 ‘Rumours’ – false reports of frontier deaths.
⁵ Richard Glover, ‘Scientific Racism and the Australian Aboriginal’, *Maps, Dreams, History*, edited by J Kociumbas (Sydney: Sydney University, 1998), 83; and EM Curr, *The Australian Race: its origins, languages, and customs* (Melbourne, 1886-87). See also correspondence regarding Aboriginal vocabulary forms, to be ‘filled out by police and forwarded to Edward Curr, Office of the Chief Inspector of Stock in Melbourne’, 24 November 1874, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A200/74/2500.
Selected excerpts from newspapers and archival records show the historical context that enveloped and encouraged the Native Police in Queensland. It was well understood that even though most settlers did support the aggression that was shown towards the ‘original owners of Australia’, not all did. There were also some who believed in showing no compassion whatsoever. So we find a situation where a few are callous and a few compassionate, but the majority are, apparently, indifferent to race relations on the frontier. That apathy did not arise from ignorance. There can be no doubt that the histories of colonisation and Aboriginal affairs were vigorously and publicly debated in the Queensland press until the early decades of the twentieth century. Far from keeping it a secret, many settlers openly endorsed the killing of Aboriginal people, and some happily admitted to their part in the violence of the frontier. Not least were the four former Native Police officers who wrote books and manuscripts, and another six who contributed articles and letters to the editors of various Queensland newspapers.

There are three aspects that must be considered before a comprehensive account of Native Police operations can be compiled, and a credible assessment of the force’s impact on Indigenous populations can be attempted. Firstly, the historical context: how brutal were most colonial Queenslanders, especially with regard to interracial violence? What do the surviving records tell us about frontier violence, and what can be deducted

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6 There is no shortage of material offering insights into public perceptions of the Native Police in colonial Queensland. See Henry Reynolds, *With the White People: The Crucial Role of Aborigines in the Exploration and Development of Australia* (Melbourne: Penguin, 1990), and Appendix 6 ‘A good reliable pamphlet’.

7 Native Police officers Eglinton, Hill, Johnstone and Kennedy wrote lengthy works (*Pioneering in the North-West; Forty-Five Years’ Experiences in North Queensland; Spinifex and Wattle: Reminiscences of Pioneering in North Queensland; and The Black Police of Queensland: Reminiscences of Official Work and Personal Adventures in the*
from those one-sided accounts of a virtual ‘war of extermination’? Are claims about colonial genocide in Queensland justified? Is it possible to gain any sort of insight into frontier deaths, and if so, what does an exercise like this reveal about the force, and its place in Queensland history?

**Context, count and comparison**

Queensland, like most former settler-colonies, lacks a substantial assessment of colonial and frontier racial violence. When historian Henry Reynolds first wrote about frontier violence, he noted that none of the books available in the early 1970s referred to racial violence in Queensland and the Northern Territory, ‘areas with large indigenous populations which saw what was undoubtedly the worst racial violence in our history’. Historian Glen Lewis, in an article primarily devoted to discussion of violence between European groups in Queensland, noted that ‘the battle with the aborigines to expropriate their land was particularly intense in Queensland’. The best research to date on frontier violence is found in the collected works of Raymond Evans, and *Invasion and Resistance* by Noel Loos. But even Loos explicitly stated that his list of fatalities did not include

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*Early Days of the Colony*), while Armit, Urquhart, Carroll, Douglas, JK Little and Scriven contributed shorter pieces. For details, see bibliography.


Aboriginal people who died resisting European invasion.\textsuperscript{11} Indigenous resistance to invasion was, as historian Mark Finnane points out, a critical factor in the development of policing in Australia in general, and in the creation of the Native Police in particular.\textsuperscript{12} Frantz Fanon’s comment ‘the frontiers of the colonial world are shown by barracks and police stations’ applies to nineteenth-century Queensland.\textsuperscript{13} It is therefore a most important topic to consider. How did the Native Police affect and change Queensland history?

The number of frontier deaths is an important topic, which needs careful consideration.\textsuperscript{14} Since so few accurate records have survived, attempts to enumerate comprehensively colonial violence are always incomplete. Attempts to calculate ‘kill-ratios’ risk becoming perverted academic exercises serving no useful purpose. The incidents of brutality and inhumanity recounted in the frontier records are very distressing, and difficult for anyone to approach objectively. John Wood’s argument that violence is virtually impossible to reconstruct, so ‘what we have are stories’, is pertinent and relevant.\textsuperscript{15} As Richard Broome argues, Australia, like nearly all other former

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
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\item Noel Loos, \textit{Invasion and Resistance} (Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1982), 190.
\item Frantz Fanon, \textit{The Wretched of the Earth} (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1968), 29.
\item Deaths from violence should ideally be distinguished from those caused by disease, starvation and other causes to actually determine the true extent of racial violence on the frontier. See Judy Campbell, \textit{Invisible Invaders: Smallpox and Other Diseases in Aboriginal Australia 1780-1880} (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2001).
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
European colonies, is ‘founded on violence’.16 Chris Cuneen’s note that ‘there was a
direct link between the legal recognition of the land grab by squatters and the
development of specific forms of policing’ – particularly those aspects of policing that
affected Indigenous people, is relevant to the Queensland situation.17

Colonialism is inherently violent, and settler societies are invariably ‘born’
through systematic violence.18 On the frontiers of Empire, ‘Colonisers put themselves at
risk, encountered heroic, organised, protracted resistance from indigenous peoples, and
participated in “the slaughter of tribesmen and the subjugation of the survivors”’.19 The
reason for the killing was recognised by some of the colonisers. Control of land and other
resources was the object of colonialism, and, as Charles Darwin noted, the Natives could
not be allowed to stand in the way of civilisation and industry. ‘Wherever the European
has trod, death seems to pursue the aboriginal’.20

While this chapter provides an ideological context in nineteenth century
Queensland racism for the brutality of the Native Police, recent writing on scientific
racism offers a broader context. Although much of the evidence used in this chapter deals
with what might be described as the ‘practical racism’ of ‘ordinary people’ on the

16 Richard Broome, ‘Aboriginal Victims and Voyagers, Confronting Frontier Myths’,
17 Chris Cuneen, Conflict, Politics and Crime: Aboriginal Communities and the Police
(Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 2001), 47.
18 For further discussion on this vital nexus, see Rob Linn, Battling the Land: 200 Years
of Rural Australia (Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1999), 42; Ross Gibson, Seven Versions of
an Australian Badland (Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 2002), 53; and John C
Weaver, The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1659-1900
(Montreal, McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 60.
19 Weaver, The Great Land Rush, 73.
20 Quoted in Herman Merivale, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies (London, Green,
Longman and Roberts, 1861), 541.
frontier, it is important to note the quasi-scientific notions that justified their actions.\textsuperscript{21} Debates about ‘managing the natives’ are part of a context of changing attitudes towards Indigenous policy that mollified the impact of frontier violence in the Nineteenth century. A closer examination of attitudes towards frontier violence in Queensland is useful before any assessment of Native Police operational tactics is compiled and presented.

**Context**

Was colonial Queensland such a violent place? Did the frontier, as some historians have contended, ‘bristle with guns’?\textsuperscript{22} How many firearms did the Native Police have, and what kind were they? In recent years some historians have claimed that ‘genocidal moments’ occurred in colonial Queensland Was genocide – the attempted complete extermination of Aboriginal people – a standard colonial practice in Queensland? Henry Reynolds said the continued existence of the Native Police was

‘tangible proof of official concern about Aboriginal resistance’, and ‘[A]s fear ran like fire, otherwise humane men came to condone butchery and finally to imbue their own hands in the blood of the dispossessed tribes’.²³ Henry Reynolds and Dawn May say ‘a high degree of tolerance of violence and atrocity prevailed in colonial Queensland’, but does the historical material support this assertion, and if so, what part did the Native Police play?²⁴

How many guns were there? Archival documents and newspapers do not usually contain many references to guns and other weapons, apart from weekly sporting notes.²⁵ After looking at a large number of records, I think there were probably more locksmiths than gunsmiths in nineteenth-century Queensland. According to Michael Bellesiles, something similar happened in the United States before the Civil War.²⁶ Rifles, revolvers and other firearms were not often mentioned in the historical material until the 1870s, suggesting that Australia was ‘catching up’ with the dramatically increased production of weapons in the United States. ‘Ordinary’ police did not carry firearms on duty, but the Native Police always did, and were issued with Terry breech-loading rifles in 1861 to replace the muzzle-loading carbines they had used previously.²⁷ However, one correspondent claimed fifteen years later that some detachments were still equipped with

²⁵ See for instance, Archibald Meston’s series ‘Fifteen Years Shooting in Australia’, and his similar series ‘Ramrod’ in The Queenslander, Brisbane Courier (7 August 1875: 6)
²⁷ Order for 200 rifles and ammunition approved, 13 August 1860, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E2/60/37.
‘antiquated double-barrelled muzzle loaders’. Snider rifles were issued to police in 1874, and then replaced with Martini-Henry rifles in 1884. The Martini-Henrys were only issued to the stations of the ‘ordinary’ police. However, many of these deadly weapons soon found their way into Native Police camps, suggesting an informal ‘trade’ in government-supplied weapons. An order for 38,000 rounds of Snider ammunition was approved in 1882. Native Police units continued to use this particular firearm until the late 1890s. Both rifles were modern, efficient, lethal tools that could kill at great distances. Their developments pointed to the tremendous advances made in firearm design and manufacture during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Of course, the references to firearms would not specifically mention frontier violence, but spoke of hunting and sporting uses. There is more evidence in the records of reluctance by many colonists to carry guns. In 1863, an attack on a station prompted one writer to say ‘if the men will only carry firearms, they would be safer up here than

28 ‘Northern Views No III’ by ‘A Northern Man’, The Queenslander (28 February 1874: 3).
29 Order for 250 Snider rifles and order for 100 Martini-Henry rifles and 50 carbines, 24 January 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A76/73/492 and 16 June 1883, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A363/83/3063. See also JS Robinson, Arms in the Service of Queensland (Brisbane, 1997).
30 Chief Clerk William Finucane to Inspector Fitzgerald, 27 February 1894, Commissioner of Police, General Correspondence, POL/J11.
31 Order for 38,000 rounds of Snider ammunition approved, 19 July 1882, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A342/82/4134.
walking the streets of Brisbane’. A number of similar statements have been located in the data. There are records, however, of some settlers advocating the use of extreme violence against Aboriginal people. They had guns and it is against this backdrop that the record of the Native Police must be carefully assessed.

Apart from the police, other government officials and their employees also killed Aboriginal people ‘in self-defence’, and some records of these deaths have survived. Geologist Robert Logan Jack led two prospecting expeditions to Cape York Peninsula in 1879 and 1880; on the first, his two ‘blackboys’ shot two men dead near Coen, prompting Logan to say ‘I regret the circumstance’. However, he added ‘I could not blame the boys for doing what I should have done myself had I been attacked’. On the second journey, Jack’s Aboriginal assistant wanted them to ‘simultaneously fire’ at a ‘blackfellow to make sure of him, but I declined the sport, to Charlie’s intense disgust and amazement’. Jack noted in his diary ‘I have been blamed in some quarters for a want of firmness in not having shot some of the blacks’, but said he hoped to avoid ‘the despicable savage warfare’ that invariably followed such actions.

Surveyor Ernest Waraker kept a diary while working in the Johnstone River district of North Queensland; in it, he noted ‘niggers’ were watching his camp, and said ‘the wretches are too treacherous to make friends with’. After a night raid on his camp, Waraker wrote ‘the only thing troubling me is that I wasn’t awake to give them a proper welcome, and assist them to a few ounces of lead in their diaphragms’. Soon after, he

35 Letter to The Courier (15 August 1863).
called Sub Inspector Douglas to ‘straighten them’. Customs Department officers, Royal Navy mariners and other public servants are known to have shot at, and in some instances, killed Indigenous people.

Self-defence

The colonial newspapers occasionally discussed the question of what the squatters had done to protect themselves before the Native Police existed. Most agreed with the force’s first Commandant, Frederick Walker, who thought the squatters’ action in ‘taking up arms in their own defence’, was justified and inevitable. Killing was well known. An early editorial on the force discussed the disadvantages of self-defence:

How did the squatters manage, before a Native Policeman was dreamt of? The answer is simple, they protected themselves. But at what a cost! At the sacrifice of

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40 *Waraker Diary*.
41 One Aboriginal man was killed at the Woody Island quarantine camp near Maryborough in 1865; crew from HMS *Basilisk*, although ‘disgusted’, witnessed killings after the wreck of the *Maria* near Cardwell in 1872; and ‘a number of blacks’ were shot at Sweer’s Island in 1873 by staff of the Normanton Customs station. See Police Magistrate to Colonial Secretary, 10 November 1865, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A72/65/2996; Captain John Moresby, *Discoveries & Surveys in New Guinea and the D’Entrecasteaux Islands* (London: John Murray, 1876) and Diary of *Arthur Neame*, RB Joyce Papers, National Library of Australia, Box 147; Police Magistrate to Colonial Secretary, 25 January 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A182/73/849.
43 See, for example, grazier William Archer’s testimony to the 1858 New South Wales Select Committee into the Native Police, saying if the Native Police did not exist, squatters would ‘take the law into their own hands’ and ‘very soon exterminate the blacks’; *New South Wales Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1858: 873).
many valuable lives, and an occasional raid upon the aborigines, who, driven to
desperation by the gradual disappearance of those of a fierce nature upon which
they depended for food, took to eating the squatter's cattle and sheep, and
murdering the whites whom they looked upon as the aggressors. It was a war of
cruel extermination on one hand, and of dire retaliation on the other.\textsuperscript{44}

Did the government and the settlers view the Native Police as ‘self-defence’?
Examples from the archives show how the Native Police operated as an integral part of
the colonial apparatus of law and order, and how citizens of fledgling townships turned to
the force for help. Townspeople also subscribed to the doctrine of ‘forward defence’, and
Rockhampton residents wanted to form a ‘dispersal’ party when large numbers of
Aboriginal people arrived in the town to escape Native Police retribution after the Cullin-
la-ringo killing of 1861.\textsuperscript{45} Police Magistrate John Jardine advised the Colonial Secretary
that he had refused the resident’s request. Instead he went with Lieutenant Patrick and
three troopers to search their camp, and then ‘dispersed them peaceably’.\textsuperscript{46} However,
attitudes hardened in Central Queensland after the death of Acting Sub Inspector Cecil
Hill in 1865.\textsuperscript{47} One writer said, soon afterwards, ‘these incorrigible rogues are becoming
unbearable, and require a regular dressing down. Ordinary morality can only be driven
into their obtuse skulls by leaden lessons’. The correspondent also said if squatters ‘have

\textsuperscript{44} Editorial, \textit{Darling Downs Gazette} (8 March 1861: 3).
\textsuperscript{45} Nineteen members of the Wills party were killed at Cullin-la-ringo station on the
Nogoa River on 17 October 1861.
\textsuperscript{46} Jardine to Colonial Secretary, November 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence,
COL/A22/61/2898.
\textsuperscript{47} Acting Sub Inspector Cecil Hill joined the force in 1865 and was killed by Aborigines
three months later, \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 2, 3 (28 February 1865: 10) and WRO
Hill, \textit{Forty-Five Years’ Experiences in North Queensland, 1861 to 1905} (Brisbane: H
Pole & Co, 1907).
taken matters into their own hands’, it would, ‘in face of the terrible atrocities remaining unavenged’, not be seen as a ‘disfavor’.\footnote{‘Rockhampton News’, \textit{Brisbane Courier} (3 June 1865).} Not all agreed. Ebenezer Thorne wrote in 1876:

> While some squatters acted as Christian gentlemen, others, goaded to acts of reprisal and, as they perhaps put it, in self-preservation for themselves and property, surrounded by swarms of natives, committed acts which were simply scandalous.\footnote{Ebenezer Thorne, \textit{The Queen of the Colonies or Queensland As I knew It by An Eight Years’ Resident} (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1876), 341.}

Some Native Police officers used self-defence as an excuse as well. Frederick Wheeler reported in 1862 that while on patrol he found:

> A large assemblage of aborigines have been driving and killing cattle. They consisted of Ubi Ubi, Durundur and Brisbane blacks. I called upon them to disperse and go back to their own country but they surrounded us and would not move away, at last I was obliged to fire upon them in self-defence.\footnote{Wheeler to Colonial Secretary, 1 July 1862, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A31/62/1897.}

Some people argued that the settlers should continue to take care of their own defence, rather than rely on the Native Police. Newspaper correspondents believed ‘mob rule’ was justified and inevitable, with one report asking ‘How can it be wondered at if bushmen take the law into their own hands, and pursue and shoot them down without mercy?’\footnote{‘Rockhampton News’ from the \textit{Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, The Courier} (8 April 1864).} An editorial in the \textit{Brisbane Courier} on the ‘Native Question’ stated:
Clearly the duty of the Government is to keep up the Native Police force in a state of efficiency, otherwise, the settlers must be allowed to take their own course for the protection of their lives and property.52

Similar attitudes to ‘self-defence’, almost like contemporary justification for individuals to break the law in repelling ‘home invasion’, were expressed in newspaper columns for decades to come. Of course, Aboriginal self-defence was always seen as an ‘outrage’, so many explorers, miners and pioneers went armed and prepared for conflict.

The short-handed and unpredictable Native Police could never really guarantee protection. Commissioner Seymour often noted in his Annual Reports that there were not enough Native Police detachments to answer every request for protection.53 Just as predicted, violence increased after the opening of the Palmer River goldfield in 1873.54 This ‘monumental population movement into an area far beyond previous European settlement’ inspired one correspondent.55

The miners must protect themselves, and treat the aborigines like other destructive inhabitants of the bush. A breech-loading rifle should form an item in every northern-bound digger’s outfit, for revolvers, although useful in close quarters,

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52 Editorial, Brisbane Courier (8 December 1864).
53 For example, in his first Annual Report, Seymour said ‘the constantly increasing occupation of hitherto waste country renders it necessary that this force should be considerably augmented’. In his 1878 Annual Report he noted ‘more detachments were needed’ as the ‘complaints of cattle-killing and hut-robbing by the blacks’ from Cairns to Cooktown were ‘never ending, and will never cease as long as there are blacks there’. In 1885, he reported ‘owing to the want of men I have been unable to accede to other requests equally as urgent as those which I was enabled to attend to’.
54 ‘Recommend send out an officer of Native Police with at least six troopers as I feel certain there will be great danger of serious disturbances’, Gold Commissioner WESM Charters to Colonial Secretary, 13 September 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A189/73/2483.
55 Peter Bell, ‘Essay on North Queensland Mining Settlement’, Readings in North Queensland Mining History 2, edited by KH Kennedy (Townsville: James Cook University, 1982), 1.
are not efficient at the long ranges from which boomerangs and spears are thrown by dexterous savages.56

Newspaper correspondents weren’t the only ones warning colonial adventurers about the hazards of the north. After a death near Cooktown, Police Commissioner Seymour noted that his 1876 Annual Report had drawn attention to ‘the want of ordinary precautions on the part of the diggers and packers in this district’.57 One veteran prospector warned would-be miners ‘it is very foolish for small parties to go outside unprepared. They must be well prepared with firearms and a good dog is useful’.58 Some settlers evidently heeded these sorts of warnings, and took precautionary action. Sub Inspector Douglas reported in 1878 that four men had ‘destroyed’ a camp near Cairns, and said ‘I consider the public have to a great extent relieved the Native Police by taking the law into their own hands and it was certainly no good my patrolling where others had only the previous day been dispersing’.59

Settlers who didn’t protect themselves attracted criticism. At an 1861 inquest into the deaths of two seamen, Rockhampton Police Magistrate John Jardine said that he had ‘never heard of a case of such wilful rashness on the part of the murdered men’; the two men, armed only with revolvers, had pursued a group of Aboriginal people.60 A stockman was killed on the Palmer River in 1888, and Native Police Sub Inspector Brabazon Stafford gave evidence at the inquest. ‘There is no doubt in my mind’ he said,

56 ‘Palmer News’, The Queenslander (20 February 1875: 10).
57 Police Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 14 February 1877, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A250/77/5882.
58 ‘Letter to Editor’ by James Mulligan, The Queenslander (14 March 1878: 8).
59 Douglas to Police Commissioner, 1 March 1878, Port Douglas Inspector’s Letterbook, POL/12M/G1/78/36.
that had the deceased and his mates ‘stood and faced the blacks’, they could ‘easily have fought their way to the tent where their weapons were and so saved their lives’.\(^{61}\) Self-defence was expected on the frontier.

As far as many, if not most, settlers were concerned, the ‘advance of settlement’ could not be reversed, and if the Aborigines resisted, the settlers would be justified in taking the law into their own hands.\(^{62}\) One newspaper item in 1885 noted the danger of persons ‘travelling without firearms’.

No man should travel anywhere in the north without effective firearms ready for immediate use, for no one knows the day nor the hour when the festive myall will waltz in on him with a carefully selected bundle of black palm spears.\(^{63}\)

It is references such as this that give us useful insights into the world of the Native Police.

One particular episode set the tone of the debate about self-protection on the Queensland frontier for many decades – the killings at Cullin-la-tringo in 1861. The consensus of many newspaper correspondents and officials, including Governor Bowen, was that squatter Horatio Wills was to blame for the deaths of nineteen settlers. Wills had ignored good advice, trusted the local Blacks and failed to issue firearms to his men.\(^{64}\)

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\(^{60}\) Inquest into deaths of Henry Irving and Nicholas Miller at Rockhampton, JUS/N3/61/65.

\(^{61}\) Inquest into the death of Alfred Wright at Maytown, JUS/N152/88/93.


\(^{63}\) ‘Blacks in the North’ from the *Cairns Chronicle*, *Darling Downs Gazette* (4 April 1885).

\(^{64}\) Despatch from Governor Bowen to the Secretary of State for Colonies, 16 December 1861, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/23/61/74. See also numerous later references, including Henry Lamond’s claim that ‘many men’ remembered that ‘the Willses demanded kindness to the blacks. No firearms were allowed’, ‘Queensland Native Mounted Police’ by Henry Lamond, *The Bulletin* (1 April 1953): 39.
Not all writers have accepted this argument about a lack of guns.⁶⁵ There was, according to one relative, ‘an excellent supply of firearms’ and Wills ‘frequently offered them to the men’, but they refused, obviously feeling quite safe with Aboriginal people.⁶⁶ After the sudden attack, revenge parties operated in Central Queensland for months afterwards. There is a considerable amount of writing on the Cullin-la-ringo killings, with over fifty primary sources, and more than sixty books and articles mentioning this particular violent event. Many suggest European actions played no part in the deaths of twenty settlers. This blinkered attitude still exists in some minds today.⁶⁷ Aboriginal resistance to European invasion was not considered valid and appropriate action, but the armed defence of settlers’ assets was seen as lawful and justifiable homicide. Writers often used Cullin-la-ring, like Hornetbank, as an example, because it provided ‘reliable’ evidence of Indigenous ‘savagery’ and ‘treachery’.

Two early influential works on the Cullin-la-ring killing were Oscar De Satgé’s *Pages from the Journal of a Queensland Squatter* and JTS Bird’s *The Early History of Rockhampton*. De Satgé wrote ‘this terrible killing acted as a warning to many not to trust or admit the blacks’; Bird repeated this assessment by describing the event as ‘an especially atrocious outrage which showed everyone that the blacks were not to be

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⁶⁵ ‘The tent occupied by the squatter was a well-stocked armory’ and ‘his own tent was a well-stocked arsenal’, JE Murphy ‘Operation Massacre’, *Life* (July 1952:6) and ‘The Massacre at Cullin-la-Ringo’, *Walkabout* 32, 6 (June 1966: 20)


⁶⁷ Eight articles and two books specifically on the Cullin-la-ring killing have been located, and the historical evolution of the retelling of this particular ‘frontier clash’ is possibly one of the most fascinating aspects of Queensland colonial history. See Cooke, *The Currency Lad* (1997); Martin Flanagan, *The Call* (Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1998); and Les Perrin, *Cullin-la-ring: The Triumph and Tragedy of Tommy Wills*, (Brisbane, 1998).
trusted.\textsuperscript{68} Historian Ross Johnston says simply ‘nineteen people were murdered by Aborigines’. He made no mention of the clear evidence of European provocation.\textsuperscript{69} A report was published soon after saying the attack was caused by the abduction of two boys by three ‘New South Wales gentlemen’ who refused to release them despite being followed by sixty men for a ‘considerable distance’.\textsuperscript{70}

In other times and places, the frontier attitude of ‘shoot it if it moves’ persisted. Twenty years after Cullin-la-ringo, miners and settlers were still confident they could shoot Aboriginal people with impunity. Native Police operations must be seen against this backdrop. Ex-Sub Inspector Stanhope O‘Connor wrote to the papers in 1880, saying he had ‘peacefully interviewed’ tribes north of Cooktown who told him ‘a white man always shot at a blackfellow when he had a chance’.\textsuperscript{71}

\textbf{Justifying the violence}

Several generations later, people still justified the slaughter by the Native Police. Writer Henry Lamond, the son of an officer, argued ‘we cannot turn back the clock’. He admitted that the violence on the frontier was ferocious, but called it a necessity.\textsuperscript{72}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{68} Oscar De Satgé, \textit{Pages from the Journal of a Queensland Squatter} (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1901), 154, and JTS Bird, \textit{The Early History of Rockhampton} (Rockhampton, 1904), 96. Both are widely quoted by later writers.
\item \textsuperscript{69} W Ross Johnston, \textit{The Long Blue Line} (Boolarong, Brisbane, 1992), 7.
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} (12 December 1861).
\item \textsuperscript{71} ‘Black v. White’ by Stanhope O‘Connor, \textit{The Queenslander} (18 December 1880: 786).
\end{itemize}
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Lamond has been quoted widely as a reliable source on Native Police frontier violence.\(^\text{73}\)

Settlers believed in simple solutions to problems in the complex colonial world. As recently as 1959, this was still the conventional history of the Queensland frontier.

In war, one suppresses excuses for the enemy: fear makes fury relentless, and the squatters met ferocity with ferocity, in terror for their wives and children. They found, they thought, an effective answer to the native warriors in the Native Mounted Police. They claimed, with reason, that they had no alternative.\(^\text{74}\)

Henry Lamond was more interested in defending the reputation of the Native Police and that of his father, Inspector James Lamond, than objectively describing frontier history. He was also interested in mounting a moral defence for violence as an act of settlement. Archival records show that James Lamond expressed the usual frontier attitudes, including a classic statement in 1897, ‘When the blacks begin to know their own strength they may then become a serious trouble again’.\(^\text{75}\) Evidence of attitudes similar to Lamond’s can be found in many books and articles celebrating the pioneer experience.\(^\text{76}\)

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\(^{75}\) Report from Insp Lamond at Cooktown to Commissioner, 4 July 1897, General Correspondence, POL/J14/97/8526.

\(^{76}\) See, for example, ‘Conflicts with Blacks: Dreadful Plights of Pioneers’ by ‘Baralga’, *Cummins & Campbell's Monthly Magazine* (June 1946: 17-29); ‘Pioneering Days: “We Fought with the Black and We Blazed the Track”’ by Unknown, *North Australian*
Frontier violence affected all levels of colonial society. There may have been Members of the Queensland Parliament who had killed Aboriginal people. An inquest, held at Maryborough into the death of an Aboriginal woman in 1864, found George Curtis, who later became a Parliamentarian, had shot her. There is also evidence that Queensland’s first Labor Premier (Anderson Dawson) was involved in a frontier retaliatory massacre while prospecting in the Kimberley region of Western Australia in 1886.

Those who criticised the violence employed by the Native Police and settlers attracted contempt. A news item on the colony’s northern districts included an invitation to ‘let those who have put these articles in the Sydney papers, about killing the aboriginals, come up here for a short time’. After Cullin-la-ring, Tom Wills criticised the ‘Brisbane saints’ who, he said, ‘will probably cry’:

“Oh pity the poor inoffensive blacks”. They should come to this district and see the place while the babies of the murdered men are above the ground. If that sight would not turn their hypocritical cry, they ought to be put at the bottom of a well to get cool, and give them time to reflect.

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78 See ‘Maryborough News’, *Brisbane Courier* (24 September 1864) and Maryborough Circuit Court Records, CCT/3B/N7.
80 ‘Country Intelligence from the North’, *The Courier* (4 October 1862).
Other settlers expressed similar attitudes in the debate over what to do with the Natives. Social anxieties and fears, mixed with bravado and brutality, caused one editor to declare ‘very few people have even the remotest idea of the dangers faced by the pioneer squatters of Queensland’. This was not an isolated outburst. A particularly scathing letter from one frontier resident, published in 1865, claimed too many people were giving the Blacks ‘special treatment’. If settlers were killed ‘not much would be said or done’, but if an Aborigine was killed, ‘the folks inside and the mock philanthropists [would] raise a cry immediately, send writs, [and] send up their officers, attended by a body of cavalry’. Statements like these avoided admitting the true situation on the frontier. The Native Police functioned, purely and simply, as a retaliatory force.

Revenge

The Native Police was a retaliatory force, not a preventive one. Revenge may have prompted some of the worst killings. Squatters and other settlers may have killed more in reprisal raids than the Native Police did. It is against this background of hatred and distrust that the role of the Native Police must be considered.

There is reliable evidence of ‘revenge’ parties operating in colonial Queensland. The most infamous of these ‘death squads’, known as ‘The Browns’, was convened after

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82 Editorial ‘Civilising the Aborigine’, Brisbane Courier (18 December 1890: 4).
the killing of the Fraser family at Hornetbank in 1857.84 For several months afterwards, native police and armed parties of squatters with their employees tried to kill almost every Aboriginal person they found.85 One Upper Dawson squatter, George Serocold, wrote to his brother in England, saying ‘Whatever you do be careful as I do not wish anybody to be able to read what I have written’.

Twelve of us turned out and taking rations with us we patrolled the country for 100 miles round for three weeks and spared none of the grownup blacks which we could find.86

He added, ‘In dealing with savages you must make yourself feared’.

The only surviving members of the Fraser family – Sylvester (West) and William, shared this approach. When grazier Andrew Murray met William Fraser in Central Queensland three years after Hornetbank, Fraser reportedly said that he had shot ‘seventy blacks to date’.87 Known to many Aboriginal people as ‘Nemesis’ and ‘Debbil Debbil’, Fraser killed so many that a rumour began to spread in the nineteenth century that he had

83 ‘Subdivision of the Colony’ by Karl Choetun at Charleville, Brisbane Courier (6 May 1865).
84 Eleven settlers, including eight members of the Fraser family and other employees, were killed at Hornetbank station on the Upper Dawson River on 27 October 1857. Ernest Davies was one of the party, and later named the rest of the ‘reprisal’ team; see EC Davies, ‘Some Reminiscences of Early Queensland’, Royal Historical Society of Queensland Journal 6, 1 (1958) 36-9.
85 See report saying ‘a great many of the Aborigines had come down from the Upper Dawson for the purpose of escaping from the Native Police and the whites who were pursuing them’, Wiseman to Colonial Secretary, 19 May 1858, Crown Land Commissioner Wiseman’s Letterbook, CCL 3/G2.
86 Letter from George Serocold to Charles Serocold, 31 December 1857, Serocold Papers, John Oxley Library, Queensland Historical Retrieval Project 5-7. See also Gordon Reid, Nest of Hornets (Canberra: Oxford University Press, 1982).
a ‘licence to kill’. Popular writers in the twentieth century helped establish this particular ‘frontier myth’, the ‘license to kill’, as an accepted historical fact.\textsuperscript{88} One letter-writer said that the Police ‘shut their eyes to happenings not easy to stop’, but when Fraser ‘could not stay his own hand’, he went ‘within an ace of having to face a murder charge’.\textsuperscript{89}

There are records suggesting William Fraser served for a brief period as an Acting Sub Inspector in the Native Police.\textsuperscript{90} His employment in the force reminds us that hatred of Aboriginal people was no impediment to a Police appointment. Apart from assisting the Native Police in identifying and killing Aboriginal people, the Fraser brothers executed their own private vendetta.\textsuperscript{91}

A similar (and also incorrect) rumour survives that Macintyre River grazier James Marks also had been granted ‘unofficial permission to shoot any native on sight for six months’ after the death of his son.\textsuperscript{92} Marks was described by one contemporary as ‘a hater of all aboriginals’.\textsuperscript{93} Edgar Foreman wrote in 1928 that ‘special licenses were


\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Queensland Police Gazette} 4 (25 February 1867: 24)

\textsuperscript{91} Fraser went out with Native Police detachments to identify and to help kill Blacks from Hornet Bank, Walker to Murray, 30 December 1857, cited in David Denholm, \textit{Some Aspects of Squatting in New South Wales and Queensland, 1847-1864} (Doctoral thesis, Australian National University, 1972) 350-351.

\textsuperscript{92} One example of this ‘frontier myth’, claiming Marks killed fifteen men, is included in DW de Havelland, \textit{Gold and Ghosts Volume 3: Queensland Central and Southern Districts} (Perth: Hesperian Press, 1987), 57.

granted certain people’ to punish tribes that murderers belonged to, which suggests that
the myth was well established by the early decades of the twentieth century.94 Beliefs, incorporating elements of the Fraser story, claiming permits were issued to kill Aborigines survive in pioneer historiography.95

William Fraser – ‘Debbil Debbil’ – was, however, the best known of the ‘vengeful’ men in colonial Queensland. If he did serve in the Native Police, he was, by all accounts, in his element. According to two correspondents who claimed to have interviewed him, no permit to kill Aboriginal people was ever granted, although Fraser did allegedly admit to one correspondent ‘I carried out my work of revenge’.96 Whenever there was a public debate on frontier violence in the press, someone invariably mentioned the deaths at Hornetbank and Fraser’s vengeance. Writers often claimed that Fraser’s revenge was perfectly justifiable and, by extension, so would other killings be acceptable.97 In a chilling way, the exceptional act of vengeance became, through the legend of William Fraser, legitimised for a substantial number of people, even though it remained illegal. A persistent rumour survives that William Fraser shot an Aboriginal woman in a town simply because she was wearing a dress just like one of his mother’s.98

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97 ‘History records no just cause for the committal of the tragedy’. This attitude was still entrenched in living memory, Roy S Farley, ‘Fraser Memorial “Hornet Bank” Massacre by Aborigines’, *Queensland Geographical Journal* (1957: 23).
98 Apparently first mentioned in Bird, *The Early History of Rockhampton*, 201, it also appeared in Harry Perry, ‘Memories of the Native Police’, in *The Steering Wheel and
Evidence of popular legitimacy of vengeance is plentiful. After the Cullin-la-riego killing in 1861, survivor Tom Wills wrote to his family, saying he wanted ‘good resolute men that will shoot every black they see’.99 His attitude was endorsed by Colonial Secretary Herbert who wrote to neighbouring squatters saying ‘the thanks of the Government are due in the first instance to yourselves for so promptly coming forward to avenge the killed’.100 After the Cullin-la-riego killing, Governor Bowen reported to England that ‘an uncontrollable desire for vengeance took possession of every heart’ of the neighbouring squatters, and ‘about thirty of the tribe of murderers are said to have fallen in the deadly struggle which ensued when the eleven English avengers stormed their camp’.101 According to one recent publication, over seventy squatters rallied to ‘seek out those responsible’, and ‘local legends recount many graphic tales of encounters and dispersals’.102 It was later reported that about seventy Aborigines had been killed in retaliation.103

Others also had reasons to hate Indigenous people, and were appointed to the force. Pioneer settler John Uhr was killed during an Aboriginal attack in 1845, and his

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99 TW Wills to HCA Harrison, 24 October 1861, National Library of Australia, MS 1468.

100 Colonial Secretary to Messrs Gregson, McIntosh and others at Rainworth, 11 November 1861, Colonial Secretary’s Letterbook, COL/R2/61/893.

101 Despatch from Governor Bowen to Secretary of State for Colonies, 16 December 1861, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/23/61/74.

102 Grahame Walsh, *Carnarvon and Beyond* (Tarakka Nowan Kas Publications, 1999), 87.

103 ‘Queensland News’ from the *Rockhampton Bulletin* saying the police ‘overtook a tribe of natives, shot down sixty or seventy, and ceased firing when their ammunition was expended’, *Sydney Morning Herald* (11 December 1861).
two nephews (Reginald and Wentworth D’Arcy Uhr) served in the Native Police.\textsuperscript{104} Revenge parties existed in many parts of Queensland. According to one 1866 news item, after a traveller was found murdered most of the neighbours assembled and ‘set off to chastise the murderers, and succeeded to a sickening degree – having so thoroughly whipped some thirty of the depredators that they will never again ask to smell gunpowder’.\textsuperscript{105} Travellers on the road from the Flinders River to the Norman township in the Gulf district believed ‘there were no blacks alive within a radius of twenty miles’ after retributive raids following the death of one settler in 1874.\textsuperscript{106}

Understandably, first hand accounts of a vengeance party are rare. One credible account of a killing, perpetrated by squatters and their employees, is found in the reminiscences of Edward Hobkirk, an employee at Dowling’s station on the Bulloo River.\textsuperscript{107} According to Hobkirk, grazier John (‘Jack’) Dowling was killed in 1864 by his ‘pet blackboy’ and Dowling’s brother Vincent wrote to the nearest Native Police (probably Bungil Creek near Roma) about the murder. Hobkirk said Dowling was told to ‘take what measures he thought best to revenge the murder’, so ‘all the men in the

\textsuperscript{104} John Uhr, the uncle of Reginald and Wentworth D’Arcy Uhr, was killed during an Aboriginal attack at Wivenhoe in the Brisbane Valley in 1845. See McConnel Papers, John Oxley Library, OM 79.017/31 and John Steele, The Petersons and the Uhrs: An Australian Family Since 1825 (Brisbane: Queensland Historical Facsimiles, 1980), 27. Appointment of Reginald Uhr as Cadet, 23 December 1862, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E6/62/52; appointment of Wentworth D’Arcy Uhr as Acting Sub Inspector, Queensland Police Gazette 2 (17 October 1865: 67).

\textsuperscript{105} ‘North Queensland News’, The Queenslander (7 July 1866: 9).

\textsuperscript{106} ‘In the Gulf Country’ by John Yeneer, The Queenslander (14 February 1874: 9).

\textsuperscript{107} EO Hobkirk, Original Reminiscences of South West Queensland, National Library of Australia, MS 3460, Volume 2. It is unclear when Hobkirk actually wrote this account, but the other records in the file cover the period from 1870 to 1923. Hobkirk gave his manuscript to William Gall at the Home Secretary’s Office in 1922.
neighbourhood’ were assembled and ‘armed with revolvers and rifles’ before the local Aboriginal people were mustered.108 Hobkirk admitted he helped bury the bodies that Dowling and others shot at several camps.109

The most chilling examples of frontier attitudes are those, like Hobkirk’s, which are contained in private records. As Richard Broome notes, looking at the private letters of settlers helps us to ‘fully understand the frontier and its violent face’.110 However, the fact is that exhaustive research has turned up few accounts and most are brief. They are no less disturbing because of their brevity. In fact, the terseness and almost mundane character of the remarks is troubling, because it implies how easily frontiersmen dismissed the lives of Aborigines. Writer George Carrington related in his book Colonial Adventures and Experiences how he saw piles of bodies.111 A journal entry by prospector James Mulligan stated ‘Mr Firth’s people are gone out after the blacks’.112 Station

108 Hobkirk, Original Reminiscences. The Dowling brothers were the nephews of Sir James Dowling, a New South Wales judge, and related to other leading squatter families. See a family tree of the Dowling family in David Denholm, The Colonial Australians (Melbourne: Penguin, 1979), 177, and a list of their relatives (including James Morisset) in Anthony Dowling (editor), Reminiscences of a Colonial Judge: James Sheen Dowling (Sydney: The Federation Press, 1996), 202. John Dowling’s death was confirmed in the Brisbane Courier (4 June 1864), and the repercussions are mentioned in Bobbie Hardy, Lament for the Barkindji: the vanished tribes of the Darling River Region (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), 116.

109 One source says Vincent Dowling ‘subsequently became a terror to the blacks’, Charles F Maxwell, Australian Men of Mark 1788-1888 I (Sydney: Charles F Maxwell, no date), 385.


111 George Carrington, Colonial Adventures and Experiences (London: Bell and Daldy, 1871).

manager Blagden Chambers described the finding of twenty-five bodies after a Native Police action on the Warrego River in the early 1860s.  

There are many newspaper items about frontier violence and conflict. Some reports were false and others were repetitions of previous news items or relayed news from other newspapers, often months out of date. These delayed tales, hardly news, seem deliberately calculated to justify acts of vengeance. One example of this late coverage is the news item about the murder of the ‘Strau’ (Straher) family, on the road from Cooktown to the Palmer River, and the subsequent Native Police action. The Northern Territory Times reported in April 1875 that ‘a day or so after the murders were committed’, Sub Inspectors Coward, Townsend and Douglas ‘came upon the black vagabonds, and ‘quietly dispersed’ them. The Police had first recorded these deaths in October 1874, some five months earlier. Evidently, the story was considered sufficiently newsworthy for settlers on other frontiers to be kept informed of developments, regardless of the time lag. Former Native Police Cadet, and retired Chief Clerk of the Agriculture Department, Ernest Scriven, wrote a particularly gruesome account of the killing of the ‘Strau’ family fifty years after the event. Scriven’s version of events was apparently based on a book published several years earlier.

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113 Blagden Chambers, *Black and White* (Melbourne: Methuen, 1988)
114 Northern Territory Times (April 1875). I am grateful to Tony Roberts for this reference.
115 The family had been warned not to camp at that particular spot; see Inquest into the deaths of John, Bridget and Annie Straher at Cooktown, 21 October 1874, JUS/N41/74/274.
116 See WH Corfield, *Reminiscences of North Queensland, 1862-1899* (Brisbane: AH Frater, 1921), 57-58; and Ernest SE Scriven, ‘Cooktown including the story of Mrs...
Exterminating troublemakers: A colonial debate

Some colonists wanted to go beyond vengeance and called for the complete extermination of Aboriginal people. What is really disturbing is the way in which a great many people, from station hands to British visitors, from clergymen to newspaper editors, could discuss (cold bloodedly) the efficacy (even the ethics) of killing (locally or widely) other people. This complex, multi-dimensional continuing discussion can only be understood in an atmosphere of vengeance, racism (or racial arrogance), and greed.

The truth is that, in any rate in pastoral countries, there is a never ceasing war between the settler and the native but it is not by regular war that aboriginal races can be exterminated. The settler finds means surer and more inglorious. He imbibes a hatred for the whole native race, and learns to treat them as wild beasts, to be hunted down wherever found - as vermin to be exterminated without mercy whenever caught. He employs them in a task congenial to the taste of savages - the destruction of each other.117

How important and dangerous were these demands? In order to comprehend how some Queenslanders could have no respect for the lives of Aboriginal people and euphemistically describe their slaughter as mere ‘dispersals’, we need to, as best we can, explore the colonial mind on the subject of land and racial supremacy. As historian Barry Morris has noted, ‘much of the evidence of the killing of Aborigines is found at the level

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117 ‘Aborigines Protection Societies’ (from *The Times, Brisbane Courier* (25 March 1865).
of local history published in the accounts of local squatters’. 118 In fact, many local histories contain references to the killing of Aborigines. 119 Several features are astonishing - the frank brutality of some statements, and the extensive range of opinions about the efficacy of killing. 120 The *Darling Downs Gazette* in 1861 provided a succinct statement on attitudes that cheapened Aboriginal lives, and made them unworthy.

The country does not belong to the black man; it is God’s country. If He put the black man first upon the land, it must also be allowed that it is through His providence that the white man has come to dispossess that black man of that country which the latter has failed to apply to the purposes of its designed utility. 121

There is a wealth of literature on the racial prejudice that settlers brought with them. 122 The idea of vengeance, when fused with racism, produced flashes of extremism, as in, for example, the calls for extermination. Here we can see, as on other frontiers, the impatience of the colonists. The combination of racism, vengeance, and impatience produced ‘dispersals’. What is important to the discussion of violence in Queensland is how racial prejudice, really racial arrogance, led to a shocking devaluation of human life.

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118 Barry Morris, ‘Frontier Colonialism as a Culture of Terror’, *Power, Knowledge and the Aborigines*, edited by Bain Attwood (1992), 86.
119 See Tom Griffith’s pertinent comment that local histories ‘were always more alert to the Aboriginal past than were academic historians’, Tom Griffiths, ‘The Frontier Fallen’, *Eureka Street* (2002).
121 *Darling Downs Gazette* (21 November 1861: 3).
After the Native Police ‘gave a large number of Aboriginal people sharp reasons to move their quarters’ away from Cooktown, one correspondent said:

> Desperate diseases call for strong remedies, and while we would regret a war of extermination, we cannot but admit that there exists a stern, though maybe a cruel necessity for it.\(^{123}\)

Some settlers insisted that miners and others should carry weapons not just for defence, but to actively participate in the decimation of Aboriginal people, which was (one said) ‘the one, the only remedy and redress’.\(^{124}\)

How did the extremists who promoted the elimination of Aborigines relate to or evaluate the Native Police? In the estimation of some, the force was a hindrance. A Roma correspondent wrote about Parliamentary debate on the Native Police in 1867.

> It is, that all the old settlers dexterously avoid allusion to the wholesale ‘drives’ made by squatters in days of yore. They, old foxes, know that the moment pioneer settlers are left to protect themselves, a war of extermination commences. In fact, the native police do not get rid of the darkies quick enough for these sly old hypocrites; and if the native police is done away with, Lord help the blacks!\(^{125}\)

Journalist Arthur Vogan claimed that some settlers hunted Aborigines with dogs; one writer, calling himself ‘An Ex-Officer’ of the Native Police, said ‘a pack of hounds had

\(^{123}\) ‘Cooktown News’ (from the *Cooktown Herald*, *Dalby Herald* (13 November 1875: 3).
\(^{125}\) *Dalby Herald* (2 November 1867: 3).
been trained to only attack wild blacks’. There is no archival evidence to support these claims. Some settlers did, however, keep dogs to warn them when Aboriginal people approached at night. The extent of brutal raids remains, unfortunately, unknown. What is important here is another element in a rationalisation for raids, quite apart from vengeance and simple racist attacks; extermination raids were justified as setting the tone, so that more kindly ways could follow! One newspaper item suggested that the country must be held by ‘main force’:

In occupying the country, it is necessary to subjugate the blacks, and the most merciful way of doing this, in the long run, is to treat them with severity at first. If they attempt to kill the whites, or to wage war against us, they must be shot down.

Others partly agreed; one writer in the 1870s claimed ‘firearms have the effect of making the most savage blacks perfectly quiet’. Another said later ‘we are all perfectly aware that the blacks must be kept in check, and that the only way to do so is to shoot pretty freely now and then’. While hardly extermination, this advocate for ‘occasional violence’ drew support from the same frontier attitude, and fitted perfectly with the Native Police’s raison d’être.

128 *Darling Downs Gazette* (21 November 1861: 3).
129 ‘What the Blacks are Good for’ by ‘A Wandering Philosopher’ (from *The Australasian*), *The Queenslander* (17 January 1874); ‘Lower Herbert News’, *The Queenslander* (31 March 1877).
Many settlers argued that they had no alternative to violence, and believed the two races could not share the same country. Letters saying the Black resistance must be crushed or the colony abandoned are plentiful. An example gives an idea of their content: ‘A war of extermination is the only policy to pursue, the alternative being an abandonment of the country, which no sane man will advocate for an instant’.  

Sport

One particularly inexplicable form of brutality, associated with Native Police operations, was the practice of ‘nigger-hunting’. When an Aboriginal man was killed near Maryborough in 1863, Lieutenant J Donald Harris of the Native Police was charged with murder, and dismissed from the force. The editor of The Courier said, in a scathing editorial on the affair, that Harris was ‘not an exception’ but an example ‘selected from a class of gentlemen, who unable to obtain a living in an ordinary way, use the influence of friends to get them appointed to cadetships in the Native Police force’. According to the paper, ‘Shooting blacks is, by them, considered good sport’. ‘There is a certain amount of excitement no doubt in hunting down blackfellows’. Harris ‘may have been wandering back to his old hunting days at home’. The paper ‘congratulated the

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130 *The Queenslander* (31 March 1866: 7).

131 One author referred to ‘Nigger Hunting’ as ‘a most unpleasant task’, but one that ‘had to be done if the white man was to make good as a stock producer’, GJC McDonald, *Beyond Boundary Fences* (Perth: Hesperian Press, 1996), 82. The book is a collection of articles written by McDonald between 1937 and 1958.
colony upon being rid of a man who, according to evidence, proved himself to be perfectly careless of the life of a fellow-creature'. The Court found no defence to the charge against Harris was necessary as there were no European witnesses, and promptly dismissed the charge. Something similar happened on the North American frontier where Indians were ‘stalked and killed as if they were animals’ or killed by Whites ‘just to try out their pistols’.

We know the Native Police ‘hunted’ Aborigines, but there is no way of knowing how many stations engaged in hunting down and shooting Aboriginal people. There is no way of knowing for how many years such actions occurred in particular districts, but there are clues to its almost mundane incorporation into station life. In a note in a diary kept at ‘Shamrock Vale’ near Mackay in 1871, there is a reference to ‘Harry and Lance’ being ‘out on the prowl after niggers’ but ‘found none’. The day’s entry included a poem called ‘Scald Saga’.

Forth from the Hollow, gaily we sailed;  
Each with his carbine, blackfellows after;  
Home in the twilight, silent returned we;  
Sad and dejected; niggers there were none.

132 Dismissal of Lieutenant Harris, 16 May 1863, Executive Council Minutes, EXE/E7/63/22.  
133 Editorial, The Courier (17 August 1863: 2).  
136 One month later, Sub Inspector Armstrong and four troopers ‘came up and stayed’, Rawson Papers, John Oxley Library, MS 2967.
In some parts of Queensland hunting and killing Aboriginal people was considered by some settlers to be a form of acceptable action. By the 1880s, however, one colonist wrote ‘the shootings season is over in Queensland and the ‘Black Game’ is protected now by more humane laws than formerly’.137

By the end of the nineteenth century, change had begun on the Queensland frontier. In 1876 three Native Police officers – Hervey Fitzgerald, Frederick Wheeler and John Carroll – were charged with killing or injuring Aboriginal people. After Wheeler absconded while on bail and facing a charge of murder, newspapers throughout Queensland condemned the ‘diabolical murder’ he committed ‘in cold blood’:

This is how our colony is made to stink in the nostrils of all civilised people, either in Australia or England. The Northern digger, or the Western squatter who takes up his rifle in self-defence against the attacks of hostile blacks, is ignorantly classed by people at a distance with these fiends in human shape, who actually find amusement in murdering poor black wretches, who, they well know, are too weak to resist, and too friendless to seek redress.138

A correspondent named ‘Outis’, writing in *The Queenslander* in 1880, argues for the truth to be revealed. ‘If as a colony we should indulge in wholesale murder of the race we are dispossessing, let us have the courage of our opinions and murder openly and deliberately – calling it *murder*, not ‘dispersal’’.139

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137 Australian Museum Curator Edward Ramsay to New Zealand Museum Director James Hector, 28 August 1882, National Museum of New Zealand Archives. I am grateful to Paul Turnbull for this reference.
138 *Cooktown Courier* (18 October 1876: 3).
These excerpts from archival records situate the Native Police in the debates in Queensland on exterminating Aboriginal people that extended from Separation until the 1890s. Given that the Native Police operated within this violent frontier context, what evidence is there that government ever attempted to control the force’s ‘excesses’? There is, as the records of violence show, very little sign of official restraint.¹⁴⁰

Native Police Operations

If one word could describe the operations of the Native Police, and its impact on Aboriginal people, it would be terror. As Chris Cuneen notes, our understanding of the colonial process has been broadened by the work of Taussig, who argues for ‘the importance of the role of terror in maintaining a colonial hegemony, while ‘officialdom’ attempts to create a reality which denies the extent of terror’.¹⁴¹ In Australia, as elsewhere, conquerors (including many ‘Christian’ nations) used fear and brutalities as legitimate tactics for internal and external security.¹⁴² Europeans were ‘enveloped’ with violence.¹⁴³ There is abundant evidence that the commanders of the force deliberately sought to terrify and intimidate Indigenous people as much as they actively visited violence upon them. There are many more references in the literature to retaliation than

¹⁴⁰ ‘[N]othing effective was done to curtail the Native Police’, Atkinson, The Europeans in Australia, 332.
any other action, and it can be assumed that retribution was a more practical tactic than prevention. What can be learned about the operations of the force from the historical material? A brief survey is revealing.

The Native Police operated, chiefly, in response to reports of Aboriginal attacks.\textsuperscript{144} Sometimes colonial officials tried to justify the force as both preventive and retaliatory. When Colonial Secretary Sir Arthur Palmer made a speech in Parliament on the ‘Treatment of the Blacks’ in 1872, he referred to various critical articles in the \textit{Courier, Pastoral Register} and \textit{Central Australasian}\textsuperscript{145}. According to Palmer, the Queensland Government ‘had never followed a policy of extermination in dealing with the blacks. Their policy had been one of repression’; the Native Police force, he said, ‘vigorously patrolled in order to repress and prevent crime’.\textsuperscript{146} The evidence shows differently. A careful cross-indexing of official records and other archival material reveals much about the activities of the force, despite the lack of specific records. By collating the police staff files, and the inquest files, with general correspondence and newspaper items, a reasonably good idea of how the Native Police operated in Queensland can be formed.

Many of the reports made by Commissioner Seymour and his subordinates argued that the tactics used by the force were fully justified, and argued that they had no choice against such ferocious and determined fighters. Nevertheless, the pretence of English justice was occasionally mentioned, and, in 1867, a memo was sent to all Inspectors from the Commissioner.

\textsuperscript{144} See Appendix 6 ‘A Good Reliable Pamphlet’
\textsuperscript{145} \textit{The Queenslander} (22 June 1872: 9).
\textsuperscript{146} \textit{The Queenslander} (22 June 1872: 9).
When forwarding monthly duty reports, officers in command of Native Police are instructed to carefully insert on the back of each report the date of all outrages reported to have been committed by the Blacks, on whom, by whom reported, with particulars of outrages and supposed cause thereof, also date and full particulars of every “collision”. Officers of Native Mounted Police are cautioned to be careful when acting without Warrants.147

There is little evidence in the surviving records of Seymour’s orders about this practice being carried out.

Sometimes the inquests give us insights beyond expectations into Native Police operations. Despite a general understanding that the force was only to be used against Aboriginal people, on a few occasions, it was used to police other races. In 1864, a detachment under Lieutenant Brown helped arrest notorious bushranger Frank Gardiner at Apis Creek.148 Sub Inspector Frederick Murray reported in 1868 that his detachment went from their barracks at Conroy in pursuit of three or four Polynesians who were suspected of having killed two Europeans.149 They ‘came up with them’, returned fire when shot at, and later found the body of one. The death of this man, Murray said, ‘was caused by a gunshot wound received in the affray with the troopers’.

Native Police detachments responded quickly to reports of Aboriginal ambushes. In late 1868, carrier Richard Gill found the body of a man in the scrub on the Logan Downs run near Clermont. The body had multiple wounds and according to the statement of fellow carrier Patrick Martin, there were ‘plenty of tracks of blacks’ nearby.150 Martin had ‘no doubt the deceased was murdered by blacks’ while walking along the road.

147 Commissioner of Police, General Orders, 14 May 1867, POL/4/249
148 The Courier (14 March 1864), and Illustrated Sydney News (16 July 1864).
149 Inquest into the death of Lahalowe (a South Sea Islander) at Bowen, JUS/N19/68/173.
Police Sub Inspector Maxwell Armstrong said that his trackers ‘got the tracks of two blacks’, and followed them until they joined the tracks of a mob of blacks ‘numbering eighty or ninety’. He did not ‘entertain the slightest doubt but that the man was murdered by blacks’. Judith Wright, in *The Cry for the Dead*, noted savage reprisals in this area after Cullin-la-ingo.\(^{151}\)

After an inspection tour of northern districts, Seymour submitted a report to the Colonial Secretary in 1868.\(^{152}\) The coast between Townsville and Mackay was, he said, ‘inhabited by blacks of the most hostile character’ so he was ‘unable, as intended, to remove the Native Police from those districts’. Instead two ‘flying detachments, having no settled camp or barracks, would patrol constantly’ from Townsville to Mackay.\(^{153}\)

There are no reports on operations in the coastal area between Mackay and Bowen, and few inquests into Aboriginal deaths in that area, but it is clear that large-scale violence occurred there. The Leap, near Mackay, is named after a particularly brutal massacre involving the forcing of Aboriginal people over a cliff face. Clive Moore says the violence of the story ‘encapsulates Aboriginal-European relations around Mackay in the 1860s’.\(^{154}\)

There are better records for the Rockhampton area. In 1871, Frederick Wheeler sent a telegram to the Commissioner, saying he had ‘just returned from dispersing blacks

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\(^{150}\) Inquest into the death of unknown digger at Logan Downs, JUS/N23/69/A28.


\(^{152}\) *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1868).

\(^{153}\) *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1868).

at Gracemere, Calinyul and seacoast’. No more information was supplied by Inspector Wheeler or requested by Commissioner Seymour. A letter from “A Lover of Justice”, published in the Rockhampton Bulletin soon after, claimed that Aborigines only stayed in Rockhampton to save their lives as they were hunted back by the Native Police if they went fifty miles from town. The writer said ‘the main cause of the trouble is the Native Police officers not allowing them a chance of living away from the haunts of whites’. “A Lover of Justice” claimed that ‘An officer of the Native Police had recently boasted that he could shoot as many as he liked without interference’. This was undoubtedly a reference to Frederick Wheeler who was stationed in the Rockhampton district from the late 1860s until 1876. Oral history from a nearby area tells of several massacres by the Native Police, including one ‘probably in the 1870s’ at a mountain called Pyri Pyri (‘big slaughter’).

Inquests show that some deaths were attributed to the failure of the force to patrol. George Cessford, a recently arrived migrant from England, was working as a farm labourer at Mount Dryander near Bowen in December 1871. His employer, Charles Bradley, said that his wife informed him that ‘the blacks came to my place and threatened the people there’. Bradley said he was ‘continually apprehensive of an attack from the blacks’ and wrote several times to the Native Police for assistance but they ‘have not

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155 Wheeler to Commissioner, 9 January 1871, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A170/72/1484
156 Rockhampton Bulletin (17 January 1871).
158 Inquest into the death of George Cessford at Mount Dryander, JUS/N32/72/19.
been near my place since March 1871’. He believed that the blacks were ‘more
dangerous and daring’ as a result of the absence of the Native Police. Bradley said that
when he last saw Cessford alive, he told him ‘if he was afraid of the blacks to get his
horse and come home’. Apparently Cessford ‘did not appear to be afraid’ but the next
time Bradley went to the landing, he found that his worker was missing. After an initial
search, Bradley went to Crystal Brook station for help, but was unable to get any
assistance. Eventually the body was found and Bradley stated at the inquest that he
believed the body ‘had the appearance of having been killed by blacks’. No record of a
Native Police response has been found.

When Acting Commissioner Barron submitted the 1871 Annual Report, he said
that an additional detachment of Native Police had been stationed at Bowen Downs ‘on
account of the aboriginals having become troublesome and dangerous’. It was also
argued that the detachment at Nebo needed strengthening as the Aborigines were
‘continually threatening the settlers and spearing cattle’. According to the report ‘several
murders’ had occurred in this district but it was noted that some were ‘acts of revenge on
account of settlers carrying off gins and small boys to be made servants’. The same
thing happened on Commando raids by Boers in the Cape Colony. No further details of
these abductions have been located in the archival material.

In 1872 Aborigines killed Dick Welford at Isis Downs on the Lower Barcoo.
According to parliamentarian Lumley Hill, eight persons had been murdered in the
district in the last sixteen months, and the inefficiency of the Native Police patrols in the

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159 *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1872).
160 *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1872).
area was blamed for the outrages. Hill went to the closest Native Police barracks at Tambo to report the murder and returned with Insp Maxwell Armstrong and four troopers. No further records relating to Native Police activities after this event have been found to date. Records have been found of five deaths from frontier violence in the Lower Barcoo district during the previous two years. Hill had said ‘I can now only attribute his death to the inefficiency of the patrolling officer of Native Police in this district’. Acting Sub Inspector Nicholson, the officer referred to, was suspended and dismissed. However, one correspondent connected the shooting of blacks by ‘a young gentleman gaining colonial experience’ with the death of Richard Welford, who, the writer claimed, was killed by blacks in revenge for Native Police killings.

On other occasions, officers reported that they had no alternative but to kill. Frontier violence continued for years in parts of Central Queensland, and some colonists ‘took no prisoners’. Shepherd Frederick Maier was found lying dead at a camp near Aramac in 1872. An Aboriginal named Tambo was suspected because a gun was missing and ‘there was no trace of him or his gin and the camp was deserted’. Sub

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161 Report on the death of Richard Welford at the Barcoo River, May 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A168/72/806. Edward Harries later gave an account of the murders of Welford and stockman Henry Hall, and subsequent reprisals, in the Croydon Record (date unknown).
162 Inquest into the death of Ah Foo at Bowen Downs, JUS/N28/71/49; Chief Inspector Murray to Commissioner, reporting on the death of Herbert Davis and blackboy at Marion Downs, Midlands Inspector’s Letterbook, A/36335/71/142; and Lumley Hill to Colonial Secretary, 6 May 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A168/72/806.
163 Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A168/72/806
164 ‘How we Civilise the Blacks IV’, quoting the Western Champion of 26 May 1880, The Queenslander (12 June 1880: 754). One local history claims Welford was ‘bludgeoned from behind’ while drinking, but no records have been found to confirm or deny this. See Margaret Reeves, A Strange Bird on the Lagoon (Brisbane: Boolarong, 1985), 27.
Inspector John Dunne said that he went to the scene with five troopers and searched the vicinity, but found no tracks. Dunne followed Tambo’s tracks and ‘came up’ with him next morning. When the Native Police tried to arrest Tambo, he ‘was so violent’ that they were ‘unable to do so’. Dunne was ‘obliged to shoot him to prevent his escape’.

A similar incident was reported in 1872, when the Police Magistrate at Cloncurry, Aulaire Morisset, held an inquest. John Cook was camped about 160 kilometres from the Norman River. Robert Gome, who witnessed the attack, said that he was woken during the night by a cry of “Oh God I am speared”. Gome said that he saw three blackfellows close to deceased and ‘two spears standing up and sticking on the deceased’. He fired a shot after the blacks and went to Cook, who was ‘rolling on the ground’. Later Gome, Acting Sub Inspector Alexander Salmond and five troopers went to the ‘scene of the outrage’. Then, Salmond said, he followed the tracks and ‘came up’ with the blacks and ‘dispersed them’, but ‘found nothing with them’ that would connect them with ‘the outrage’. He was confident that the troopers had ‘followed the same tracks’ from the Norman River.

After Cullin-la-Ringo, the most important ‘collision’ on the Queensland frontier took place after the wreck of the Maria near Cardwell in 1872. Stories about the alleged murder of part of the crew, and the ruthless actions of several reprisal parties, were published in the colonial press. This event, and the subsequent barbarous and largely unjustified retaliation, have been the subject of several books. It is also mentioned in a

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165 Inquest into the death of Frederick Maier at Aramac, JUS/N34/72/187.
166 Inquest into the death of John Cook at Cloncurry, JUS/N35/72/271.
167 *Brisbane Courier* (4 April 1872), and reports on the wreck of the Maria, July 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A172/72/1812; see also ‘Loss of the Brig “Maria” by Fitzroy’, [http://www.tarrier.net/events/maria_1.html](http://www.tarrier.net/events/maria_1.html).
number of articles. Cardwell residents and Royal Navy sailors joined an expedition arranged to go ‘in search of rafts and punish the Blacks for murdering the Captain and crew’. Sub Inspector Johnstone and his troopers, along with a second detachment, sailed up the coast, and attacked a ‘black’s camp’ at daylight. According to one source, the Royal Navy officers were ‘disgusted’ by the ‘unrestrained ferocity’ of the troopers. There can be no doubt that the Native Police, on this occasion, operated in a retaliatory fashion rather than in a preventive manner. Large numbers of Aboriginal people were killed on the coast north of Cardwell, including some who had helped European shipwreck survivors.

As the colonial frontier moved further north, Native Police operations shifted too. By the mid 1870s, open and savage warfare existed at the Palmer River goldfield. Records show how clashes developed and the consequences of violence. According to the evidence given at one inquest, a group of miners saw ‘blacks in great numbers’, who appeared ‘very hostile’. The miners were ‘all armed’ but the blacks ‘surrounded them’ and threw spears at them. The miners fired shots, which ‘kept them off for a little’ but they were attacked again soon after. As they retreated, one man was speared in the side. He cried “Oh” and pulled the spear out, then fell dead. Police arrived one day later but the body could not be found. Sub Inspector Edward Dumaresq testified that ‘the greater

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169 Captain John Moresby, *Discoveries & Surveys in New Guinea and the D’Entrecasteaux Islands* (London: John Murray, 1876), 42.

170 Inquest into the death of Cornelius Hurford at Palmer River, July 1874, JUS/N41/74/225.
part of his detachment’ had deserted so he ‘was able to take only one boy with him’. He said he saw a camp recently occupied by ‘a body of blacks’, but no trace of the deceased. Dumaresq concluded ‘I am certain that the blacks had removed the body and it is my opinion from my experience of the habits of the blacks in this part of Queensland that they eat it’. Dumaresq was dismissed soon afterwards.171

The killing of the Straher family (John, Bridget and Annie) has already been mentioned. It was one of the few instances of the death of a non-Aboriginal woman or a child on the northern frontier. Alfred Court, a publican at Palmerville, was travelling from the Palmer to Cooktown with miner Charles Standen when they saw that ‘blacks had thrown logs across the road’ and ‘heard them yabbering’.172 When the blacks saw the horsemen, they ‘started to run’ and Court ‘galloped after them towards the Normanby River’. Standen called out to him, and they then saw a dray with the bodies of a man, a woman and a child lying nearby. Standen stated that all three bodies had ‘tomahawk wounds about the head’. Court said that ‘as they had only a revolver with two charges in it’, and the ‘scrub was quite close’, they ‘did not think it safe to remain at that hour in the evening’. They proceeded along the road until they reached a large camp of bullock drivers, where they stayed the night. Next morning ‘a large party, well armed’ went to bury the bodies. One of the bullock drivers, named Martin Greene, said that he had met the Straher family on the previous day and warned them not to camp at the lagoon because ‘I thought there were blacks about there’. A note was sent to Sub Inspector

171 Dumaresq was dismissed for an unspecified reason, but the desertion of his troopers was mentioned in the inquest deposition, and appeared in The Queenslander soon after. See inquest JUS/N41/74/225; ‘Palmer News’, The Queenslander (15 August 1874); POL/4/583 & Queensland Police Gazette 12 (31 January 1875: 64)
172 JUS/N41/74/274.
Douglas about the killing, advising him that they had seen ‘about 40 blacks, all male and armed with bundles of spears’. The bodies were buried and the family’s surviving horses were handed over to the police.

The colonial press reported this particularly violent episode as an outrage. Newspaper reports from the Palmer said the ‘Stroh murders’ were reported by Mr Court, who ‘hunted the blacks to the river’ where several ‘gave signs of distress by jumping into the air’. Court, the papers said, found their bodies, but was almost out of ammunition so left them unburied and went to a teamster’s camp nearby; a ‘well-armed party’ went in pursuit while Court advised Sub Inspector Douglas at the Puckley Creek (Palmer River) barracks. Later, Sub Inspectors Coward, Townshend and Douglas, with troopers, ‘came upon the black vagabonds and “quietly dispersed” them. Apart from the inquest, there are no other official records of this killing, or of the Native Police response to it.

The only other time when North Queensland Aborigines killed a European woman took place near Cardwell in 1875. The murders of William and Elizabeth Conn were talked about for years and written about for decades. The only witness to give a statement at the inquest into the deaths was Sub Inspector Robert Johnstone, who said that he went with his troopers to Conn’s place, where they found Conn’s dismembered body in the garden. Conn, he said, had been speared, and his arms and legs were

174 Fifteen years later, the Herberton mail contractor wrote that he ‘was the first to find the bodies’ and said he reported the deaths to police, JC Hogflesh to Chief Secretary, 8 October 1889, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A595/89/9567.
176 Inquests into the deaths of William and Elizabeth Conn at Cardwell, JUS/N45/75/244 and 246.
apparently ‘hacked with a tomahawk’. Tracks of blacks were found near the body, and Johnstone said ‘I am convinced that he was murdered by blacks’. The tracks of Mrs Conn were found and followed, but Johnstone collapsed with a fever attack. He decided that ‘I was only hampering the boys rapid movements’ and ‘as everything depended on the speed in overtaking the blacks’, decided to ‘send the troopers on by themselves’. Mrs Conn’s body was later found in the bush.\textsuperscript{177}

The Police Magistrate at Cardwell, Brinsley Sheridan, informed the Colonial Secretary of the murders, and said that the troopers were searching for Mrs Conn, who had been ‘taken away’ by the blacks.\textsuperscript{178} Sheridan wired next day that he had held an enquiry and had ordered Conn’s body to be buried. He said that it was ‘shockingly mutilated’. A newspaper report from Cardwell said Sheridan, Johnstone, several men from the town and two troopers went to Conn’s homestead by boat, while other townsmen were proceeding overland and a detachment of troopers had arrived from Cashmere to help.\textsuperscript{179} The \textit{Queenslander} later noted that Johnstone had used ‘every exertion’ to persuade the Conns to move without success.\textsuperscript{180} Despite the fact that the Conns had been warned not to stay in such an isolated spot that was known to be a major Aboriginal pathway, most writers persisted in blaming Aboriginal people for this attack. Johnstone’s admission that he had allowed his troopers to proceed without him evidently attracted no attention from the authorities.

\textsuperscript{177} JUS/N45/75/246.
\textsuperscript{178} Sheridan, Police Magistrate at Cardwell, to Colonial Secretary, 8 April 1875, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A215/75/3243
\textsuperscript{179} ‘Cardwell News’, \textit{The Queenslander} (17 April 1875: 4).
\textsuperscript{180} ‘The Blacks on the Lower Herbert’ by WC Millar, \textit{The Queenslander} (5 May 1877).
Sometimes, as the inquest files show, Native Police operations were defeated by a lack of stores. Sub Inspector Hugh Galbraith said his detachment left Bynoe Native Police camp in October 1874 after receiving a report of a man ‘supposed to be insane’ wandering about on the Leichhardt River. The patrol arrived at Floraville and began to search the area. They were told, at an Aboriginal camp, that ‘a white man was speared, and they found a ‘newly made grave’. The grave was opened and the body of a white man ‘cut or broken into several pieces’ was found inside. Apparently the smell was ‘very offensive’ and the troopers ‘refused to touch the body’. Galbraith returned the body to the grave and marked a tree nearby with ‘Native Police’. He said at the inquest ‘I believed the man was murdered by the blacks’, but he was unable to ‘follow up the blacks’ because the patrol was ‘out of rations and short of ammunition’.

On other occasions, the legendary tracking skills of the troopers weren’t good enough. When Aborigines killed a Chinese man near Burketown in early 1876, Sub Inspector Maitland Day and his detachment from the Hughenden Native Police camp went to the scene, and ‘proceeded in pursuit of the murderers’. According to the inquest record (which is almost unreadable) ‘about two hundred blacks’ were accused of the murder. The Native Police followed the tracks until they reached the Saxby River, where Day said ‘the blacks dispersed in all directions’ and could not be followed any further. The detachment returned to the murder scene but was unable to examine it because it was flooded.

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181 Inquest into the death of William Scanlan, Burke district, JUS/N43/75/78.
182 Inquest into the death of Ah Shong, Burke district, JUS/N48/76/58.
In 1884, an inquest was held at Cloncurry into the death of grazier James Powell. Witness Alexander Kennedy said that he and Sub Inspector Urquhart with a detachment of troopers went to the murder scene and identified the body. He said that there were ‘marks of violence’ on the body, there were ‘blacks’ tracks about the scene’ and he went with the police to follow the ‘tracks of the murderers’. They ‘came up with them’. Sub Inspector Frederick Urquhart testified that the ‘murderers were very numerous’, and ‘endeavoured to evade and resist arrest’, so were ‘fired upon and dispersed by my troopers’. Soon after the inquest, an article “Native Police” was published, claiming an item titled “Powell’s Revenge” (from the Carpentaria Times) was allegedly ‘written by a Native Police officer’. The author of ‘Native Police’ said ‘it is bad enough to know that such a cursed stain on the country exists as a Native Police force; but it is diabolical to have its unhallowed work chronicled in idiotic rhyme’ that ‘clothe brutality and cowardice with a mantle of glory and heroism’. The writer also noted that the Native Police ‘wilfully murdered eight blackfellows and several gins’ about a year ago who ‘were of the same tribe that murdered Powell’, and concluded ‘it is high time the Native Police were done away with, or, at least, sent to the very outside country’.

Occasionally, Native Police officers gave evidence at inquests that some people ‘asked for trouble’. There are suggestions that this was the case at the Straher and Conn

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183 Inquest into the death of James Powell at Mistake Creek, JUS/N108/84/415
184 See also telegram from Uhr, Police Magistrate at Cloncurry, saying ‘Information just to hand Mr Powell of Powell and Kennedy Carlton Hills and Parkside murdered by blacks blackboy badly speared’, 21 July 1884, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A395/84/5070. The killing was reported in The Queenslander (16 August 1884).
185 Queensland Figaro (15 November 1884).
killings. A report from Sub Inspector Ernest Carr on the murder of John Conway said that four blacks had murdered him. Carr said that ‘from all appearances the deceased had been killed with stones’ which were found ‘broken all round his body’. After making enquiries ‘through the quiet blacks’, Carr wrote that Conway had ‘tried to take one of the Aboriginal women with him’ which ‘caused the owner of the gin’ to throw a rock at him. The other three then helped to ‘stone him to death’. Conway was, according to Carr, ‘solely to blame for his untimely end’. The suspects ‘cleared out for the mountains’ and Carr found it ‘impossible to come up with them’.

Other reports were quite candid in their admissions about the short-handed force. In December 1884, Seymour reported to the Colonial Secretary about ‘certain charges’ against Sub Inspector Marrett made by settlers at Lower Laura. Seymour wrote ‘they expect too much from the Native Police’. Marrett’s detachment consisted of one officer and six troopers to patrol a ‘considerable area’, and it would be ‘impossible’ for Marrett to do more than visit them three times a year. He also said that the complainants ‘appear to have an idea’ that ‘it is the duty of the Native Police to instantly pursue and shoot down offenders’, but pointed out that the police regulations stated that ‘the same law applies to blacks as to whites and if the officers go beyond the law they do so at their own risk’. While Seymour may have been simply protecting his own reputation with these

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186 See evidence that the Straher (Strau) family had been warned not to camp where they did, and a news item saying Sub Inspector Johnstone tried ‘without success’ to persuade the Conn family to move; JUS/N41/74/274 and The Queenslander (5 May 1877).
187 Inquest into the death of John Conway at Russell River, November 1884, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A406/84/7964
188 Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 20 December 1884, Police Staff File, Charles Beauchamp Marrett, A/40310/84/9064.
sorts of statements, he might also have detected a change in government attitudes towards frontier violence, and the part that the Native Police played in prolonging it.

Magistrates continued to hold inquests and record details of Native Police operations. In 1888 a house owned by a Chinese man burnt down near Cooktown. One inquest witness said he found the burnt body of the deceased in the garden.\(^{189}\) According to the witness, the deceased ‘was very excitable when annoyed’. He ‘had some trouble with little boys going into his garden’. Witnesses said that several firearms, known to be at the deceased’s house, had not been seen since.\(^{190}\) Senior Constable James Geraghty from the Eight Mile Native Police camp investigated the matter, and said that he ‘could find no marks on the body’. He said that Inspector Murray instructed him to ‘search for traces of blacks’, and the troopers ‘picked up the blacks’ tracks’ in the range near the garden. Then he ‘sent word’ to Sub Inspector Brookes at the East Normanby Native Police camp, searched up Trooper’s Creek and found ‘tracks of three blackfellows’ on top of the range. Sub Inspector Brookes joined him and they followed the tracks into Cooktown. Constable Michael Murray testified that he, Constable Murphy, and tracker Jimmy went to an Aboriginal camp near Cooktown, where they took possession of two guns believed to have been stolen from Sow Young’s house. No further details of this episode have been found.

One inquest, and the Native Police activity associated with it, attracted the attention of a respected Presbyterian minister, Professor John Rentoul. The body of selector George Hobson was found at Myola on the Barron River near Cairns and an

\(^{189}\) Inquest into the death of Sow Young at Normanby, JUS/N159/88/446.

\(^{190}\) According to the inquest depositions, there were eight guns in the house.
inquest into his death was held at Cairns in August 1890. Hobson’s neighbour John Driscoll stated when he found him there was a wound on Hobson’s forehead. Suspicion was directed at three Aboriginal employees of Hobson named Bismark, Darkey and William. Driscoll said ‘I never heard the blacks threaten deceased’. Apparently a spear had been thrown at Hobson some time before, after he refused to reinstate an Aboriginal man, and would not lend his rifle to another. A tomahawk and a scrub knife were found near Hobson’s hut and, according to witness John Walton, there was ‘fresh blood and hair’ on both. Walton and Constable William Sweeney said they saw ‘barefoot tracks’ nearby; Sweeney also said that Hobson’s throat was ‘cut right across’ and there were many other wounds on the body. A note was attached to the inquest file, stating that ‘two aboriginals were arrested’ in connection with the death.

A letter “The Queensland Blacks” by Professor Rentoul was published soon after. Rentoul, who had arrived in Cairns shortly before, referred to a report by Reverend John Gribble about the murder of Hobson by the Barron River tribe. Rentoul said that ‘the inevitable “white policeman and black trackers” from a hostile tribe were out after the murderer’, but claimed that the Barron tribe had ‘nothing to do with Hobson’s death’. ‘A black named Bismark shot him’. The published account, according to Rentoul, was this.

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191 Inquest into the death of George Hobson at Myola, JUS/N179/90/380.
192 Records show that Constable Hansen from the Native Police camp at Nigger Creek was given a reward for ‘arresting the murderers of George Hobson’, Police Staff File, Charles Hansen, A/38828.
193 The Queensland Blacks’ by Prof Rentoul, The Queenslander (19 September 1891: 572-3).
The policeman and black trackers went and “returned, not having made an arrest”. This is told you with a smile. The rule as to “dispersing the blacks” is that no report is rendered. The other account, whispered in private all round Cairns, is that the “black camp” of the Barron tribe, towards which Bismark’s steps were traced, was surrounded; and without warning, the cordon of rifles fired into the camp and left eight aboriginals dead.  

He concluded ‘this kind of story – this startling difference between the things told on the spot and the bare sentences given in the newspapers as to “dispersing the blacks” – is the most striking of one’s experience in North Queensland. The quite ruthless and matter-of-fact way in which the “dispersing of the blacks” is described to you is a distinct and ugly fact’.

Another outsider’s perspective on the Native Police was recorded in 1892. *Missing Friends* by Thorvald Weitemeyer gave an account of a Dane’s experiences in colonial Queensland. After visiting the Herbert River Native Police camp, he said it was the duty of the officer and his troopers to ‘fill the aborigines with terror, and to use such means to that end as his own judgement may dictate’. Weitemeyer mentioned that he often saw the troopers on patrol ‘like regular bloodhounds, quite naked, with their rifle in their hand and a belt around their waist containing ammunition and a large scrub knife’. This appears to be a standard description of the troopers’ ‘bush garb’.

One last example, from the official files, gives us a brief glimpse of the force after the turn of the century. When the lugger *Annie* was stolen in 1902 by a number of her Aboriginal crew, Sergeant James Whiteford and his troopers went to Knight Island (near Cape Flattery, north of Cooktown) to arrest them. The *Johara*, which was sent to pick up

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194 *The Queenslander* (19 September 1891: 573).
Whiteford and his prisoners, was wrecked at Port Stewart near Coen and the police waited on the island for six weeks. Eventually the government launch *Melbidir* under the command of Northern Aboriginal Protector Walter Roth picked up the prisoners and took them to Cooktown.\(^{196}\) This episode was mentioned in Whiteford’s obituary, but according to that version, Whiteford paddled a “dugout” canoe to the mainland and walked 150 miles down the coast, leading his prisoners.\(^{197}\) Whiteford was, apparently, one of the few men who served in the Native Police without killing Aboriginal people.

### The deaths

If general estimates and general reports are unreliable, can we find numbers of Native Police killings in scattered reports and newspaper stories that corroborate each other? From the records, how many settlers did Aboriginal people kill? The interest in this part of Australian history arises from the absence of records, and the unreliability of those one-sided accounts that have survived.\(^{198}\) Estimates of Aboriginal deaths during colonisation have been estimated as multiples of presumed white deaths. The controversy

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\(^{196}\) Sergeant Whiteford to Inspector Marrett, January 1902, Police Staff File, James Whiteford, A/40348/02/1755

\(^{197}\) Obituary for James Whiteford, *The Queenslander* (18 October 1928: 61).

arises from the fact that the official data is unreliable. In 1972 Henry Reynolds said 5,000 Aboriginal deaths on the frontier ‘would be a conservative estimate; by 1975 he noted ‘for Queensland as a whole the figure must be doubled’.\textsuperscript{199} Ten years later, Noel Loos stated ‘to suggest that at least 4,000 Aborigines died as a result of frontier resistance in North Queensland between 1861 and 1896 is probably so conservative as to be misleading’.\textsuperscript{200} Using figures from Loos, Reynolds later estimated that there were about 800 to 850 European deaths on the Queensland frontier from 1841 to 1897, and estimated Aboriginal deaths by assuming a ratio of ten Aboriginal people for each European. On this basis, he claimed 10,000 Aboriginal deaths in frontier Queensland.\textsuperscript{201}

The figures quoted by Loos, and by Reynolds, include deaths that were recorded in some official documents and those which were only reported in the newspapers. Richard Broome, who says ‘violence was a marker of the Australian frontier’, estimates that fewer than 1500 Europeans but over 20,000 Aborigines died throughout the frontiers of colonial Australia.\textsuperscript{202} Broome warned readers about the exaggeration of massacres and the unquestioning acceptance of colonial gossip, which both boosted numbers.\textsuperscript{203} This is a vital point, as many deaths noted in the newspapers are completely unsupported by any

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{200} Loos, \textit{Invasion and Resistance}, 190.
\item\textsuperscript{201} Henry Reynolds, ‘The Unrecorded Battlefields of Queensland’, \textit{Race Relations in North Queensland}, edited by Henry Reynolds (Townsville: James Cook University, 1993), 41.
\item\textsuperscript{202} Broome, ‘The Statistics of Frontier Conflict’.
\end{itemize}
form of corroboration, or official records such as inquests, etc. According to annual statistics published by Queensland’s Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages, 203 settlers were ‘killed by Natives’ between 1860 and 1896.204

However, the statistics provided by the Registrar-General are not as useful as they could be, because, although the tables are broken down by nationality for the total number of deceased, this data is not correlated for cause of death. In other words, we do not know who was ‘killed by Natives’, only the total number of White frontier deaths. Furthermore, archival references to 327 European deaths from frontier ‘skirmishes’ between 1834 and 1900 have been located during the course of the current research. Even though some deaths are not fully corroborated by inquests, this figure is probably a more accurate measure of European deaths resulting from frontier violence in Queensland.205

The colonial inquest series is generally a good historical source. References to one hundred inquests into frontier violence, including the deaths of settlers and their allies (Chinese, South Sea Islanders, and ‘tame’ blacks) have been found for the period 1860 to 1905. However, the realities of frontier record keeping were as imperfect as the difficulties of colonial policing. Almost two hundred fatal attacks on colonists by Aborigines were recorded, resulting in over three hundred deaths. Colonial authorities held eighty separate inquests into these deaths. Over one hundred incidents of attacks on Aboriginal people were recorded, causing at least one thousand deaths. Thirty-five

205 See Appendix 3 ‘Frontier Deaths’.

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inquiries were held into Police killings of Aborigines. Of these, twenty-five involved the Native Police. The following discussion, drawn from a comprehensive and extensive survey of archival material held at the Queensland State Archives, reveals much about Native Police operations.

No official inquiry into violence on the Queensland frontier was ever held, apart from two Parliamentary investigations into killings by Aborigines. In some cases, inquests, by ‘decent’ Magistrates like Henry Challinor, describe how the police disposed of the dead bodies and other incriminating evidence. CD Rowley said he ‘wished to know more’ about Ipswich doctor, and later parliamentarian, Henry Challinor. As far as records show, he was one of the few government officials who demonstrated any compassion for Indigenous people. It would appear, from the archival records and oral history, that many of the bodies of Aboriginal people were burnt. The destruction of evidence was, evidently, one hallmark of the Native Police.

Sometimes the reasons given to justify Native Police killings are quite disturbing. In 1866 an inquest was held at Banana in Central Queensland after Acting Sub Inspector

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207 The 1858 Select Committee of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly appointed ‘to inquire into and report upon the murders which have recently taken place on the Dawson River, and generally on the state of outrage between the white population and the aborigines in the Northern Districts, with a view to providing for the better protection of life and property, *New South Wales Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1858); and the Select Committee of the Queensland Parliament appointed to ‘enquire into the efficiency and management and general working of the Police and Native Police Forces’, *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings* (1861).
209 For a recent discussion of fire as a potent symbol of ‘secrecy, frustration and disappearance’, see Gibson, *Seven Versions*, 69.
Edward Seymour (no relation to the Commissioner) shot dead an Aboriginal woman.\textsuperscript{210} According to the only European witness, Seymour shot her because she ‘riled’ him, and he also allegedly said that he was ‘taking revenge for the death of Mr Hill, an officer in the force who had been sometime previously killed by the Blacks’. Two years later, a trooper killed a woman during a domestic dispute, later expressing his regret (‘But me could not help it; me very sorry; me no want to hurt’), and was released.\textsuperscript{211} It would appear the trooper was afraid of his officer and of another trooper (possibly the husband of the deceased), saying ‘me very sorry but me want to run away; me tell Mammy and Billy when he come home’, but the real story behind this particular killing remains unknown. Although not technically a ‘frontier’ incident, this murder shows us that sometimes killers and victims knew each other.\textsuperscript{212} Many more examples of these sorts of deaths survive.

Four instances of Native Police deadly attacks on Aborigines are well documented. In the first, an inquest was held into the death of an Aboriginal woman named Kassey, who was killed at the Herbert River in 1872. She was the partner of a runaway trooper named Alick who unsuccessfully appealed to a local settler for help in giving himself up to the Police Magistrate at Cardwell. Despite Alick’s attempts, Kassey was shot dead by troopers under the command of Acting Sub Inspector Charles Shairp. Her body was then burnt.\textsuperscript{213} One officer testified at the inquest that two troopers helped

\textsuperscript{210} Inquest into the death of an unknown Aboriginal woman at Banana, JUS/N12/66/87.
\textsuperscript{211} Inquest into the death of Eliza at Fort Cooper, JUS/N19/68/186.
\textsuperscript{212} For evidence of ‘intimacy’ in similar cases in Victoria and New South Wales, see Jan Critchett, \textit{A Distant Field of Murder: Western District Frontiers 1834-1848} (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1990), 133; and Atkinson, \textit{The Europeans in Australia}, 159.
\textsuperscript{213} Inquest into the death of an unknown Aboriginal woman at Gairlock, JUS/N35/72/218.
look for the remains. One said to him ‘some fellow been roast him poor fellow’. This particular killing was fully investigated, Shairp was dismissed, and the details were widely known. It is hardly a case of extermination or ‘dispersal’, but a graphic example of death and violence among parties who knew one another.

The second case implicated Frederick Wheeler, and the precautions that were taken to ensure no European witness ever saw a killing. When Frederick Wheeler’s detachment killed several people at Fassifern in 1860, there were written complaints from Ipswich clergyman, coroner and surgeon Henry Challinor. Records show that Colonial Secretary Herbert wrote to Commandant Bligh saying Wheeler was to be ‘reprimanded’ and would in future ‘use every exertion to perform his duty with circumspection and humanity’. Wheeler apparently remembered the language of this order, and when a subordinate officer was chastised after the summary execution of an Aboriginal man named Dickey near St Lawrence ten years later, wrote in a memo ‘Acting Sub Inspe ctor Douglas seems as yet not to have learnt circumspection’. This was the second time Alexander Douglas had been caught ‘red-handed’ killing Aboriginal people, but neither affair obviously harmed his career. Douglas was reprimanded after an inquest into the deaths of several Aboriginal men near Gladstone in 1872. He reached the rank of Chief

214 JUS/N35/72/218.
215 See Queensland Parliamentary Debates 32 (1880: 671); also Police Magistrate at Cardwell to Colonial Secretary, 15 October 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A175/72/2337; and ‘Murder of woman at Palm Tree Gully, near Cardwell’, 15 October 1872, Colonial Secretary’s Inwards Correspondence, COL/A168/72/2344.
216 See Gibson, Seven Versions, 54-6, 64-7, and 74-6.
217 Colonial Secretary to Wheeler, 11 January 1861, A/71730.
218 Wheeler to Commissioner, 16 September 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A187/73/2122.
Inspector in 1900 and Acting Commissioner of Police in 1903. Wheeler’s note ended up in the archive files.

At the St Lawrence inquest, several European witnesses gave incriminating evidence against Douglas. One swore that native police with a European officer took Dickie from his house and handcuffed him to the trooper’s saddle. A second European stated a black was tied to one of the troopers passing his house. A third said he met a European in the bush who told him to ‘go in another direction’. On looking he saw native police near the waterhole, and several testified they heard shots soon after. The body was found tied to a sapling by a leather strap, with two bullet holes in the head, crucified like those in the drawings by Oscar. No charges were laid against Douglas. One of the witnesses described the European and a second ‘saw the person in charge of the Black Police. I heard him addressed as Mr Douglas’. An opinion was sought from the Attorney-General, who wrote back to say: ‘I consider the finding in the hearing correct and that the black was shot by the Native Police but there is nothing in these papers to show under what circumstances and unless the police are in possession of or can obtain further

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219 Inquest into the death of Harry at Calliope, JUS/N35/72/223, and appointment of Inspector AD Douglas as Acting Commissioner, 3 October 1903, Executive Council Minute, COL/E238/03/429.
220 Inquest into the death of Dickey at St Lawrence, JUS/N37/73/190.
221 Kim McKenzie and Carol Hooper, ‘Eyewitness? Drawings by Oscar of Cooktown’, Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia, edited by Iain McCalman, Alexander Cook and Andrew Reeves (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Plate 9.6. In 1890, the naked body of an Aboriginal girl aged ‘12 to 14 years’ was found in the Albert River near Burketown. She had been ‘tied to a bar of iron with a wire rope at ankles, knees, waist, neck, and wrists; two iron bullock-bows were through the arms’; according to one source, ex-Sub Inspector William Armit was found to have ‘used crucified captives for target practice’ in New Guinea; Queensland Police Gazette 27 (1890: 141) and Hank Nelson, Black, White & Gold: Goldmining in Papua New Guinea 1878-1930 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976), 163.
information nothing can be done’. In his defence, Douglas presented a note from a grazier asking him to ‘pay a visit’ with his troopers, and the file was marked ‘Away – with other Douglas papers with care’. Possibly this caution was an attempt to keep the details of Native Police activities on behalf of graziers from becoming general knowledge.

The third example of Native Police operations also shows that the colonial justice system did not protect Aborigines. In 1885 a detachment commanded by Sub Inspector William Nichols and Cadet Roland Garraway killed six Aboriginal people at Irvinebank. Geof Genever’s work on the killings is, to date, one of the few detailed studies of frontier violence in Queensland. He says the Native Police virtually represented ‘the sum total of Colonial Queensland’s policy towards its indigenous people’, and concluded, ‘it was unarguably a policy primarily based on collective punishment without trial: one that was not only illegal, but morally bankrupt’. One European witness at the inquest said he saw black troopers riding about and ‘the blacks scattered in all directions’. He then saw a blackfellow handcuffed and fastened to a fence, who ‘was screaming out loud. Shortly after that the troopers led him away fastened between two horses’. According to one newspaper, ‘over fifty persons had seen the bodies’ at a camp near the town. Several residents said the Native Police had burnt the bodies. Mine-owner John Moffat, a most reputable witness, testified: ‘I found the remains of a large fire that had been made on the

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222 Wheeler to Commissioner, 16 September 1873, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A187/73/2122.
223 COL/A187/73/2122.
224 Inquest into deaths of four Aborigines at Irvinebank, 23 October 1884, JUS/N110/84/511; Geof Genever, *Failure of Justice* (Eacham: Eacham Historical Society, 1996).
225 Genever, *Failure of Justice*, 16.
spot where the bodies formerly lay’. 

Nichols was dismissed from the force and charged with murder, but the Crown did not proceed with the case. One police officer remarked before the preliminary hearing that local prejudice would obstruct further proceedings in the matter. ‘If tried in Cooktown justice might be defeated owing to hatred of aboriginals’.

A fourth case implicated an officer – Lyndon Poingdestre – who was as notorious as his contemporary Frederick Wheeler. In 1887, the Police Magistrate at Normanton held an inquest into the death of six Aborigines. The Normanton Native Police detachment commanded by Inspector Poingdestre was blamed, and the Colonial Secretary was informed the Magistrate had ‘no doubt the murder was committed by troopers and the bodies removed’. Again the bodies were burnt, and all evidence destroyed after European witnesses had viewed them. The evidence was clear, but it was only evidence to satisfy an historian, not a court under the rule of reasonable doubt, i.e., had there been any eyewitnesses to the actual shooting? Native Police troopers had obviously participated in the killings, but there is a difference between historical and legal evidence. No conviction could be recorded when there was no physical evidence and no eyewitnesses. The government chose not to lay any disciplinary charges, and lightly chastised Poingdestre, saying he ‘acted contrary to regulations in allowing his

227 JUS/N110/84/511.
228 Detective John Barry to Officer In Command of Detectives, 17 January 1885, Police Staff File, William Austin Nichols, A/40104.
229 Inquest into deaths of ‘certain Aboriginals’ at Normanton, 24 November 1887, JUS/N150/87/551 and Crown Law Office to Colonial Secretary, 5 January 1888, Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence, COL/A531/88/105; Finnane and Richards, ‘You’ll Get Nothing Out of It’?

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troopers to go without him’.230 Once again, the government recognised the futility of a prosecution when settlers likely approved of the attack.

In the absence of reliable data, and with only limited investigations into Native Police killings, we can look at Aboriginal oral history projects. We should not expect to find exact numbers here, but there are references to attacks that should be taken seriously because they are often our only way of gaining access to the traumatic experiences on the ‘other side of the frontier’. Further, Aboriginal accounts have always been presented in oral forms.231 For example, a number of unreported massacre sites were located in the Cardwell area as part of the Jirrbal cultural heritage project.232 The large numbers of archival records for the Native Police in this district suggest there were probably a lot more killings than reported in government records.233 Oral accounts of the punitive raids on the coast north of Cooktown after the Lizard Island ‘affair’, say ‘troopers didn’t pick up “real Aborigines”. They would just shoot them outright’.234 At Mapoon, the Reverend Nicholas Hey recorded in 1892 the adoption of a young orphan Aboriginal boy after learning that ‘both his parents were shot by the police with a number of others of his tribe’.235 An oral account of a massacre on the Atherton Tableland, about 1880, is

230 COL/A531/88/105.
231 Another good reason for listening to oral evidence is, as Tom Griffith reminds us, the fact that oral sources of history are often regarded by residents as ‘the pre-eminent means of access to the local past’ in many rural communities, Griffiths, ‘The Frontier Fallen’.
233 There were at least five Native Police camps in the Cardwell area between 1864 and 1896. See Appendix 2 for details.
included in a website devoted to the Ngadjonji people.\textsuperscript{236} Although not relating to a Native Police killing, Aboriginal people from the Mitchell River on Cape York Peninsula still vividly recall the extreme violence shown towards their relatives by the Jardine Brothers in 1865.\textsuperscript{237} Oral evidence of frontier aggression has been collected in other parts of Queensland and Australia.\textsuperscript{238}

The last investigation into a Native Police killing took place in 1902 after a patrol killed several Aboriginal men at the Ducie River on Cape York Peninsula.\textsuperscript{239} The bodies of the Aboriginal people were partly burnt in an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the evidence. This time the Commissioner of Police investigated. Again, the principles of ‘due legal process’ were followed as in other cases too, but following the process does not assure perfect justice. It is clear from this case, and so many others, that there was reluctance by crown officers to accept Indigenous evidence in instances like these, although it was admissible in Queensland after 1876. The young Constable in charge, John Hoole, testified that ‘all the troopers were armed’ and at first said ‘I do not allow my troopers to load their rifles without my permission’. He then admitted ‘they could load whether I liked or not’. He also stated:

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\textsuperscript{236} \url{www.koori.usyd.edu.au/ngadjonji/Today/massacre.html}
\textsuperscript{237} Personal communication with author, Tania Major, 2001.
\textsuperscript{238} See, for example, \textit{This is what happened: Historical narratives by Aborigines}, edited by Luise Hercus and Peter Sutton (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1986); Peter and Jay Read, \textit{Long Time, Olden Time: Aboriginal Accounts of Northern Territory History} (Alice Springs: Institute for Aboriginal Development Publications, 1991) and Tony Roberts, \textit{Frontier Justice: A History of the Gulf Country to 1900} (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2005).
I never had occasion to shoot over the heads of blacks. It is not my custom to shoot over the heads of blacks nor is it the custom of the Troopers so far as I know to shoot over the heads of blacks to make them stop. They must have got excited when they fired over their heads. 240

Hoole, a very inexperienced officer, was placed in command of the ‘flying detachment’ because ‘no more suitable man with longer service’ was available. 241 At the inquiry Inspector Marrett said he could not recall Hoole ever arresting an Aboriginal person. Whilst Hoole’s evidence is unreliable, it does not incriminate himself or anyone else. His evidence only shows that his men loaded without permission, they didn’t usually fire at all, and they fired this time but were so excited and poorly trained they killed people. Despite the Native Police having likely committed murder, Hoole was allowed to resign and the troopers were ‘transferred to other districts’. 242 These steps in themselves suggest evidence of guilt, in some form at least.

Comparison

Were other colonial police as murderously violent? How did the Native Police compare with other armed forces? The formations, such as the Malay Corps and the Cape

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240 Police Staff File, John Hoole, A/38841.
241 Marrett to Commissioner, 4 July 1902, A/49713/02/10390.
242 Meston complained in 1902 that, ‘doubtless for some special reason’, three ex-troopers ‘supposed to be concerned in some recent trouble in the North’ were sent down to the Fraser Island Aboriginal Reserve by the Commissioner, Southern Protector of Aboriginals to Home Secretary, 24 September 1902, COL/143/02/16277.
Regiment, mentioned by colonial officials and the public, were in similar positions as security-providers to colonisers. Europeans, and their Indigenous allies, killed Native people wherever they established colonies. By seeing the Native populations as sub-human, settlers could justify their actions to themselves and others. For example, the British justified the use of lethal ‘Dum-Dum’ bullets in colonial warfare against ‘natives and barbarians’ because ‘the savage will go on fighting even when desperately wounded’.243 As writer Mark Cocker notes, ‘European colonists used their civilisation as a powerful shield for their actions’.244 We know some of what violent colonists believed, especially about their justifications. It is likely that they saw their actions as part of progress, part of the laws of nature, not as religiously inspired or as an indication of national values. As earlier citations have shown, especially those when the Bible was quoted, historical evidence of racial inequalities was used as an excuse for violence. Escalations, and the savage conduct of the ‘war’, required rationalisations that portrayed the ‘other side’ as deserving of special attention.

According to historian HL Wesseling, the French general Thomas-Robert Bugeaud, who conquered Algeria in 1844, was the ‘father of the doctrine of the colonial war’.245 For Fanon, ‘colonial brutality’ was Bugeaud’s ‘doubtful glory’.246 Bugeaud advocated a strategy of ‘restless pursuit, attack, pursuit again’ to defeat Native resistance. The principles employed by Bugeaud to reach and subdue ‘hostile’ populations ‘through their crops, their flocks and their property’ were adopted by Colonel CE Callwell of the

British Army, and subsequently used in military campaigns in Africa and India. Irregular forces on the northwest frontier of India used similar tactics. ‘This is not civilised warfare’.  

Many of the strategies mentioned by Callwell were those that had been used by the Native Police, and also by colonial (not British troops) in New Zealand at the end of the Maori Wars. When Britain withdrew her troops, the New Zealand government developed tactics that took the war to the enemy. For example, Callwell advocated the destruction of homes and crops as a means of defeating enemy tribes and argued that mobile ‘flying columns’ were the key to success. Mounted forces, he said, defeated the ‘Red Indians’ of the United States. He argued ‘it is of utmost importance that the marauding party should not have time to disperse’. One American officer is quoted as saying the key to victory was ‘permitting the Indians no rest’. ‘Severity’, Calwell contended, was ‘sometimes necessary’ as ‘uncivilised races attribute leniency to timidity’. Savages must be ‘thoroughly brought to book or they will rise again’. Colonists throughout Queensland believed the same thing and expressed similar ideas.

Other parts of Australia, in which Native Police forces operated, can be compared with Queensland. In Victoria, recent estimates place the number of Aboriginal deaths from frontier violence in the region of 1,000 people. Hundreds, if not thousands, were

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246 Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, 23.
killed in northern Australia. Richard Kimber estimates that over 650 Aboriginal people were killed by police in Central Australia from 1881 to 1891, a total that he contrasts, on the basis of oral evidence, with the official figure of 44 deaths. Police and squatters in Western Australia were responsible for the killing and imprisonment of hundreds of Aboriginal men. Their imprisonment on Rottnest Island meant that not all managed to return to the northern parts of the colony. At first, discharged Aboriginal prisoners were given a few days’ rations and released to find their own way home. Later orders were given for them to be escorted home, but ‘such well-intentioned instructions were not always adhered to’.

What about other parts of the British Empire, particularly those places where formations that Governor Bowen specifically compared with the Native Police – the Sepoy Regiments in India, the Hottentot Corps at the Cape Colony, and the Malay Regiment at Ceylon – existed? Extreme violence was routinely used in each of these British colonies, but the number of deaths went unrecorded. The combined use of native allies and extreme violence characterised the European colonisation of the Indian subcontinent and parts of Africa. In Nigeria, ‘police violence was widespread and

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252 Roberts in *Frontier Justice* details hundreds of deaths in Borroloola district of the Northern Territory.
255 See map showing areas from which Aboriginal prisoners were transferred to Rottnest Island in Neville Green, *Far From Home: Aboriginal Prisoners of Rottnest Island 1838-1931* (Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1997), 13.
256 Green, *Far From Home*, 55.
institutionalised during colonial rule’. British forces at the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 practised a form of total war by destroying Zulu cattle and houses, and ‘carried out a policy of refusing to take prisoners and massacring the wounded’.

In Ceylon (Sri Lanka) the soldiers of the Malay Regiment had a reputation as ‘brave and ferocious’ troops. The Indigenous population particularly feared the African troops in the Kaffir Corps. One British officer reported that the ‘very name’ of these mercenaries (‘Caffre troops’) ‘struck terror into the minds of the inhabitants’. The similarities between this body and the Native Police in Queensland are particularly noticeable, including its deployment in detachments that acted as ‘shock troops’ as the British grabbed control of the lucrative spice business. No figures for total Cingalese deaths are available, but may well have been in the thousands.

Across the Tasman, settlers in New Zealand were fighting their own colonial war. According to one observer, the settlers and the colonial government were responsible for the ‘fighting and devastation’ because ‘they had no intention of observing native rights’. Governor Bowen observed, in relation to the Aborigines, that their collisions with Europeans ‘do not occupy that place in the annals of Australia which is filled by the Maoris in the annals of New Zealand, and by the semi-civilized Mexicans and Peruvians

– or even by the Red Indians – in the history of America’. Historian CD Rowley said
‘The Maori was respected as a warrior; the Aboriginal was despised as a rural pest’. The Executive Council referred to Maori in 1865:

It will be recollected that the hostile Aborigines in the interior of Queensland are more numerous in most points in proportion to the few scattered settlers than are the Maoris in proportion to the British population of New Zealand.

By 1860 the Pakeha (Europeans) in New Zealand outnumbered Maori, and given the low density of European population in the interior of Queensland, that predominance must have come very late if at all. Aborigines were still more numerous than Europeans in northern parts of Queensland for many decades.

In 1866, the Executive Council noted that 10,000 British and colonial troops were serving in New Zealand against 40,000 Maori with ‘2,000 in arms’. At the same time, there were ‘at least 15,000 Aborigines in Queensland’, including ‘2,000 fighting men hostile to the whites’. While noting ‘it is true that the Australian Blacks are not nearly as formidable or so well armed as the Maoris’, the Council, as a loyal institution of the British Empire, stated emphatically that ‘hostile natives’ were to be ‘chiefly found in the Northern half of Queensland’, where ‘mortality among English troops’ would ‘nearly

262 Despatch from Governor Bowen to Duke of Newcastle, 12 April 1860, Governor’s Despatches, GOV/22/60/34.
264 Colonial defence, 10 May 1865, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E11/65/26.
equal what it is in India’. Since there were no wars in India at that time, it must be assumed that this claim refers to deaths from heat, disease and accident. Total Maori casualties during the Anglo-Maori Wars are unknown, but certainly extended into the thousands. It is unclear what this discussion hoped to achieve. If it were the deployment of British troops, the Executive Council would have had a hard time convincing anyone the Aborigines threatened Queensland in ways Maori jeopardised parts of New Zealand. It may have been linked to Governor Bowen’s efforts to make Native Affairs an Imperial problem.

The Native Police was not much of a force in military terms, but it got the dirty job done, as squatters might concede. In New Zealand, thousands of troops were needed. Aborigines might be hostile, but were also seriously fragmented, and not practiced in military operations the way Maori had been even before contact with the British.

In Jamaica, about 500 people were killed when soldiers of the West India Regiment and Maroon irregular forces were used to suppress an overthrow of civil government in 1865. According to eyewitnesses, the Maroons treated the country as if it was ‘an enemy’s country in time of war’ and ‘aroused sheer terror’ among the inhabitants. Humanitarian groups, politicians and newspapers in Britain were outraged and an official inquiry was convened in 1866. Governor Edward J Eyre defended his

265 ‘Enquiries on Native Police’ in Governor’s Despatch No 18, from Secretary of State for Colonies (Edward Cardwell), 7 November 1866, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E14/66/64.
266 James Belich found references to over 2,000 deaths in the records of the Maori Wars. By comparison he estimated that 20,000 Maori and very few Europeans died during the earlier so-called ‘Musket Wars’ between various tribes, James Belich, Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders (Hawai’i: University of Hawai’i Press, 1996), 157 & 170.
encouragement of a violent suppression, and went on to explain ‘excesses must always
take place under martial law, and especially when black troops, who are often wholly
beyond the control of their officers, are employed’.269 Eyre’s explanation – the
uncontrollable excitement of native troops – was exactly that used as late as 1902 in
Queensland when Constable John Hoole explained how his men came to kill Aborigines
at the Ducie River.

Others saw ‘copy cat’ killings in Europe. An editorial in The Queenslander
during 1877 compared the ‘dispersal’ process of the Native Police with recent ‘atrocities’
in Bulgaria.270 Irregular troops, called ‘Bashi-Bazouks’, were armed and maintained by
the government, and acted as gendarmerie in various parts of the Turkish Empire. They
massacred Christians and destroyed villages in Bulgaria until exposed by an American
journalist.271 Several years later, ‘Bulgarian atrocities’ were mentioned again. The
‘imitation of our Native Police system by the Turks’ caused the problem.272 In case
readers might think that in Native Police massacres women and children were
‘unmolested’, the writer gave ‘a few incidents’ to ‘show how the matter stands’.

The shooting of two women ‘in the North-west’ committed ‘not by Circassians or
Bashi Bazouks, acting under the order of a Moslem ruler, but by a force
maintained, equipped, and paid for by the church-going Christian people of
Brisbane and Queensland.273

268 Heuman, The Killing Time, 128 and Chapter Nine.
321.
270 Editorial ‘Police Protection in the North’, The Queenslander (8 December 1877).
272 ‘How We Civilise the Blacks III’, The Queenslander (5 June 1880: 722).
A settler at the Herbert River agreed, and said ‘there are things done to blacks and black women by some of the police which equal the Bulgarian atrocities’. The only newspaper writer making this parallel between Queensland and Bulgaria was Danish-born Carl Feilberg. He made this comparison ‘several times, from the Cooktown Courier in 1876 and 1877, to The Patriot in late 1878 and finally during the 1880 campaign in the Queenslander’.275

More recently, historians have compared the Native Police in Queensland with the German forces in Southwest Africa and New Guinea. The Native Police in German New Guinea, first established in 1896, were linked to local revolts, murder and rape. Troopers were responsible for the worst documented massacre carried out in New Guinea under German rule. In 1901, the Native Police killed at least eighty inhabitants of the island of St Mathias north of New Ireland after the death of explorer Bruno Mencke.276 Reasonably good records of the German force have survived, and recent work indicates many similarities between the two Native Police corps.277 Total numbers of deaths due to Native Police action in German New Guinea are unknown. After the First World War

277 Peter Sack, Phantom History, The Rule of Law and the Colonial State: The Case of German New Guinea (Canberra: Australian National University, 2000).
began, Australian military forces took charge of the Native Police in German New Guinea, and used them for ‘punitive expeditions’ from 1915.278

Other native forces under the command of the colonisers, using very similar tactics, operated in South America. In Guyana slave patrols composed of free Coloured and Indigenous men were used to control large slave populations and to catch ‘runaway’ slaves.279 If slaves could not be captured, the patrols were encouraged to return with a severed arm or hand, for which they were paid half the reward normally granted for a ‘live’ prisoner. After one expedition in 1795, seventy arms were produced. A Negro Corps, called the ‘South American Rangers’, was formed in 1796 to continue this work. After a rebellion in 1823, hundreds of slaves were shot by planters, militia and the slave patrols, and the heads were stuck on staves in public places.280 This highlights one obvious difference. The Native Police burned the bodies, suspecting, correctly, their actions were not fully sanctioned and it was best to cover evidence.

Colombian and Peruvian rubber barons employed blacks from Barbados to control their Indian labour force in Amazonia during the early years of the twentieth century. The violence the rubber companies used and the terror they enforced on the Putumayo Indians was so extreme it became the subject of an English parliamentary enquiry.281 Barbadians, who have been described as the ‘martial race of the West Indies’,

280 Mars, Deadly Force, 69.
served in colonial police forces across the Caribbean. Diplomat Sir Roger Casement, who had exposed similar brutality in the rubber plantations of Belgian Congo, inspected the region in 1910 and estimated that about 30,000 Indians had been murdered or deliberately starved to death in the ten years since 1900. Anthropologist Michael Taussig says the Barbadians were ‘in effect indebted peons who were not only used to torture and hunt down Indians but were themselves subject to torture’. Murders were also committed by the ‘muchachos’ or ‘muchachos de confianza’ – armed Indians working for the rubber companies. These men were ‘armed with the weapon of greatest repute, the infamous Winchester rifle’ and were ‘recruited and trained at an early age to bully other Indians into gathering rubber – usually Indians ‘from tribes hostile to which the boys belonged’ according to one observer.

The Genocide Question

Did genocide take place in colonial Queensland, and in other parts of Australia? In recent years, increasing numbers of writers have stated that genocidal extermination took place, but there is debate over the term genocide and its applicability to situations

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283 Taussig, *Shamanism*, p43

where Indigenous people were murdered and their manner of living was assaulted by colonisers. 286 The difficulty with using genocide in a technically correct way arises because there must be evidence of government intention. 287 Aboriginal people in Queensland and other Australian colonies were killed for their land, but there were no official orders for this action.

There are references in the primary sources to activities with genocidal outcomes in other places. Some settlers in Queensland remarked upon violence in other Australian colonies. Even the Executive Council noted this, reporting ‘blacks were shot down’ in Tasmania, and ‘almost exterminated in the settled districts of New South Wales and Victoria – often by wholesale massacres’. 288 Pioneer North Queensland grazier Edward Palmer agreed, saying the history of North Queensland in connection with the blacks was similar to that of New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria and ‘perhaps if the truth were spoken the means of getting rid of them are similar too’. 289

The use of the term genocide is clouded by the United Nations declaration, which specifies that intent is important. It is, at this point in time, quite difficult for many citizens of former settler-colonies to recognise that their societies are built on the violent theft of Indigenous land and other resources. 290 Until that historical injustice is

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285 Taussig, 1987, p47
288 ‘Native Police’, 7 November 1866, Executive Council Minute, EXE/E14/66/64.
290 This of course includes the United States, where Native Americans were killed in large numbers. For an overview see Gideon Maxwell Polya, *Jane Austen and the Black Hole of British History: Colonial rapacity, holocaust denial and the crisis in biological sustainability* (Melbourne, 1998).
acknowledged, colonial formations such as the Native Police, and the important part they played in the colonisation process, will continue to be misunderstood. Quite simply, without the use of armed force and the co-operation of Indigenous people, colonisation would not have succeeded in many parts of the world. The true history of the Native Police cannot be separated from an admission of the violence that underwrote Queensland’s occupation by European squatters and miners. The Native Police was not the only dirty tool. A number of squatters organised their own murdering parties.

According to genocide scholar Colin Tatz, ‘almost all historians of the Aboriginal experience avoid the word genocide’, and he argues that this reluctance stems from ‘the place of morality in Australian politics’.291 Historian Dirk Moses, using the work of Alison Palmer and Henry Reynolds, says the Native Police was a form of government-sponsored genocide.292 Evidence cannot be found to conclusively prove that the Queensland government was directing or even condoning the killings of the Native Police. What this really means is that we need some other words to express dramatically and honestly what some agents of colonisation and their hirelings did to Aboriginal people. And we need language to describe a government that did not go on record as intending to exterminate Aborigines, but certainly was relieved when the men of the Native Police escaped murder charges. Like the man who could not be brought to trial for want of evidence, the government escapes a decisive historical verdict. Morally though,

successive Queensland governments conducted themselves with a repugnant disregard for the lives of Aboriginal people.

Alison Palmer’s book, *Colonial Genocide*, claims that genocide took place in colonial Queensland. Palmer qualifies this claim by saying the genocide was ‘piecemeal’ without ‘an overtly defined policy’, but she argues that through the Native Police the government was ‘complicitly involved in a policy of recurrent, piecemeal massacres of Aborigines’. 293 Her use of dubious secondary sources to support this assertion means that some of her conclusions are suspect. 294 In particular, her thesis, based on the work of Mulvaney, Reynolds, Loos, and others, that ‘the Native Police Corps files are missing from the historical archives’ which ‘cements the secrecy of the Native Police Corps’ activities’, suggests that she never actually looked at records in the Queensland State Archives. 295 If she had, she would have discovered, for example, that the term ‘Corps’ was only used briefly in Queensland during the early 1860s, and not at any other time. Carelessness does not help Australians or Queenslanders to confront their past, because poor research only leaves a door open to those who deny that there is anything to confront. Claims based on unsubstantiated evidence do not constitute reputable scholarship.

The ‘momentum for extermination’ came from the periphery. There were people at the centre (Brisbane) who agreed, but the historical evidence shows that there were far more people in the metropolis who didn’t support the killing, and who wouldn’t kill Aboriginal people. The frontier is a different (but not unconnected) realm. Genocide is a ‘dead-end’ word, and the United Nations declaration too narrow, and will never allow the term to ‘stick’. Raymond Evans’ approach is more appropriate and accurate:

Private individuals illegally accomplished more genocidal outcomes than did the state via its military, police and native police forces, but the state was complicit, via its failure to prosecute Europeans for the killing, kidnapping or injuring of Aborigines.296

This perspective more accurately reflects the body of archival material, and also acknowledges that genocidal outcomes took place. We can say this firmly without having recourse to conspiracy theories about missing records. It is no longer acceptable to allege that there are no Native Police records, and no longer acceptable to write history without research.

Conclusion

Colonialism and violence are inextricably linked in the operations of the Native Police in Queensland. Herman Merivale noted the link between colonisation and violence in 1838. ‘[T]he history of European settlement presents a wide and sweeping destruction
of native races by the uncontrolled violence of individuals, if not colonial authorities. Unrelenting aggression was the means by which colonial settlers normally advanced and seized new territories and resources. Murderous ‘moments’, when violence overcame civilising urges, were common in Queensland, as they were in other colonial settings. The violence used by the Native Police was not unique, unusual or uncommon. Similar formations used identical tactics to crush Indigenous resistance.

Archival and historical records reveal much about Native Police violence. The force was a major cause of Aboriginal deaths by European violence in colonial Queensland. However, the full extent of frontier violence will never be known, and neither will the Native Police’s share. Officers in the Native Police reported many Indigenous deaths, and settlers told of many more, but we have to rely also on archival records and newspapers of doubtful veracity. Just as some Native Police officers exaggerated the number of violent ‘collisions’ with Indigenous groups, many newspaper correspondents submitted exaggerated or mistaken reports on the deaths of colonists. This is a vital point that has been overlooked by many historians, and demonstrated in this thesis. The culture that developed on the Queensland frontier, with regard to racial violence, was fostered by secrecy that often masked the true extent of the violence. Fear, anxiety and rumour in stressful situations are the subjects of a large modern historiography, and important factors in the story of the Native Police in Queensland.

Assessing the real impact of the Native Police is a difficult and distressing task. Squatters and miners killed many Aborigines, but they acted only for themselves, used

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297 Cited in Lindquist, Exterminate all the Brutes, 123.
298 See Appendix 4 ‘Rumours’.
their own firearms and horses, and concerned themselves only with the regions they occupied. The Native Police was, despite the government’s loose supervision, ultimately a state agency. The European members of the force were often connected with administrators and politicians; it used government equipment; it was a police force established by executive decision and mandated by parliamentary budget decisions. Thus, as a government entity, its murderous activities merit special attention.

Official investigations into Native Police violence reveal that racial violence was largely accepted and widely practised on the Queensland frontier. Many settlers supported the killing of Aboriginal people, and admitted they had killed out of fear, hatred and distrust. Against this background, the Native Police can be seen as a product of its time. Thus, the government didn’t have to hide or destroy records. The European members of the force generally knew – as did squatters and miners – that they had to cover their actions. The excerpts from newspapers and archival records discussed above show that some settlers did not agree with the violence shown towards the ‘original owners of Australia’. However, it is also from the official records that the most damning evidence against the Native Police and their fellow settlers can be gleaned. Finding the history of Native Police operations in Queensland was, after all, a case of going to the State Archives, looking in the right places, and not giving up on the search for evidence, thus showing that the history of the Native Police differs little from other historical problems with their similar gaps in evidence.
Conclusion

The topic of this dissertation is a narrow one, and might be thought to fall within the field of Queensland history, parochially defined. On the contrary, this thesis shows that detailed archival research refines the terms in which the history of Australia has been written. On the Queensland frontier in the nineteenth century, Aboriginal policemen under the command of European officers killed large numbers of Indigenous men, women and children. The Queensland government retained the Native Police, first created by the New South Wales government, as an effective means of crushing Indigenous resistance. The thesis, based on extensive archival research, represents a revision of frontier history in Queensland. It looks at some unanswered questions in the light of new data on racial violence in colonial Australia.

In this dissertation, I have argued that the differences between police and military actions in colonial Queensland were extremely blurred. Archival records show that the Native Police acted mostly as a military force. Many surviving records of Native Police operations have been located during the research for this dissertation, and this new evidence reveals much about Native Police operations in Queensland. The records show that the force was, at the time, a standard form of colonial law enforcement apparatus.

For a long time, Queenslanders and Australians have needed a good history of the Native Police. Despite the arguments of many writers and historians who claimed that the records of the force had been destroyed, many important documents are held in the State Archives. Records show that the Native Police force was a legally constituted arm of government. However, not all primary records are accurate. Similarly, many secondary
sources cannot be trusted, because they are often based on recycled gossip, opinion, and hearsay. The best way to approach the history of the force is to corroborate and compare records.

I have compiled a searchable database containing all the references I found. The first entries were the inquests into Native Police killings. Then I added notes about the force from diaries, journals, manuscripts and personal papers. Queensland newspapers, especially The *Queenslander* and the *Brisbane Courier*, were good sources of frontier violence reports. Reminiscences by a few former Native Police officers were found. Over 400 historical records relating to the policing of Aboriginal people in Queensland were located in the Colonial Secretary’s Inwards Correspondence series.

Other archival series revealed more documents. In fact, records about the Native Police are to be found in almost every provenance at the Queensland State Archives. About eighty Police Staff Files give career details for some Europeans who served with the force. There will be more references in other police records. The bundles of Executive Council Minutes contain over three hundred references to the force, including appointments and dismissals. Queensland Governors sent Despatches to London on the subject of the Native Police, and responded to requests for information on the force. The Justice Department’s inquest series is one of the richest sources, with over one hundred investigations of interracial killings on the colonial frontier. There are more records to look at in this provenance. Hundreds of references to the Native Police can be found in the *Queensland Government Gazette*, along with hundreds more in the *Queensland Police Gazette*. Appointments, promotions, disciplinary action, and dismissals are
revealed. Court records and inquest files allow insights into Native Police history. All the records help us understand how the force worked in colonial Queensland.

A detailed summary of each primary source found to date has been entered into the searchable database. This means keyword searches are particularly effective. The compilation of this master-file has enabled the creation of a nominal roll of European members of the force. The Native Police used almost one hundred different stations and camps across the colony, and these are now listed. The districts that the Native Police operated in, and the individuals who led troopers, are now known. Some of the tactics that the force used are now known as well. Records show conclusively that the most senior government leaders in colonial Queensland – the Colonial Secretaries, Executive Councils, and Governors – knew about the violence on the frontier, and the Native Police, and did little to stop the violence or restrain the Native Police. Government was complicit in the killing of Indigenous people.

One of the key questions I sought to answer was the date and manner of the force’s end. To date, no record of an official ‘winding up’ order has been found. This suggests the force was ended by attrition as camps were closed and officers retired. Although many troopers were retrenched at the end of the nineteenth century, small Native Police units existed on Cape York Peninsula until the First World War. By that stage, troopers had largely become unarmed trackers whose main function was the escort of Aboriginal people on removal orders to reserves and missions. The era of dispersal had finally ended.

This dissertation has only opened up essential avenues of research. Further research on frontier racial relations in Queensland should be undertaken to build on the
material found to date. Tracker files, tracing the employment of Aboriginal men and women by the Queensland Police Force during the twentieth century, would be worth examining for further references to the Native Police. Similarly, our understanding of the ‘Policemen’ of Torres Strait, and the ‘Reserve Police’ on Aboriginal Reserves and Settlements, would benefit from further research.

Records about frontier violence also need to be further investigated. Every judicial series contains references to Indigenous people and their treatment by the State. This is a rich topic well worth further research. The number of frontier deaths is an important topic, which needs a lot more consideration. Ideally, deaths from violence should be distinguished from those caused by disease, starvation and other causes to determine the true extent of racial violence on the frontier. But records of death, even when co-related with correspondence files and newspaper reports, will only ever reveal how many settlers died on the Queensland frontier. Indigenous death records are much harder to find. Had we the same easy access to written records from ‘the other side of the frontier’, the Native Police of Queensland would be part of a completely different story.
Appendices

Appendix 1: A Nominal Roll of the European members of the force Page 305
Appendix 2: Native Police camps and stations by date of opening Page 353
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Appendix 6: ‘A good reliable pamphlet’: A documentary history of the Native Police in Queensland (on disc)
Appendix 1: An Interim Nominal Roll of the European members of the Native Police

Abbreviations
ADB = *Australian Dictionary of Biography*
AHRR = Australian Heritage Records Register database
CPS = Clerk of Petty Sessions
NSW BDM = New South Wales Births, Deaths and Marriages
PM = Police Magistrate
QBDM = Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages
QGG = *Queensland Government Gazette*
QPG = *Queensland Police Gazette*
QVP = *Queensland Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings*
RC = Royal Commission

Affleck, John de Linden
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1886 (A/38716)
Discharged With gratuity, 1889 (QPG, Vol 27: 44)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/73 (A/38716)
Notes Shot trooper Peter dead near Barron River, 1888 (JUS/N163/88/628); accidentally shot himself in the arm, which was amputated, 1889 (A/38716)

Ahern, John
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable
Promoted Sergeant
Promoted Senior Sergeant
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1877 (QGG, Vol 21, 4: 1)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1881 (COL/E46/81/374)
Promoted 2nd Class Inspector, 1886 (COL/E76/86/319)
Promoted 1st Class Inspector, 1900 (QPG, Vol 27: 120)
Promoted Travelling Inspector, 1890 (QPG, Vol 27: 133)
Died 1893 (QPG, Vol 30: 313)
Staff file AF/2949
Notes Held inquiry into the conduct of Sub Inspector Smart (1883), and of Sub Inspector Urquhart (1884); referred to in a 1888 newspaper article as “Jacky-Jacky” (*The Queenslander*, 14/4/88: 585-6).
Alford, Richard Henry

Born Queensland, 1861 (A/38791)
Appointed Constable, 1888 (QPG, Vol 25: 73)
Promoted First Class Constable, 1898 (A/38791)
Promoted Acting Sergeant, 1898 (QPG, Vol 35: 436)
Reduced Constable, 1900 (A/38791)
Died Illness, on board ship, 1901 (A/38791)
Staff file AF/536 (A/38791)
Notes Stationed at Turn Off Lagoon (1896-1900), and the object of extreme criticism by Inspector James Lamond in 1899. Alford’s wife Mary Ann (nee Carelton, married 1887) died in 1898, and their three children went to live with Constable Joyce, and his wife (who was Mrs Alford’s sister). They were later allowed to live at the Turn Off Lagoon station by special permission of Police Commissioner Parry Okeden (A/38791/98/5948). Alford was charged with neglect of duty in 1900, reduced in rank, and transferred to Croydon, Burketown and Bundaberg. He died of heart disease whilst on transfer to Normanton (A/38791/01/2146) After Alford’s death, a gratuity of £130 was paid to his children, with the last payment in 1916 (A/38791).

Armit, William Eddington De Margerites

Born Belgium, 1848 (ADB, Vol 3: 48)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (QPG, Vol 9: 59)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1873
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1876 (QPG, Vol 13: 49)
Dismissed Discipline, 1880 (POL/4/614)
Reappointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1881 (QPG, Vol 18: 4)
Dismissed Discipline and financial irregularities 1882 (QPG, Vol 19: 114)
Died New Guinea, 1901 (ADB, Vol 3: 48)
Staff file AF/23 (A/38710)
Notes Ex-soldier, arrived Australia 1870; married Marion Barton, 1871, and they had nine children, with two dying young, (QBDM); in command of detachment at Creen Creek killing, 1876; wrote to papers (as “A Queensland Police Officer”) after dismissal in 1880 saying he was ‘forbidden to publish any information which would give the public even the slightest glimpse into the doings of the Native Police’ (The Queenslander, 4/9/80: 306); drunk at Thursday Island, 1881; involved in bitter argument with Poingdestre and dismissed, 1882. Became journalist and was special correspondent for Argus while on expedition in New Guinea, 1883. Bankrupt at Cooktown and applied for reappointment to Native Police in 1884. Member of Cooktown School Committee, 1886, and Secretary of Cooktown Chamber of Commerce, 1891. Private secretary to New Guinea administrator William MacGregor, 1893, and led retaliatory party in New Guinea, 1894 (COL/A781/94/10801). Resident magistrate in New Guinea from 1899.
### Armstrong, Maxwell

- **Born**: Unknown
- **Appointed**: Cadet, 1862 (QGG, Vol 3: 749)
- **Promoted**: Sub Inspector, 1864 (EXE/E10/64/63)
- **Promoted**: Acting Inspector, 1871 (QPG, Vol 8: 61)
- **Died**: Ireland, 1905 (A/38708)
- **Staff file**: AF/11 (A/38708)
- **Notes**: Appointed Police Magistrate at Blackall, 1871; granted 15 months leave in 1874 to see his father in Europe

### Aubin, Myrtil

- **Born**: France, 1842
- **Appointed**: Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 5:24)
- **Promoted**: Sub Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/158)
- **Dismissed**: Discipline, 1867 (COL/E1/67/172)
- **Died**: Unknown
- **Staff file**: Unknown
- **Notes**: Naturalised 14 April 1866 at age of 24; in command of detachment at Morinish killing, 1867 (QVP, 1867:983), suspended and dismissed (QPG, Vol 4:59)

### Baker, John Tanner

- **Born**: Unknown
- **Appointed**: 2nd Lieutenant, 1858 (NSW)
- **Promoted**: 1st Lieutenant, 1862 (EXE/E5/62/6 & QGG, Vol 3: 105)
- **Resigned**: 1862 (COL/A36/63/40)
- **Died**: Unknown
- **Staff file**: AF/1960
- **Notes**: Appointed CPS at Pioneer River (Mackay), 1864 (COL/Q2/64/111); appointed Acting Police Magistrate at Mackay 1/1/64 (QVP, 1865:30)

### Barron, Thomas Henry Bowman

- **Born**: Unknown
- **Appointed**: Inspector, 1865 (QGG, Vol 6: 1343 & QPG, Vol 3: 1)
- **Retained**: Inspector, 1869 (COL/E3/69/199)
- **Appointed**: Chief Clerk and Accountant, 1869 (QVP, 1870: 13)
- **Promoted**: Acting Commissioner, 1866, 1871 & 1880 (QGG, Vol 7: 35, QVP, 1872: 15 & COL/E41/80/391)
- **Resigned**: Financial irregularities, 1881 (COL/E45/81/343 & 352)
- **Died**: London, 1882 (SCT/P75/2669)
Bayley, Wallace Paget
Born  NSW, 1838 (Pioneer Families of Australia)
Appointed Cadet, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/6 & QGG, Vol 4: 142)
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/24 & QGG, Vol 4: 381)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2 & QGG, Vol 5: 575)
Resigned 1865 (QGG, Vol 2: 75)
Died 1878 (Pioneer Families of Australia)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of an army officer. Family name sometimes recorded as Bailey or Bayly, and relative Nicholas Paget Bayly at Mudgee, NSW. WP Bayley lived in North Queensland after leaving police

Bayley, William Henry
Born Liverpool, NSW 1834 (Pioneer Families of Australia)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5, No 18: 1)
Resigned Unknown
Died Parramatta, NSW 1864 (Pioneer Families of Australia)
Staff file Unknown
Notes From Taroom; family from NSW, family name sometimes recorded as Bailey or Bayly; mother and father were both children of army officers

Beevor, Arthur
Born Unknown
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Resigned 1866 (EXE/E14/66/50)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes From Warwick; in command of detachment at Calliope killing, 1865 (COL/A73/65/3225)

Beresford, Marcus Gervais
Born Ireland?
### Appointed Cadet, 1882 (POL/4/617)
- Died On patrol at Fullarton River, 1883 (QPG, Vol 20: 61)
- Staff file AF/104 (A/38720)
- Notes Descended from Anglo-Irish military families of Waterford (Beresford, and Power or de La Poer, including Lord Charles William De La Poer Beresford, Baron Beresford, etc) and son of George De La Poer Beresford and Mary Nesbitt; previously in New South Wales Police; killed during attack on patrol at Mackinlay Ranges near Cloncurry; gratuity paid to his widow (A/38720)

### Blakeney, Charles John
- Born Unknown
- Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (EXE/E2/60/45)
- Resigned 1862 (COL/A33/62/2336)
- Reappointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (EXE/E10/64/41)
- Dismissed Discipline, financial issues and neglect of duty, 1866 (EXE/E14/66/67)
- Died 1892 (QBDM)
- Staff file Unknown
- Notes Brother (WT Blakeney) became Registrar-General; married Mary Ann Cameron, 1862, and they had ten children (one died young) (QBDM); two whole detachments deserted from Blakeney at Cardwell in 1865 (COL/A92/66/2008); dismissed for failing to patrol Fort Cooper district, 1867 (COL/A92/67/1549); solicitor at Dalby, 1869; bankrupt 1883 and applied for discharge of bankruptcy when living at Cooktown in 1886. Son (Frank Charles Blakeney) also joined the Native Police in 1898

### Bligh, John O'Connell
- Born England, 1834
- Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1853 (QVP, 1864: 33)
- Promoted Acting Commandant, 1861 (QGG, Vol 2: 340)
- Promoted Commandant, 1861 (QGG, Vol 2: 506)
- Resigned 1864 (QVP, 1865: 29 & 32)
- Died Probable suicide after death of wife, Gympie, 1880 (ADB, Vol 1: 66)
- Staff file Unknown
- Notes Relative of William Bligh, son of Richard and Elizabeth Bligh and nephew of parliamentarian Sir Maurice O'Connell; his parents were cousins and related to Nutting family. Entered NSW public service as Assistant CPS 1853; in command of detachment at Maryborough killing, 1860 (JUS/N1/60/6a). Took up land near Cooloolah, 1860; given sword by residents, 1861; appointed Police Magistrate at Gayndah, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5: 1), as PM at Maryborough (QGG, Vol 8: 719) and as PM at Gympie from 1869 (QGG, Vol 10: 762); married Charlotte Eliza Dick, 1863, she died in 1876 giving birth to their sixth child but the baby (Lily) lived
Breene, Martin
Born 1840, Ireland (A/40255)
Appointed Constable, 1868 (A/40255)
Promoted Senior Constable, 1875 (A/40255)
Promoted Sergeant, 1877 (A/40255)
Promoted Senior Sergeant, 1888 (A/40255)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1894 (QPG, 31/310)
Retired On pension, 1905 (A/40255)
Died South Brisbane, 1928 (A/40255)
Staff file AF/2126 (A/40255)
Notes Married Catherine Sullivan 1871; owned land at Mackay, 1881 (QGG, Vol 28: 43)

Britton, William Thomas
Born Northern Ireland, 1835
Appointed Sergeant, 1862 (A/40255)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1878 (QVP, 1879)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1881 (COL/E46/81/374)
Promoted 2nd Class Inspector, 1887 (COL/E81/87/104)
Retired 1895 (A/40255)
Died London, 1923 (A/40255)
Staff file AF/2125 (A/40255)
Notes Married Emily Swetton, who died with their only child at Bowen; left estate to various Queensland hospitals

Brooke, Jocelyn
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1881 (COL/A342/81/4120)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1882 (POL/4 & QGG, Vol 31: 484)
Resigned Ill-health and discipline, 1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 422)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/96 (A/38719)
Notes Worked with George Bridgman at Mackay Aboriginal Reserve before appointment; sent to Cooktown after being appointed and investigated Aboriginal Reserve at Georgetown, 1888. Submitted resignation after being charged with insubordination, withdrew his notice and then resigned six months later (A/38719)

Brown, Unknown
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable
Promoted Sergeant
Dismissed Discipline, 1864
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Eureka killings, 1864 (JUS/N8/64/147), and dismissed after the bodies of two Aboriginal men were found.

Brown, Charles Frederick
Born Unknown
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1874 (QVP, 1875)
Dismissed Discipline, 1877 (QVP, 1877)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Trained by Wheeler, who told him there were no ‘standing orders, rules or regulations’ (QVP, 1877: 119)

Browne, Henry John
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4: 323)
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4: 381)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5, No 18: 1)
Promoted Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 7: 37 & QGG, Vol 6: 517)
Promoted Western Chief Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/63 & QGG, Vol 8: 188)
Promoted Travelling Inspector, 1872 (QPG, Vol 9: 77)
Retired 1875 (QPG, Vol 12: 64)
Died Roma, 1878 (SCT/P45/1600)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Formerly in 19th Prince of Wales Regiment; married Elizabeth Constance Harding, 1872

Carney, Owen
Born Unknown
Appointed Sergeant, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1: 2)
Dismissed Neglect of duty, 1865 (A/40222)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/1977 (A/40222)
Notes Dismissed after losing horses at Burdekin, 1865.

Carr, Ernest Henry T
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 3: 10)
Resigned 1867 (QPG, Vol 4: 3)
Reappointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1871 (POL/4/525)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>1st Class Sub Inspector, 1879 (COL/E30/79/37 &amp; QGG, Vol 24: 279)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>On super, 1894 (COL/E175/95/76)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Sydney, 1923 (A/40261)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/2139 (A/40261)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Married Fanny Constance Beardmore (from Marlborough), 1875, and they had three children; one son named Ernest Edward Blakeney Carr and another (Ernest Powell Carr) died in 1883 aged three. EH Carr served in the Cairns/Port Douglas area from 1879 to 1885, and tried to shoot his wife at Milton, 1899 (A/40291)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Carr, Frederick William**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>2nd Lieutenant, 1857 (NSW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>1st Lieutenant, 1861 (EXE/E3/61/26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged</td>
<td>Ill health, 1866 (EXE/E13/66/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>In command of detachments at Bendemere killing, 1860 (COL/A3/60/381) and at Tieryboo killing, 1863 (JUS/N5/63/22). Appointed as Magistrate, 1861 (QGG, Vol 2: 351); granted three months sick leave, 1862 (COL/Q2/62/536). Complaint from Henry Coxen about seizing of trooper Macbeth alias Georgey at Bendemere, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/22); suspended for appointing (his relation) as campkeeper, 1864 (EXE/E12/65/41), then on sick leave from 1865 until resignation. Married Maria Carter about 1868 (QBDM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Carroll, John William**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Ireland, 1841</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Acting Sub Inspector, 1873 (QPG, Vol 10: 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>Murder of trooper, 1876 (COL/E19/76/679)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Townsville, 1892 (A/16753/93/4 &amp; QBDM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>In command of detachment at Aramac killing, 1873; charged with murder of trooper and flogging of gin, but case was dismissed by AW Compigne, Police Magistrate (A/5117); married Mary Eugenie Gorman, 1878. Wrote to <em>The Townsville Herald</em> in 1881 saying there were ‘no instructions’ but he thought the Native Police force would be ‘a cheap and effective protection to the Australian pioneer for many years to come’ (COL/A320/81/3821).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cave, William**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
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</thead>
</table>

312
Cheeke, Walter Frederick
Born Unknown
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1876 (POL/4/595)
Resigned 1879
Reappointed 1879
Discharged Reduction of force, 1880 (COL/E35/79/503)
Died Dunwich, 1928? (A/52897)
Staff file AF/343 (A/38756)
Notes Appointed as Govt Agent for Pacific Islander recruiting, 1884; appointed as Brewery Insp, 1887 (QGG, Vol 42: 1324), and retrenched from Customs Dept, 1889. Married Lucy Priddy, 1889; appointed Customs Officer at Hungerford, 1895 (QGG, Vol 63: 848) and officer in charge of brewery, 1898 (QGG, Vol 69: 585); had an interview in 1910 with Commissioner Cahill about Barron having abused his powers and his dismissal for embezzlement; Cheeke sent to Dunwich, 1917 (A/38756)

Clerk, Frederick M
Born New South Wales, 1855
Appointed Constable, 1880 (POL/12M/G2/80/67)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1881 (QVP, 1882)
Dismissed Drunkenness, 1884 (POL/4)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/257 (A/38742)
Notes Trained under Sub Inspector Carr at Barron River, and campkeeper at Georgetown and Cloncurry. Suspended and reprimanded for drinking, 1882, and had dispute with Sub Inspector Alfred Smart, 1883; both were dismissed 1884.

Clohesy, Thomas
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable, 1863 (QVP, 1864: 31)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1864 (QVP, 1865: 29 & 32)
Resigned 1866 (QPG, Vol 4: 3)
Reappointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1867 (QGG, Vol 8: 1019)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/300)
Died Illness, Rockhampton, 1879 (QBDM)
Staff file AF/226 (A/38739)
Notes First appointed at Gayndah, and served in North Queensland from 1867 to 1878. Married Kate Murphy, 1872, and they had three children; she was given a gratuity of £431 after his death (COL/E32/79/193); and wrote again in 1925 asking for more money, which was refused (A/38739)

Collopy, Mathew
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1871 (QPG, Vol 8: 43)
Died Illness, 1880 (QPG, Vol 17: 41)
Staff file Unknown
Notes One child died young; nothing more found

Compigne, Walter
Born England, 1841 (FamilySearch)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 7: 36)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/158)
Resigned Unknown
Died 1884, Gympie
Staff file Unknown
Notes Appointed CPS at Gympie, 1868 (COL/E2/68/52 & QGG, Vol 9: 142); appointed as Warden and as a Magistrate at Gayndah, 1875 (QGG, Vol 16: 1 & 733); married Mary Ann McCowan, 1884 (QBDM)

Cooper, William
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 263)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1893 (COL/E158/93/310 & QGG, Vol 60: 350)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1899 (QGG, Vol 72: 1640)
Resigned 1900 (A/38752 & QGG, Vol 73: 1185)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/320 (A/38752)
Notes Appointed Protector of Aboriginals for Cook district, 1898 and 1899 (QGG, Vol 69: 902 & Vol 71: 224), and cancelled, 1899 (QGG, Vol 72: 400 & 451). Inquiry held in 1899 by Commissioner into the sending of two Aboriginal women from Cooktown to Townsville by Cooper
(A/38752), demoted to 2nd Class Sub Inspector, and transferred to the Gulf.

**Coward, Thomas (Tom)**

- **Born**: England, 1834
- **Appointed**: Acting Sub Inspector, 1864 (QVP, 1878, Vol 2: 297)
- **Promoted**: Sub Inspector, 1865 (POL/4/151 & QGG, Vol 6: 517)
- **Reappointed**: 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1879 (COL/E31/79/95)
- **Resigned**: 1880?
- **Died**: Adelaide, 1920
- **Staff file**: AF/1971 (A/40221)
- **Notes**: Previously in South Australian Police; explorer in Central Australia, 1857 (AHRR); placed in charge of all police in Burke district, 1868 (COL/A106/68/1788) and clashed with Sub Inspector WD Uhr. Suspended at Burketown in 1870, but resumed duties afterwards; enquiry into discipline charges held by Inspector Marlow at Cashmere in 1871 (A/40221) and transferred to Cardwell. Transferred to Mines Dept in 1874 as Warden and Goldfield Commissioner at Palmer River (QGG, Vol 15: 2318) and took part in reprisals after Straher family killing, 1875. Resigned as Goldfields Warden in 1877 (QGG, Vol 21: 1340) and requested transfer back to Native Police in 1877. Married Millicent Deagon (1879), had three children (including Rambler Norman Coward) and probably became a publican in Adelaide (QBDM & AHRR)

**Crompton, Richard Radcliff**

- **Born**: Unknown
- **Appointed**: Acting Sub Inspector, 1870 (QVP, 1871)
- **Resigned**: Unknown
- **Died**: Unknown
- **Staff file**: Unknown
- **Notes**: Described as ‘unable to cope’ and ‘incompetent’ (COL/A170/72/1346)

**Darley, John**

- **Born**: Unknown
- **Appointed**: 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (QGG, Vol 1: 66)
- **Died**: Illness, 1861 (EXE/E4/61/135)
- **Staff file**: Unknown
- **Notes**: Sent to get ‘clothing patterns & equipment’ (rifles) at Sydney, 1860; on sick leave and died, 1861; nothing more found
Day, Maitland Tyrrell
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1873 (QVP, 1874)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1874 (QVP, 1875)
Resigned Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Tam O'Shanter Point killings, 1877
(COL/A249/77/5567)

Deevy, Michael
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable, 1897 (A/38768)
Resigned 1908 (A/38768)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/537 (A/38768)
Notes Campkeeper at Cooktown and Coen; accused by Roth of killing man at
Mapoon, 1900 (A/58927/00/19949); order from Commissioner Parry
Okeden in 1902, that Deevy ‘will not be sent into the bush in charge of
patrols’ (A/49713/02/10390)

Dicken, Charles Shortt
Born 1844
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 57)
Resigned 1867 (QPG, Vol 4: 82)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Appointed CPS at Springsure, 1867, and appointed Police Magistrate at
Springsure, 1872 (QGG, Vol 13: 1045); served as PM at Millchester and
Charters Towers, 1872 (QGG, Vol 16: 995), and at Townsville, 1879
(QGG, Vol 24: 10); appointed Queensland Agent General 1880; was
Lieutenant in 87th Regt, and appointed Captain in Defence Force, 1889

Doherty, Cornelius
Born Ireland, 1847 (A/38774)
Appointed Constable, 1881 (A/38774)
Dismissed Drunkenness, 1891 (QPG, Vol 28: 429)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/461 (A/38774)
Notes Campkeeper at Barron River, Glendhu, Coen, Cooktown, Normanby. In
command of detachment at Springvale killing, 1891 (A/38774/91/8776)
Dorsey, Alexander
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 83)
Resigned Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Appointed Sub Commissioner of Goldfields at Charters Towers, 1873 (QVP, 1873); appointed Goldfield Warden and Sub Commissioner of Goldfields at Palmer River, 1874 (QVP, 1874) and served until 1876; CPS at Clermont, 1879 (QGG, Vol 24: 1136) and at Bowen (1885-88)

Douglas, Alexander Douglas
Born Channel Islands, 1843
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (QPG, Vol 9: 68)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1876 (QPG, Vol 13: 49)
Promoted 2nd Class Inspector, 1884 (QPG, Vol 21: 266)
Promoted 1st Class Inspector, 1893 (COL/E158/93/310 & QGG, Vol 60: 230)
Promoted Northern Senior Inspector, 1898 (QGG, Vol 69: 1356)
Promoted Chief Inspector, 1900 (QGG, Vol 74: 1908)
Promoted Acting Commissioner, 1903 (COL/E238/03/429)
Retired 1905
Died England, 1914
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of army officer and previously in Royal Navy at China. Was in command of detachments at Gladstone and St Lawrence killings, 1872 & 1873 (JUS/N35/72/223 & JUS/N37/73/190). Sent to Cooktown, 1874; charged with murder and investigated after Miriam Vale killings, 1875 (COL/A306/80/296). Married Lucy Street, 1884, and she died 1905; wrote letter “How the Blacks Might be Civilised” in 1892.

Dumaresq, Edward John
Born Tasmania, 1836
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1868 (QPG, Vol 5: 77)
Resigned 1870 (QPG, Vol 7: 6)
Reappointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (POL/4/553)
Dismissed Discipline, 1875 (POL/4/583)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Bloomfield River killings, 1874; most of his troopers deserted soon after (JUS/N41/74/225)

Dunne, John McKay
Born Canada?
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1872 (POL/4/528)
Resigned Unknown
Died Illness, Fort Burke (NSW), 1877 (POL/4/602 & SCT/P58/2024)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Only child, and father (John Dunn) was Reverend in Church of England at New Brunswick. JM Dunne possibly held a commission in the Indian Navy, before joining the Native Police. Appointed as Acting CPS at Cunnamulla (QGG, Vol 11, No 144: 1) and as District Registrar at Paroo, 1875 (QVP, 1875). Died from ‘softening of the brain’, i.e. mental illness (Watson, 1969:19). Never married, his parents died before 1877, and next of kin was (his Aunt) Julia Whitlock, widow of James Whitlock, Customs Collector at St Andrews (SCT/P58/2024)

Durham, Herbert Rowland Pasley
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1884 (QPG, Vol 21: 117)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1885 (COL/E67/85/189 & QGG, Vol 36: 1906)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1894 (COL/E171/94/430 & QGG, Vol 42: 1013)
Promoted 2nd Class Inspector, 1904 (A/38785)
Reduced 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1906 (A/38785 & QGG, Vol 87: 273)
Died Suicide at Hughenden, 1906 (A/38785 and JUS/N365/06/503)
Staff file AF/502 (A/38785)
Notes Married Mary Ann Morse, 1887; at Thargomindah, 1894; appointed Transport Officer for Fourth Contingent to Boer War, 1900 (QGG, Vol 73: 1379); appointment cancelled, 1901 (QGG, Vol 76: 540); served at Boer War 1900-01 (NAA) and awarded Queen’s Medal with clasp.

Dyas, George
Born Ireland
Appointed Constable, 1864 (A/38770)
Promoted Sergeant, 1869?
Promoted Acting Sub Inspector, 1871 (QPG, Vol 8: 43)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1877 (POL/4/599)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1877 (QGG, Vol 21: 97)
Died Killed, near Normanton, 1881 (POL/4/616)
Staff file AF/420 (A/38770)
Notes Previously Irish Constabulary and posted to Gilbert River goldfield. Investigated after Inspector Clohesy laid a ‘serious charge’ in 1874, but no further details found. He married Sarah Moore in 1875, and was killed, possibly by Blacks, in the bush while on transfer to Normanton; a gratuity of £347 for his widow was approved (COL/E42/81/48)
**Earl, Edward Campbell**  
**Born** Bowen, 1874 (Provenance unknown)  
**Appointed** Constable, 1896 (A/38803)  
**Resigned** 1897 (A/38803)  
**Died** Leura, NSW, 1930 (Provenance unknown)  
**Staff file** AF/598 (A/38803)  
**Notes** Eldest son of grazier James Earl of Butcher’s Hill near Cooktown; recommended by Inspector Hervey Fitzgerald (A/38803). Was the campkeeper at Kirtleton (Cardwell) Native Police camp, but resigned after twelve month’s service, prompting Commissioner Parry Okeden to note ‘so much for Fitzgerald’s paragon’ (A/38803/97/3656); became canefarmer, butcher & grazier at Balaclava (Cairns), and Mayor of Cairns in 1906.

**Eglinton, Ernest**  
**Born** Great Britain  
**Appointed** 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1878 (QVP, 1879)  
**Resigned** Unknown  
**Died** Brisbane, 1921  
**Staff file** AF/602 (A/38804)  
**Notes** Arrived in Queensland with his family in 1870; appointed Police Magistrate at Boulia, 1884 (COL/E60/84/99 & QGG, Vol 34: 895); married Anna Maria Alice Bell, 1884; served as Police Magistrate at Birdsville, Port Douglas, and Winton (1884-1918); sister (Blanche) married George Essex Evans; wrote *Pioneering in the North-west* mentioning Beresford, Kaye, Urquhart, Murray, Hill.

**Finch, Henry Zouch**  
**Born** 1841 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 19/7/1875)  
**Appointed** Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2: 75)  
**Promoted** Sub Inspector, 1869 (COL/E4, POL/4/456 & QGG, Vol 10: 1361)  
**Died** Suicide, at Gray’s station on the Flinders, 1875 (POL/4/590 & SCT/P38/1301)  
**Staff file** Unknown  
**Notes** Eldest son of Charles Wray and Elizabeth Finch of Sydney. Suspended and reinstated after unknown offence in 1872. Wanted to leave in 1873, but was allowed to withdraw his resignation by Colonial Secretary Palmer (COL/E11/73/97). In command of detachment at Gilberton killings, 1874. Never married, and his brother (Edward Finch) was a bank manager at Townsville (SCT/P38/1301).

**Fitzgerald, Hervey**  
**Born** Canada, 1844 (A/40291)
Appointed
Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2: 75)
Promoted
Sub Inspector, 1871 (A/40291)
Promoted
Promoted
1st Class Inspector, 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 328 & QGG, Vol 42: 70)
Retired
1905 (A/40291)
Died
Clayfield, 1922 (A/40291)
Staff file
AF/2203 (A/40291)
Notes
Married Clara Laura Maria Gorton, 1874; suspended for whipping an Aboriginal woman, ‘severely reprimanded’ and transferred to Gold Escort, 1876 (COL/E20/76/757); manager of Enoggera Mine, 1877; back in Native Police by late 1879, and in command of Cooktown detachments after death of Mrs Watson at Lizard Island in 1881; remained in North until 1898; wrote to Commissioner in 1896 about ‘attacks of scoundrels’ on Native Police officers, which he thought should be ‘met by an action for criminal libel’

Freudenthal, Rudolph
Born
Austria, 1816
Appointed
Promoted
2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/3)
Appointed
Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Discharged
On pension, 1879 (COL/E34/79/400)
Died
Mackay? 1892
Staff file
AF/527 (A/38789)
Notes
Married Anna Maria Doyle, 1861. Wrote to Attorney General in 1866, saying the Native Police force was ‘driving him to suicide’ (JUS/A7)

Galbraith, Percy Dumas Fead
Born
Unknown
Appointed
Cadet
Promoted
2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1884 (QGG, Vol 34: 1316)
Promoted
2nd Class Inspector, 1900 (QGG, Vol 74: 1672)
Promoted
1st Class Inspector, 1909 (QGG, Vol 74: 957)
Resigned
1910 (A/40283)
Died
Unknown
Staff file
AF/2183 (A/40283)
Notes
Formerly in New Zealand Police; witness at RC into CIB 1899. In command of detachment searching for “the Breelong Blacks” (the Governors) in NSW, 1900. Served at Normanton from 1901 to 1904, and was appointed Aboriginal Protector there, 1901.

Garraway, Roland Walter
Born
England, 1859 (A/40212)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Appointment</th>
<th>Promotion 1</th>
<th>Promotion 2</th>
<th>Promotion 3</th>
<th>Promotion 4</th>
<th>Promotion 5</th>
<th>Promotion 6</th>
<th>Promotion 7</th>
<th>Promotion 8</th>
<th>Promotion 9</th>
<th>Promotion 10</th>
<th>Promotion 11</th>
<th>Promotion 12</th>
<th>Promotion 13</th>
<th>Promotion 14</th>
<th>Promotion 15</th>
<th>Promotion 16</th>
<th>Promotion 17</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Cadet, 1884 (A/40212)</td>
<td>2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1885 (COL/E67/85/189 &amp; QGG, Vol 36: 1906)</td>
<td>3rd Class Sub Inspector, 1898 (QPG, Vol 35: 49 &amp; QGG, Vol 69: 65)</td>
<td>1906 (A/40212 &amp; QGG, Vol 87: 951)</td>
<td>Sub Inspector, 1907 (A/58994/08/2783 &amp; QGG, Vol 88: 1377)</td>
<td>Resigned As 3rd Class Inspector, 1910 (A/40212 &amp; QGG, Vol 95: 1536)</td>
<td>Died 1942 (QBDM)</td>
<td>Staff file AF/1936 (A/40212)</td>
<td>Notes Recommended by Fraser at Barron River and trained by Sub Inspector Ernest H Carr. In command of detachment at Irvinebank killing, 1884, and was the main witness in (defeating) murder charges against Sub Inspector Nichols. Requested (unsuccessfully) a transfer to Queensland Police in 1886, and resigned in 1888 after an Enquiry held into his employment of Senior Constable Michael Portley as a bailiff on land owned by Mr Breen of Port Douglas. Applied for reappointment to Native Police 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1894, 1895 and 1897. Married Jane Mary Thoms, 1890, who went to live at Stanthorpe (A/40212); he became a livery-stable keeper and was bankrupt at Cairns, 1890. Reappointed by Commissioner (1897) and posted to Cairns (1898), and other North Queensland stations from then till 1906. Appointed as Aboriginal Protector at Highbury Native Police camp, 1898 (QPG, Vol 35: 157) and relived of this duty in 1900 (COL/E221/00/566). Later became publican of Grand Hotel at Mackay 1911-13, and at Townsville 1921 (A/44850/21/935).</td>
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Retired On pension, 1916 (A/40508)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/2906 (A/40508)
Notes Campkeeper at Eight Mile; transferred to ordinary police in 1890.

Gilmour, James Merry
Born Scotland?
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/158)
Died Blackall, 1874 (QPG, Vol 11: 76)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Previously station manager at Bindango, Maranoa district (McManus, 1969:11). Appointed by Inspector Wheeler to patrol roads near Roma with seven troopers ‘with a view to arresting bushrangers’ (COL/A76/66/549). Conducted search for Leichhardt remains at Cooper Creek, 1871 (COL/A157/71/1547); involved in dispute with campkeeper Herbert, 1873. Commissioner Seymour noted he ‘should have been suspended’ (A/38830); the cause of his death ten months later is unknown.

Gough, Henry Bloomfield
Born Ireland 1844 (SCT/P330/9419)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 57)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1873 (COL/E11/73/19 & QGG, Vol 19: 56)
Resigned On super, 1895 (COL/E179/95/245)
Died Brisbane, 1896 (SCT/P330/9419)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Military family, brother Benjamin Bloomfield Gough was Recording Clerk at Burketown, 1867; HB Gough never married; appointed CPS at Byerstown, 1877 (QVP, 1878); Police Magistrate at Isisford, 1880 (QPG, Vol 17: 41 & QGG, Vol 26: 167 & 207); served as Police Magistrate at Ingham, Rockhampton, and at Warwick, 1893 (QGG, Vol 63: 442); after his death, father (Percy Gough of Salisbury House, Clonmel County, Tipperary, Ireland) asked that gold watches be given to Mr Seymour and Mr Persse ‘in remembrance of their kindness to him’

Graham, David
Born Ireland, 1840 (A/40286)
Appointed Constable, 1865 (A/40286)
Promoted Sergeant, 1869 (A/40286)
Promoted Senior Sergeant, 1874 (A/40286)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1885 (COL/E67/85/189)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1887 (COL/E81/87/104)
Promoted 2nd Class Inspector, 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 328)
Hansen, Carl Stephen Christian aka Charles
Born Copenhagen, Denmark, 1853
Appointed Constable (A/38828)
Resigned 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 320)
Reappointed Constable, 1894 (QPG, Vol 31: 212)
Died Consumption, 1896 (QPG, Vol 33: 272)
Staff file AF/747 (A/38828)
Notes Stationed at Atherton, Nigger Creek; investigated for discipline and transferred to Mossman River Native Police camp, 1891 (A/38828). Accused by Inspector Lamond of ‘taking civilians on patrol with him’ and ‘talking in a most reckless manner’ (A/38828)

Harris, Joseph Donald
Born Unknown
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/3)
Dismissed Neglect of duty, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/22)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Gayndah killing, 1863 (JUS/N5/63/58), suspended and dismissed for allowing his troopers out of his control (QVP, 1863: 122-129); appointed as line repairer 1874 (QGG, Vol 15: 1117 & QVP, 1875)

Hasenkamp, Henry (Harry)
Born Queensland, 1857
Appointed Constable, 1881 (A/40559)
Promoted 1st Class Constable, 1897 (QPG, Vol 34: 169)
Promoted Acting Sergeant, 1898 (QPG, Vol 35: 436)
Promoted Sergeant
Retired 1918 (A/40559)
Died 1931 (A/40559)
Staff file AF/3079 (A/40559)
Notes Former stockman; married Mary Jane Desmond, 1879; appointed CPS at Cooktown, 1902 (A/40559); wife predeceased him; six daughters

Heenan, J
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable
Resigned Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Campkeeper at Nigger Creek; in command of detachment at Barron River, Wooroora, and Mt Garnet killings, 1898-1903 (A/38047/98/81)

Henry, Alfred
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (EXE/E13/66/5)
Resigned Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Married Emily Caroline Bell, 1869; appointed Police Magistrate at Tambo, 1872 (QVP, 1873); served as Police Magistrate at Normanton, Clermont, Townsville, Tambo (1878-90)

Higgins, John Gilmore
Born 1861 (A/40290)
Appointed Constable, 1885 (A/40290)
Promoted 1st Class Constable, 1897 (QPG, Vol 34: 199)
Retired On pension, 1900 (A/40290)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/2201 (A/40290)
Notes Constable at Atherton, married Catherine Hynes (1890) and officer in charge of Nigger Creek camp in 1898; in command of detachment at Smithfield killing, 1898 (A/38047/98/49). Discharged due to illness, and not expected to survive (A/40290/00/15322)

Hill, Cecil Fulford
Born England
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 3: 10)
Died Killed, near Rannes, May 1865
Staff file Unknown
Notes No inquest into death held, and his brother William claimed, in his book Forty-Five Years Experiences in North Queensland (1907), that ‘as far as the Government cared, he would have been left forgotten, and his death and even the locality unrecorded’; brother Stanley (Clerk in Police Commissioner’s Office at time) told the family and erected a fence round the grave.
Hill, William Richard Onslow
Born Channel Islands, 1844 (JOL, OM91-75)
Appointed Cadet, 1863
Promoted Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (POL/4/211)
Discharged ‘Loss of Office’, 1867 (COL/E2/68/75)
Died 1923
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Paroo River killing, 1867, suspended, and subject of Parliamentary debate. Appointed CPS at Cape River, 1868 (QVP, 1870); CPS at Ravenswood, 1870 (QVP, 1872); married Emily Wilson, 1871; Police Magistrate at Ravenswood, 1879 (COL/E33/79/308); served as Police Magistrate at Georgetown, Cairns, Springvale, Charleville, Clermont (1882-95); Relieving Magistrate, 1894 (QVP, 1895/38). Wrote *Forty-Five Years Experiences in North Queensland* (1907).

Hoole, John
Born 1870, New South Wales (A/38841)
Appointed Constable, 1899 (A/38841)
Resigned 1902 (A/38841)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/834 (A/38841)
Notes In command of detachment at the Ducie River (Cape York Peninsula) killing, 1902 (A/49713), and resigned later that year (A/38841)

Isley, John Bacey
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QVP, 1866)
Reduced 2nd Class Inspector, discipline, 1895 (COL/E177/95/177)
Retired 1895 (QPG, Vol 32: 174)
Died 1916 (A/40294)
Staff file AF/2208 (A/40294)
Notes Married Sarah Jane McTaggart, 1872, she died in 1881 at Port Douglas, so he raised their children alone; served in North Queensland from 1877 until 1886; suspended and reprimanded for ‘want of judgement’ in 1879 (COL/E30/79/78); reduced at retirement in 1895 for ‘misconduct’

Jardine, Frank Lascalles
Born Unknown
Appointed Inspector, 1868 (QGG, Vol 9: 334 & QVP, 1870)
Resigned Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Father (John) was appointed CPS and Police Magistrate at Somerset, 1868 (QVP, 1870). Frank appointed as CPS, Police Magistrate and Inspector at Somerset, 1868 (QVP, 1870:13-17). Reported he had shot four troopers in 1871, but three were found in a canoe at sea trying to escape one month later (COL/A163/71/2915). Married Sana Solia, and their sons were involved in a violent clash, 1905 (A/58927/05/13941 & 20551)

Johnson, Ralph Cholmondeley Godschall
Born London, 1838 (Prov. unknown)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Resigned Discipline, 1864 (EXE/E10/64/55)
Died Illness, Woogaroo, 1884 (SCT/P95/3323)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Father was assistant clerk in Legislative Assembly from 1860 until 1876; in command of detachment at Dawson River killing, 1862, and subject to complaint by Frederick Walker (COL/A39/62/991, COL/A39/63/993 & JUS/A4/63/1/4). Allowed to “resign” after a trooper was killed during a ‘fight’ near Mr Tom’s station in the Warrego district, 1864, without an officer being present (COL/A59/63/2727). Appointed as Recording Clerk in 1865, and as Land Agent at Bowen 1869 (QVP, 1870); became surveyor and surveyed Townsville & Cooktown. Married Lady Margaret Reid, at Bowen in 1870: she was the sister of newspaper owner JS Reid. Bankrupt at Bowen (1871 & 1876); served one month in prison for being of unsound mind, 1882, and was admitted to Woogaroo Asylum, 1884 with dementia (JUS/N102/84/109)

Johnstone, Robert Arthur
Born Tasmania, 1843 (ADB, Vol 4: 486)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1867 (QPG, Vol 4: 24)
Resigned 1869 (QPG, Vol 6: 33)
Reappointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1871 (QVP, 1873)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1873 (COL/E11/73/97 & QGG, Vol 14: 838)
Resigned 1880 (A/40069)
Died Toowong, 1906 (ADB, Vol 4: 487)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Educated in Scotland; became manager of Apis Downs; married Maria Ann Gibson, 1867; became manager of Bellenden Plains sugar plantation in 1868. Presented with testimonial by Cardwell residents after Maria search and reprisals; in charge of detachment at Herbert River killings,
1872, 1874 & 1876 (COL/A170/72/1296, COL/A202/74/2615 & JUS/A17). Appointed Police Magistrate at Winton, 1881 (QGG, Vol 28: 385); served as Police Magistrate at Ingham, Bundaberg, Howard & Tiaro (1882-87); author of “Spinifex and Wattle” published in The Queenslander from 1903 to 1905

Jones, Walter
Born England, 1841 (JUS/N214/93/340)
Appointed Cadet, 1880 (A/38846)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1882 (COL/E50/82/33 & QGG, Vol 31: 1882)
Dismissed Drunkenness, 1884 (COL/E60/84/129)
Died Suicide, Sandgate, 1893 (JUS/N214/93/340 and A/38846)
Staff file AF/848 (A/38846)
Notes Former soldier in Indian army, and campkeeper at Barron River, Dunrobin, and Norman River. Became Customs Clerk at Brisbane, friend of George Essex Evans, and committed suicide by drowning at Sandgate (A/38846)

Judge, Thomas
Born Great Britain?
Appointed Constable, 1863 (A/38845)
Promoted Senior Sergeant (A/38845)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1874 (QVP, 1875)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1876 (QGG, Vol 18: 690)
Died Winton, 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 26)
Staff file AF/844 (A/38845)
Notes Gratuity of £350 paid to widow Margaret (COL/E139/92/100)

Kaye, Henry P
Born England, c.1843 (JUS/N77/81/259)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1876 (QPG, Vol 13: 13)
Died Killed on patrol at Woolgar, 1881 (A/38864 & JUS/N77/81/259)
Staff file AF/955 (A/38864)
Notes Son of officer in Indian Army; wrote to AW Howitt re Aboriginal message sticks, 1881 (A/38864); headstone organised by ‘old schoolfellow’ (and surveyor) CT Bedford in 1882 (A/38864)

Kennedy, Edward Briggs
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 3: 10)
Resigned 1865 (QPG, Vol 3: 10)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
<th>Resigned</th>
<th>Died</th>
<th>Staff file</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
father was Sub Inspector at Palmer River and Eyre’s Creek, and JK Little was ‘reared in a Native Police camp’; his brother Sydney Little also served in the police. Served at Boer War (1901-02); married Nora May Tracey 1902 (QBDM). Accused (by Protector Walter Roth in 1902) of flogging Aboriginal people at Lawn Hill before his departure (A/40052/02/1104 & 12786); Roth then withdrew his complaint (A/40052/02/16045); stationed at Coen and Eight Mile (1902-4). His article, “On Patrol with the Native Police”, was published in 1939 and he was writing to The Bulletin in 1953.

### Little, Robert Kyle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Ireland, 1841 (A/40048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector</td>
<td>1875 (A/40048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged</td>
<td>Reduction in force, 1879 (A/40048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reappointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector</td>
<td>1882 (QPG, Vol 19: 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector</td>
<td>1884 (QGG, Vol 35: 756)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Sunstroke, at Birdsville, 1889 (SCT/P172/5628)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/1050 (A/40048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Previously captain in 97th and 22nd Regiments; suspended (1878) and reinstated; dismissed in 1879 for ‘financial irregularities’ involving Acting Commissioner Barron (A/40048). Applied for reappointment in Native Police, 1879, 1880 and 1881, and his wife Dora (nee Irwin) also wrote. Reappointed (1882), and in command of detachment at Blackall killings, 1885 (COL/A457/85/1598). Died in middle of ‘very hot’ January 1889.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lorigan, Daniel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed Constable</td>
<td>1879 (A/40306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1899 (A/40306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Cooktown, 1924 (A/40306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/2230 (A/40306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Campkeeper at Dunrobin, Georgetown, Carl Creek, Normanton, Patterson, Mossman and Coen. In command of detachment at Kimberley killing, 1887 (COL/A531/88/105); nothing more found.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Margetts, Frederick George

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>London, 1841?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed Cadet</td>
<td>1882 (A/40056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector</td>
<td>1883 (QPG, Vol 21: 66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned Personal reasons</td>
<td>1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 302)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Warrnambool (Victoria), 1929 (A/40056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/1104 (A/40056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Recommended by Archdeacon Matthews. Speared in leg at Coen, 1888. Wrote to government in 1894 offering his views on the Aborigines and the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Native Police (COL/139/94/13850). Became a canegrower at Ayr, and was a witness at the Sugar RC, 1916

**Marlow, John**

**Born**: Unknown  
**Appointed**: 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (EXE/E2/60/45)  
**Promoted**: 1st Lieutenant, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4: 142)  
**Appointed**: Inspector, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5, No 18: 1)  
**Promoted**: Chief Inspector, 1866 (QGG, Vol 7: 1301)  
**Resigned**: 1874 (COL/E13/74/101)  
**Died**: Unknown  
**Staff file**: Unknown  
**Notes**: Appointed as Magistrate, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4: 155); married Martha Phoebe Bonter (date unknown); declined promotion as Western Chief Inspector, 1866 (COL/E1/67/63); proposed island detention centres for Aboriginal women and children in 1867; retired to Brisbane and unsuccessfully asked to be reappointed to the Public Service in 1881

**Marrett, Charles Beauchamp**

**Born**: Madras, India (A/40310)  
**Appointed**: 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1877 (QPG, Vol 14: 50)  
**Promoted**: 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1885 (QGG, Vol 36: 881)  
**Promoted**: 2nd Class Inspector, 1898 (QPG, Vol 35: 96)  
**Promoted**: 1st Class Inspector, 1907 (QGG, Vol 88: 1334)  
**Retired**: 1910 (A/40310)  
**Died**: Sydney, 1936 (A/40310)  
**Staff file**: AF/2239 (A/40310)  
**Notes**: Appointed at Herbert River; married Eugeniee Margaret Felise Haymet at Cooktown, 1881 (A/40310); served at Cooktown from 1884 until 1898; his comments on the Native Police in 1896 were that ‘the system of Constables in charge of Native Police stations has seen the efficiency & the tone of the Force steadily diminish’ (HOM/J22/07/967)

**Matveieff, Alexey Froloff**

**Born**: Russia, 1833?  
**Appointed**: 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (EXE/D25/60/2 & QGG, Vol 1: 22 & 26)  
**Resigned**: 1861 (EXE/E3/61/26)  
**Died**: 1895 (QBDM)  
**Staff file**: Unknown  
**Notes**: Resigned from Native Police in hope of appointment as Stationmaster at Warwick; married Anna Maria West, 1861, she died 1863, and he married Elizabeth Pring, 1865; appointed Telegraph Station Master at Ipswich, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4: 227); after serving as Chief Station Master at
Brisbane, appointed Assistant Supt of Telegraphs, 1869 (QGG, Vol 10: 518); appointed as JP, 1870 (A/4834/455); witness at Colonial Stores RC 1888; appointed Supt of Electric Telegraphs, 1880 (QGG, Vol 27: 1210) and retired from Public Service, 1892

McCarthy, Denis
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1870 (QVP, 1871)
Died 1872 (QPG, Vol 10: 8)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Suspended and reinstated for unknown charges, 1872; the cause of his death (six months later) is unknown.

McNeil, Duncan Alexander
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1889 (QPG, Vol 27: 32)
Promoted Sub Inspector
Resigned 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 26)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/1331 (A/40097)
Notes Formerly in New Guinea Police, and possibly related Commissioner Seymour; married Seymour’s daughter (Margaret) in 1887. Appointed as Lieutenant in Defence Force (1888) and as Governor’s aide-de-camp, 1888 (QGG, Vol 45: 710 & 847; granted twelve months sick leave (malaria) in 1891

Macneill, Reginald
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1873 (QPG, Vol 11: 23)
Resigned 1879 (POL/4/612)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Entire detachment deserted at Cape River, 1876; shot trooper Jackey dead, 1877 (JUS/N52/77/65); nothing more found.

Moorhead, William
Born Ireland
Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1857 (NSW)
Resigned 1863 (COL/Q2/63/479)
Died Roma, 1865 (SCT/P7/305)
Staff file Unknown
Notes

In command of detachment at Fairfield killings, 1861 (COL/A24/62/69) and at reprisals after Cullin-la-ring in 1862 (COL/A26/62/823); granted three months sick leave after fall from horse, 1863; appointed CPS at Roma, 1863 (QGG, Vol 4, No 51: 1) and Registrar of Western District Court, 1865 (QGG, Vol 6: 1150); married Mary Ann Cochrane

Morisset, Robert Wilfred
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (QPG, Vol 9: 77)
Discharged Reduction of force, 1879 (A/40069)
Reappointed Sub Inspector, 1880 (A/40069)
Resigned Unknown
Died Normanton, 1911 (A/40069)
Staff file AF/1174 (A/40069)
Notes Appointed Police Magistrate at Cloncurry, 1882 (QGG, Vol 30: 1383 & QVP, 1883); served as Police Magistrate at Hughenden, Winton, Tambo, Ingham and Normanton (1883-1911); services ‘dispensed with’, 1893 and 1902 (QGG, Vol 59: 932 & Vol 78: 1381)

Morisset, Aulaire Liddiard
Born Bathurst, 1841 (NSW BDM)
Appointed Cadet, 1863 (EXE/E8/63/37 & QGG, Vol 4: 611)
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E8/63/41 & QGG, Vol 4: 829)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Promoted Inspector, 1871 (QPG, Vol 8: 35)
Retired On super, 1893 (A/40054)
Died Townsville, 1909 (A/40054)
Staff file AF/1074 (A/40054)
Notes Son of Lt Col JT Morisset of the 48th Regiment; in command of detachment at Normanby killing, 1874 (COL/A194/74/701); appointed Inspector and Police Magistrate at Burketown, 1871 (QPG, Vol 8: 35); served as Police Magistrate at Cloncurry (1871-73). Submitted resignation (financial & electoral roll irregularities, and striking Inspector Isley) in 1874, but resignation withdrawn due to ‘length of service and extenuating circumstances’ (A/40054); married Ann Macarthur, 1877; granted six months leave to work as Crown Lands Commissioner, 1883 (COL/E56/83/136); charged with financial irregularities and other offences at Rockhampton in 1889, and transferred to Roma(A/40054)

Morisset, Edric Norfolk Vaux
Born Norfolk Island, 1830 (NSW BDM)
Appointed Lt, 1853?
Promoted Commandant, 1857 (NSWGG)

332
Appointed Inspector General, 1860 (QGG, Vol 1: 26)
Resigned 1861 (EXE/E3/61/26)
Died NSW, 1887 (NSW BDM)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Eldest son of James Morisset, Supt at Norfolk Island (1829-34) and Lt Col of the 48th Regiment and Emily Vaux; married Eliza Lawson at Parramatta, 1860; sister Laura married grazier Philip Sellheim; appointed Supt of Police at Bathurst, NSW

Morisset, Rudolph Roxburgh
Born Bathurst, 1838 (NSW BDM)
Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (QGG, Vol 1: 259)
Promoted 1st Lieutenant, 1862 (QGG, Vol 3: 740)
Appointed Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1: 2)
Resigned 1864 (EXE/E10/64/35)
Died Deniliquin, 1887 (NSW BDM)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of Lieutenant Colonel JT Morisset of the 48th Regiment; married Margaret Clarke at NSW, 1857; in command of detachment at Manumbar killings, 1861 (COL/R1/61/199); punch-up with newspaper editor, 1863; at Floraville in 1870; appointed PM at Hill End, NSW 1881 (QGG, Vol 28: 64)

Mosman, Archibald Frederick
Born Sydney?
Appointed Cadet, 1884 (A/40056)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1884 (COL/E62/84/261)
Resigned 1890 (QPG, Vol 27: 247)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/1093 (A/40056)
Notes Asked for appointment to the Native Police in 1883, giving details of his Western Queensland experience and naming Inspector Murray at Blackall as a referee (A/40056). Asked, unsuccessfully, to withdraw his resignation in 1890 (A/40056); said in 1903 he had been living with an Aboriginal woman for ‘over ten years’ and they had three children (A/58750)

Murray, Frederick J
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 5: 24)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 22)
Promoted 1st Class Inspector, 1887 (COL/E81/87/104 & QGG, Vol 40: 987)
Reduced 2nd Class Inspector, bankrupt, 1895 (COL/E181/95/371)
**Retired**
- On pension, 1895 (QPG, Vol 32: 294)

**Died**
- Sydney, 1915 (A/40311)

**Staff file**
- AF/2242 (A/40311)

**Notes**
- Served in North Queensland from 1886 until 1891; found guilty of landing tobacco at Cooktown without paying excise, 1891 (A/40311); suspended and reduced for ‘monetary embarrassments’ at retirement in 1895

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**Murray, George Poulney Malcolm**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>2nd Lieutenant, 1857 (NSW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>1st Lieutenant (EXE/E5/62/2 &amp; QGG, Vol 3: 42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Northern Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 1, No 6: 31 &amp; QGG, Vol 6: 87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Chief Inspector, 1866 (QGG, Vol 7: 1301)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1877?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**
- Appointed to ‘discharge the duties of Police Magistrate at Springsure’, 1867 (QGG, Vol 8: 963); married Jane Jardine; served as Police Magistrate at Clermont & Copperfield, Warwick, Toowoomba, South Brisbane, Brisbane (1872-98); Senior Police Magistrate, 1898-?; witness at Liquor RC 1901

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**Murray, John**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Scotland, 1827 (Provenance unknown)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Lieutenant, 1852 (New South Wales, 52/1297)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1854 (New South Wales, 54/8218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reappointed</td>
<td>Lieutenant, 1855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1862 (COL/A25/62/295)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reappointed</td>
<td>Recruiting Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1: 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1870 (QPG, Vol 7: 103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Kirtleton, 1876 (Provenance unknown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**
- Son of grazier James and Wilhelmina Murray of Mt Lambie, NSW; married Rachel Little (daughter of John Little of Rosedale station, Wide Bay), 1858 (ADB, p131); two sons and five daughters (one married Walsh, another Collins and another Unsworth); forced to resign on account of drinking, 1862; travelled to Southern NSW and Victoria recruiting in 1864-65; to North Queensland 1865; allowed to resign in 1870 after ‘certain charges’ were laid against him; family returned to Rosedale after his death
Murray, Robert
Born Scotland, 1850 (A/40314)
Appointed Constable, 1889 (A/40314)
Resigned 1904 (A/40314)
Died Sydney, 1918 (A/40314)
Staff file AF/2251 (A/40314)
Notes Recommended by GPM Murray (A/40314); campkeeper at Highbury, Lynd, Maytown, Eight Mile, Musgrave, Coen, Laura and Palmer River; in charge of Highbury Native Police camp and patrols (1897-1900)

Nantes, Frederick S
Born 1840?
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (POL/4/180)
Discharged Services dispensed with, 1867
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Appointed District Registrar at Mackay (1866), and as Acting CPS at Banana 1868 (QGG, Vol 9: 370) and at Mackay 1868 (QGG, Vol 9: 508), and as Land Agent at Mackay 1869 (QVP, 1870). Dismissed from Public Service, 1871 (QGG, Vol 12: 62).

Nichols, William Austin
Born London, 1850?
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1875 (QPG, Vol 13: 13)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1882 (COL/E50/82/33 & QGG, Vol 31: 83)
Dismissed 1884 (COL/E64/84/416)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/1367 (A/40104)
Notes In command of detachment at Woolgar killings (after death of Sub Inspector Kaye), 1881 (JUS/N77/81/259). Dismissed and charged with murder after Irvinebank killings, 1884 (JUS/N110/84/511), but the case was dropped. Nichols applied (unsuccessfully) for reappointment to the Native Police in 1885 (COL/A419/85/2331). He was arrested for false pretences in 1892 (QPG, Vol 29: 274 & 360), and applied for a pension in 1921 (A/40104)

Nicholson, Henry John
Born England
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1869 (QPG, Vol 6: 68)
Dismissed Inefficiency, 1872 (COL/A168/72/806)
Died Nebo, 1880 (SCT/P65/2256)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Married, wife predeceased him (SCT/P65/2256); nothing more found
Nowlan, George Denis Bowman
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1868 (POL/4/348)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1876 (QPG, Vol 13: 49 & QGG, Vol 18: 690)
Dismissed Drunkenness, 1882 (COL/E47/82/2 & QGG, Vol 30: 9)
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/1375 (A/40105)
Notes Married Margaret Mary Kelly. Appointed as Acting CPS at Cunnamulla, 1869 (COL/E4/69/258). In command of detachment at reprisals after the Louisa Maria shipwreck in North Queensland, 1878, and at Mossman River killings, 1879 (and others). Transferred to Birdsville, 1880, after reported as physically unfit for “walking” duties in the North.

Nutting, Charles Marshall
Born England, 1850?
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (COL/E10/72/208)
Resigned 1873 (QPG, Vol 10: 90)
Died Amby near Roma, 1874 (SCT/P32/1115)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of George Nutting and Mary Bligh; appointed PM at Cunnamulla, 1873 (QPG, Vol 10: 90); bachelor (SCT/P32/1115); nothing more found

Nutting, John Bligh
Born Unknown
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E8/63/29 & QGG, Vol 4: 458)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1: 2)
Promoted Acting Inspector, 1865
Promoted Inspector, 1867 (COL/E1/67/300 & QGG, Vol 8: 1019)
Retired On pension, 1878 (COL/E28/78/419)
Died Harrisville, 1927 (A/40326)
Staff file AF/2275 (A/40326)
Notes Appointed Acting Police Magistrate at Cunnamulla, 1871 (QGG, Vol 12: 947); became grazier at Normanby station, Fassifern; witness at Railway RC 1895 and at Meat RC 1913; married Charlotte Lucy O’Connell

O’Connor, Stanhope
Born Ireland, 1850 (A/40117)
Appointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1875 (POL/4/581)
Resigned 1880 (QPG, Vol 17: 176)
Died Melbourne, 1908 (A/40117)
Staff file AF/1449 (A/40117)
Notes Son of British Army officer (A/40117). In command of detachment at
killing near Cooktown, 1879; paid by Victorian Government during Kelly
Gang pursuit, 1879-80 (A/40117); discharged from bankruptcy at Lower
Laura 1881 after selling all his property (QGG, Vol 28: 91)

Ordish, Lionel William Charles
Born Victoria, 1865 (A/40212)
Appointed Constable, 1890 (A/40212)
Promoted First Class Constable, 1904
Promoted Acting Sergeant, 1913 (A/40414)
Retired Unknown
Died Unknown
Staff file AF/2562 (A/40212)
Notes Served for four years in Victorian Artillery Corps; officer in charge at
Turn Off Lagoon in 1899 (QS, 39/2, file 278S, box 202); Acting CPS at
Cardwell, 1913 (QGG, Vol 100: 1538)

Owen, Bedell Stanford
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/9)
Promoted 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/24 & QGG, Vol 4: 381)
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5, No 18: 1)
Resigned Ill health, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 12)
Died 1885
Staff file Unknown
Notes Unsuccessfully requested a transfer from Native Police to be a CPS, 1864
(COL/A57/64/2081); appointed as Alderman at Roma, 1870 (QGG, Vol
11: 459)

Parry-Okeden, William E
Born Snowy River, 1840 (ADB, p147)
Appointed Inspector of Border Patrol
Appointed Under Colonial Secretary, 1889 (COL/E109/89/344 & QGG, Vol 97:
1016)
Appointed Acting Commissioner, 1892 (COL/E137/92/21 & QGG, Vol 105: 224)
Appointed Commissioner, 1895 (COL/E178/95/222 & QGG, Vol 113: 1530)
Appointed Protector of Aboriginals for Colony, 1898 (QGG, Vol 69: 66)
Retired 1905 (A/45223)
Died Brisbane, 1926 (ADB, p148)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Father David was owner of Mt Debatable station, Gayndah, 1867; Police
Magistrate at Cunnamulla (1872-75), Charleville (1873-81) and Gayndah
Paschen, Otto Oscar
Born Germany, 1835?
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 7: 37)
Dismissed Financial irregularities, 1867 (COL/E1/67/31)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Formerly in Victorian police and ‘had good references (GOV/25/66/61). In command of detachment at ‘numerous collisions’ in Dawson district, 1865, but Commissioner Seymour believed Paschen had ‘very much exaggerated the number’. Former Colonial Secretary Herbert said Paschen had been ordered to ‘punish the murderers of Hill’ and ‘performed to the full satisfaction of the colonists and of the Government’ (GOV/25)

Patrick, Alfred March Gorsed
Born Unknown
Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1860 (QGG, Vol 1: 259)
Resigned Ill health, 1862 (EXE/E6/62/30)
Died 1870 (QBDM)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Subject of complaint by Frederick Walker after Planet Creek killings, 1861 (QVP, 1861). Went to Rockhampton for ‘medical help’ after Cullin-la-ingo (COL/A22/61/2790) and granted sick leave soon after. Apparently injured by a shotgun ‘while on duty’, he was appointed as a supernumerary in the Customs Office in 1862 (which he said was ‘irksome’) and as a 2nd Class Clerk in the Colonial Secretary’s Office, 1863 (COL/R2/63/92). In 1864, a complaint was laid that he had benefited from the will of Joseph Fleming and he resigned from the Public Service, but was appointed as CPS at Woogaroo in 1866 (QGG, Vol 7: 298 & QVP, 1870:14). He is said to have run a ‘bachelor’s quarters’ at “Clayton” at Patrick Lane, Milton (which was later owned by JB Dixon and JS Scott), but his will showed he owned a farm & cottage at Six Mile Bridge on Ipswich Road (left to Joseph Dixon) and a cottage at Petrie Bight (QGG, Vol 11: 762)
Phibbs, Charles Hamilton
Born Ireland (SCT/P3/169)
Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1857 (NSW)
Died Drowning, at Rockhampton, 1861 (JUS/N3/61/73)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Bachelor; previously employed by Sandeman at Wide Bay; recommended by Commandant Morisset; nothing more found

Poingdestre, Lyndon John Agnew
Born Channel Islands, 1840 (A/40323 & North Queensland Pioneers: 71)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 7: 36)
Discharged Services dispensed with, 1868 (A/40323)
Reappointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1875 (QPG, Vol 12: 87)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1882 (COL/E47/82/61 & QGG, Vol 30: 429)
Retired On super, 1897 (QPG, Vol 34: 267)
Died South Brisbane, 1924 (A/40323)
Staff file AF/2267 (A/40323)
Notes Possibly related to Dumaresq family; recommended by his brother-in-law Clarendon Stuart and ‘well known’ to Inspector John Marlow (A/40323). Trained by Wheeler, reappointed by Barron (in Seymour’s absence,) in 1875 (POL/4/590), and in command of detachment at Creen Creek killing, 1876. Involved in a bitter dispute with Sub Inspector Armit, and admitted that he had ‘co-habited’ with an Aboriginal woman, 1882, before being placed in command of Norman River camp (A/40323). At Norman River killing in 1885, and in command of detachment at Kimberley killing, 1887 (JUS/N150/87/551). Reported by Inspector Lamond as living with three Aboriginal women at Highbury camp in 1897, one for fourteen years and another for ten years, and a number of his (possibly four) children (A/40323). Charlie Poingdestre was an Aboriginal tracker at Cooktown in 1909 (A/44852/09/3483). Sister Laura married AC Macmillan in 1867.

Portley, Michael
Born 1857 (ADB, p185)
Appointed Constable, 1881 (A/40521)
Resigned 1888 (QPG, Vol 25: 229)
Reappointed Constable, 1888 (A/40521)
Promoted Senior Constable, 1888 (QPG, Vol 25: 228)
Promoted Sergeant, 1897 (A/40521)
Promoted Senior Sergeant, 1906 (A/40521)
Promoted 3rd Class Sub Inspector, 1910 (A/40521 & QGG, Vol 95: 1612)
Retired On pension, 1916 (A/40521)
Died Brisbane, 1927 (A/40521)
Staff file: AF/2944 (A/40521)
Notes: In charge of Mossman River Native Police camp (1887-90); appointed CPS at Blackall, 1895 (QPG, Vol 32: 81 & QGG, Vol 63: 365)

Powell, Frederick Taylor
Born: Unknown
Appointed: 2nd Lt, 1856 (NSW)
Promoted: 1st Lieutenant, 1860 (EXE/E2/60/45)
Discharged: 1861 (COL/Q1/61/1316)
Reappointed: 1861 (EXE/E4/61/52)
Resigned: 1862 (EXE/E6/62/52)
Died: Unknown
Staff file: Unknown
Notes: At Port Denison with Dalrymple, 1860. Later appointed as coxswain.

Price, George F
Born: Unknown
Promoted: 2nd Lieutenant, 1863 (EXE/E7/63/24 & QGG, Vol 4: 381)
Appointed: Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Resigned: 1867?
Died: Unknown
Staff file: Unknown
Notes: Ordered to be trained by Wheeler at Sandgate, but joined at Port Denison. Married Jane Strain, 1866, and complained about ‘arduous service’; was appointed CPS at Nebo, 1868 (QGG, Vol 9: 320 & QVP, 1870)

Richardson, Marmaduke N
Born: Armagh, Ireland?
Dismissed: Discipline, 1863 (EXE/E8/63/41)
Died: Unknown
Staff file: Unknown
Notes: From Wide Bay. In command of detachment at Yatton killing, 1863 (COL/A44/63/2231) and dismissed for shooting a trooper while drunk.

Salmond, Alexander H
Born: Unknown
Appointed: Acting Sub Inspector, 1870 (QPG, Vol 7: 3)
Resigned: 1870 (POL/4/475)
Reappointed: Acting Sub Inspector, 1871 (POL/4/521)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>Promoted</th>
<th>Retired</th>
<th>Died</th>
<th>Staff file</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savage, Charles Douglas</td>
<td>Scotland, 1855</td>
<td>Constable, 1876</td>
<td>Senior Constable, 1883</td>
<td>Sergeant, 1885</td>
<td>Acting Sub Inspector, 1889</td>
<td>2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1891</td>
<td>1st Class Sub Inspector, 1899</td>
<td>2nd Class Inspector, 1905</td>
<td>On pension, 1910</td>
<td>Clayfield, 1931</td>
<td>AF/2277 (A/40327)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott, James Hamilton</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Acting Sub Inspector, 1868</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Townsville, 1891</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Married Emily Helena Glissan, 1871; Police Magistrate at Thargomindah, 1883 (QGG, Vol 33: 942), Muttaburra (1886-88), St George, 1888 (QGG, Vol 44: 942) and Townsville (1891); owned “Clayton” at Patrick Lane, Toowong; no more found</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scriven, Ernest George Edward</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Cadet, 1881</td>
<td>1882 (POL/4/620)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>AF/4018 (A/40884)</td>
<td>Applied (unsuccessfully) for reappointment to Native Police in 1883, and was appointed Clerk in Agriculture Dept, 1888 (QGG, Vol 43: 101), and Chief Clerk of the Agriculture Dept in 1889 (QGG, Vol 48: 870). Was a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
witness at Works Dept RC 1900, and wrote on Straher murders in Black
(1930) *North Queensland Pioneers*

**Seymour, David Thompson**
Born  Ireland, 1831 (Burke’s Peerage, 1904 & A/47922)
Appointed Acting private Secretary and aide-de-camp to Governor, 1861 (QGG, Vol 2: 285)
Appointed Acting Commissioner, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5: 1)
Appointed Commissioner, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1: 2 & QGG, Vol 5: 424)
Retired  1895 (QPG, Vol 32: 204)
Died  London, 1916 (A/47922)
Staff file  AF/2291 (A/47922)
Notes  Related to Sheridan, Lawrence, Persse and Joyce families, and educated at Ennis College, Clare. Served as Lieutenant in 12th (Suffolk) Regiment and, passionate horse racing and turf club supporter. Married Caroline Matilda Brown (daughter of Sheriff Anthony Brown) in 1864, and they had two sons (both died young) and four daughters before Caroline died in 1884. Their oldest daughter Margaret married (ex-Sub Inspector) Duncan McNeil in 1887 after her sister Eleanor married (the future) General Sir Charles Hamilton Des Voeux one week before, and a third sister (Laura Barron) married Boyd Morehead, MLA in 1895. After four years as a widower, David Seymour married his second wife (Sara Stevenson of Melbourne) in 1888, and their son (David de Burgh) was born in 1889, but he died in 1898; youngest daughter Violet’s engagement to Percy Dobson of Hobart was announced in the same year. Seymour was bankrupt (Mt Morgan mining shares) in 1892, and had shares in a North Queensland rubber plantation in the 1890’s. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the first Senate election in 1901. He remained in Queensland for at least ten years after retirement, and his hobby was railway “gadget” inventions.

**Seymour, Edward B**
Born  Unknown
Appointed  Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 5: 24)
Discharged  Abolition of position, 1868 (COL/E2/68/60)
Died  1894? (QBDM)
Staff file  Unknown
Notes  Not related to Commissioner Seymour. Killed an Aboriginal woman at Banana, 1866 (JUS/N12/66/87); nothing more found

**Shairp, Charles Norman**
Born  England, 1848 (SCT/P121/4201)
Appointed  Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (POL/4/169)
Resigned  1869 (POL/4/435)

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Reappointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (POL/4/547)
Dismissed 1872 (POL/4/552)
Died Townsville, 1884 (SCT/P121/4201)
Staff file Unknown
Notes In command of detachment at Herbert River killing, 1872
(JUS/N35/72/218); became banker’s clerk at Townsville; bachelor

Sharpe, Robert Barrington
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1876 (QVP, 1877)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1883 (QPG, Vol 21: 66)
Died Illness?, at Eyres Creek (Birdsville), 1886 (SCT/P117/4090)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Bachelor; only relative was (uncle) Henry Campbell, surveyor of
Bundaberg (SCT/P177/4090); nothing more found

Sharpe, William
Born Unknown
Appointed Cadet, 1862 (QGG, Vol 3: 105)
Resigned 1863 (COL/A28/63/511)
Died Unknown
Staff file Unknown
Notes Resigned after one year’s service in the Dawson and Port Curtis districts.

Smart, Alfred
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1873 (POL/4/561)
Resigned 1877 (QPG, Vol 14: 74)
Reappointed 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1883 (QGG, Vol 32: 1446)
Discharged Services dispensed with, 1884 (COL/E61/84/161)
Died 1890 (A/40154)
Staff file AF/1690 (A/40154)
Notes In command of detachment at Cooloolah killing, 1883 (A/40154) and had
dispute with campkeeper Frederick Clerk, 1883 (A/38742). Discharged for
drunkenness, and went to live at Dalgolly station, near Cloncurry.
Applied for appointment as ‘campkeeper, rabbit inspector or anything’ in
1888, saying he had cured himself of “nipping” (A/40154/88/3200).

Smith, Edward Patrick Charles
Born Ireland, 1864 (A/40335)
Appointed Constable, 1888 (A/40335)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Appointment Details</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Staff File</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoted 1st Class Constable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Constable, 1897 (QPG, Vol 34: 426)</td>
<td>Died</td>
<td>AF/2303</td>
<td>Married Norah Donnelly, 1886; reduced in rank for drinking and fighting, 1900. In charge of Native Police at Turn Off Lagoon station from 1905 to 1911; committed suicide at Turn Off Lagoon in 1911 after being advised of his impending transfer (A/40335/11/25001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, George Inkerman</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Constable, 1884 (A/40158)</td>
<td>Died</td>
<td>AF/1699</td>
<td>Formerly Goldfield Warden’s constable at Maytown; in charge of Coen Native Police camp 1894-1901; then transferred to Cardwell (1898) and appointed as Acting CPS (QGG, Vol 69: 902); then to Turn Off Lagoon station in 1901 (A/40158)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart, John</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Acting Sub Inspector, 1869 (QPG, Vol 6: 48)</td>
<td>Died</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promoted Travelling Inspector, 1893 (COL/E158/93/310 & QGG, Vol 60: 350)
Retired 1900 (A/40331)
Died Mosman, NSW, 1914 (A/40332)
Staff file AF/2289 (A/40331)
Notes Sent to Port Douglas, and reported he had already made changes and saved money, adding ‘Rome was not built in a day’; also said in 1879 ‘I regret to say that I find half measures of no use and that there is but one way of putting a stop to these outrages and the sooner and more effectually it is done the better’ (POL/12M/G2/79/221). Granted twelve months leave on half pay, 1883. Described by Rockhampton residents in 1888 ‘a very humane man’; said, in 1896, that trackers should be selected from Southern tribes’, ‘Native Police should be abolished and substituted with Police patrols’ & ‘Sub Inspectors in charge of detachments should be first humane and secondly firm’ (HOM/J22/07/967)

Thornton, Thomas Isaac
Born Unknown
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2, No 6: 31)
Promoted 2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 91)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1869 (QGG, Vol 10: 1615)
Promoted Inspector, 1872 (COL/E10/72/208)
Retired On pension, 1886 (COL/E77/86/354)
Died Charleville, 1887 (SCT/P142/4754)
Staff file AF/1783 (A/40174)
Notes Appointed Police Magistrate at St George, 1869 (QPG, Vol 6: 68 & QGG, Vol 10: 1300); bachelor; left his entire estate to Kate and Mabel Miller (the daughters of Capt Miller), Harvey Fitzgerald and WE Parry Okeden (SCT/P142/4754)

Tompson, Ferdinand Macquarie
Born New South Wales, 1825 (A/40341)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 57)
Promoted Sub Inspector, 1871 (COL/E8/71/250 & QGG, Vol 12: 1516)
Retired On pension, 1886 (COL/E73/86/191)
Died 1908 (QBDM)
Staff file AF/2328 (A/40341)
Notes Recommended by Marlow, and descended from an established NSW pastoral family. His father (Frederick Anslow Tompson) was part owner of North Wagga Wagga station and the first magistrate & postmaster at Wagga Wagga. FM Tompson was appointed at Bowen (A/40341), and led the 1873 Northeast Coastal Expedition (COL/E12/73/191)
Towner, Lionel Edward Dyne
Born: Tasmania, 1855 (Provenance unknown)
Appointed: Acting Sub Inspector, 1873 (POL/4/563)
Promoted: Sub Inspector, 1874 (QVP, 1875)
Resigned: Unknown
Died: Charters Towers, 1916 (Provenance unknown)
Staff file: Unknown
Notes: Appointed Magistrate and Gold Warden, 1877 (QGG, Vol 21: 1180 & 1224); appointed PM at Thornborough 1881 (QGG, Vol 28: 977); appointed Acting PM at Croydon, 1887 (QGG, Vol 41: 200); married Susan Cooper, 1890. Resigned from Public Service, 1901 (QGG, Vol 76: 1064); became Commission Agent; witness at Mining RC 1911; no more found

Townsend, Edwin J
Born: Unknown
Appointed: Sub Inspector, 1874 (POL/4/574)
Resigned: 1881 (POL/4/617)
Died: Coen, 1895
Staff file: AF/1762 (A/40172)
Notes: Suspended for drunkenness and refusal to obey orders, 1881 (A/40172); unsuccessfully asked to be reappointed 1881 & 1889

Townsend, George Robert
Born: Unknown
Appointed: Sub Inspector, 1875 (QPG, Vol 12: 135)
Discharged: Drunkenness, 1881 (A/40207)
Died: 1886 (QPG, Vol 23: 99)
Staff file: AF/1909 (A/40207)
Notes: Reprimanded for furious riding in streets of Cairns, 1878; married Jessie Jane Sinclair, 1881 (QBDM). Asked for reappointment in 1882 & 1883; appointed as Clerk in Immigration Dept, 1884 (QGG, Vol 35: 1168 & QVP, 1888: 20)

Uhr, Reginald Charles Heber
Born: Wivenhoe, 1844
Appointed: Sub Inspector, 1864 (EXE/E10/64/50)
Resigned: 1869 (POL/4/466)
Died: Blackall, 1888 (QBDM)
Staff file: Unknown
Notes
Father was appointed Sergeant at Arms for the Queensland Legislative Assembly, 1864 (QGG, Vol 5: 851); uncle (George Uhr) married Elizabeth Morisset; appointed Police Magistrate at St George, 1869 (COL/E4/69/305 & QGG, Vol 10: 1501); served as Police Magistrate at Taroom, Hughenden & Cloncurry, Cloncurry, Blackall (1874-88); married Mary Katherine Tuach, 1874 (QBDM)

Uhr, Wentworth D’Arcy
Born Wivenhoe, 1845 (ADB, 1976, p321)
Appointed Acting Sub Inspector, 1865 (QPG, Vol 2: 67)
Reduced Discipline, Acting Sub Inspector, 1868 (COL/E3/69/38)
Resigned 1869 (QPG, Vol 6: 48)
Died Kalgoorlie, 1907 (ADB, 1976, p321)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Father (EB Uhr) was appointed Sergeant at Arms for the Queensland Legislative Assembly in 1864 (QGG, Vol 5: 851). Granted expenses for pursuit of horse stealers from Gulf to NSW border (COL/E1/67/125) and placed in charge of all police in Burke district, 1867 (COL/E1/67/278). After leaving the Native Police, WD Uhr became embroiled in disputes with Sub Inspector Tom Coward, Police Magistrate William Landsborough, and Crown Lands Commissioner Scarr. Uhr was charged with numerous crimes in 1870 and 1871, including assault, fraud, obscene language, and the murder of Aboriginal people, and sometimes convicted (COL/A152/70/3098 and COL/A160/71/2032). Then he became a drover and took cattle to Darwin in 1872. Returned to Queensland, and married Jane Hayes at Normanton, 1872. WD Uhr was “dispersing” at the Palmer River in 1875, and organised a reprisal party in 1883. He became a hotelier at Darwin, 1885, married Esther (Essie) Myra Thompson, and went to Western Australia. They had four sons but all died in infancy

Urquhart, Frederick Charles
Born England, 1858 (A/47932)
Appointed Cadet, 1882 (QPG, Vol 19: 77)
Promoted 1st Class Sub Inspector, 1893 (A/47932 & QGG, Vol 60: 350)
Promoted 1st Class Inspector, 1904 (COL/E158/93/310 & QGG, Vol 82: 307)
Promoted Chief Inspector, 1905 (A/47932 & QGG, Vol 84: 1781)
Retired 1921 (A/47932)
Died Brisbane, 1935 (A/47932)
Staff file AF/3377 (A/47932)
Notes  Son of British army officer; served as merchant marine sailor; was telegraph linesman; appointed at Normanton, and served in North from 1882 to 1896. In charge of detachments at Mistake Creek killing, 1884 (JUS/N108/84/415) and at Mein killings, 1889 (A/47932). Transferred to Queensland Police, 1889; placed in charge of Criminal Investigation Branch at Brisbane, 1904 (QGG, Vol 82: 307). Wrote poetry; appointed Administrator of Northern Territory, 1921

Walker, Robert George
Born  Unknown
Appointed  2nd Lieutenant, 1853 (NSW)
Resigned  Ill health, 1861 (EXE/E3/61/26)
Reappointed  1st Lieutenant, 1861 (EXE/E4/61/41 & QGG, Vol 2: 734)
Resigned  1861 (EXE/E5/62/2)
Died  Unknown
Staff file  Unknown
Notes  Brother of first Commandant Frederick Walker; possibly related to Uhr family (LWO/A2/62/877)

Warby, George T
Born  New South Wales, 1857 (A/40195)
Appointed  Cadet, 1884 (QPG, Vol 21: 117)
Promoted  2nd Class Sub Inspector, 1885 (COL/E67/85/189 & QGG, Vol 36: 1906)
Died  Illness, at Dunrobin, 1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 66)
Staff file  AF/1867 (A/40195)
Notes  Recommended by PF MacDonald of Yaamba, and sent to the Gulf; served almost five years before dying from ‘a throat complaint’ (A/40195)

Watterston, Thomas Broadwood
Born  Scotland, 1834
Appointed  Acting Sub Inspector, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 48)
Dismissed  Financial irregularities, 1866 (QPG, Vol 3: 91)
Died  Sydney, 1918
Staff file  Unknown
Notes  Joined the Native Police after his wife Margaret died at Dalby in 1866, and sent his children to Sydney; Commissioner Seymour recommended his dismissal after discovering he had three separate orders for the same pay to cover a cash advance (COL/A85/66/3127 & 3221)

Wavell, Alfred
Born  Unknown
Appointed  Constable, 1872 (A/40191)
Dismissed Discipline, 1874 (A/40191)
Reappointed Constable, 1882 (A/40191)
Promoted Senior Constable, 1888 (QPG, Vol 25: 359)
Died Killed, while attempting to arrest (Aboriginal) Joe Flick, at Lawn Hill, 1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 422)
Staff file AF/1841 (A/40191)
Notes Married Elizabeth Head in 1874, and was dismissed for ‘marrying a well-known prostitute’ (A/40191). Appointed as campkeeper for Poingdestre at the Norman River camp, and actively patrolling 1889 (A/41523/89/1018).

Wheeler, Edward
Born Genoa or Leipzig, 1841
Appointed Sub Inspector, 1864 (EXE/E10/64/28)
Dismissed 1871 (POL/4/523)
Died England, 1892
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of London merchant Henry Wheeler and Sicilian noblewoman Portia Gaudiano; in command of detachment at Barcoo killing, 1870 (COL/A198/74/1714)

Wheeler, Frederick
Born London, 1830 (Ironside)
Appointed 2nd Lieutenant, 1857 (New South Wales Government Gazette, 11/2283)
Promoted 1st Lieutenant, 1858 (QVP, 1864)
Appointed Inspector, 1864 (QVP, 1865)
Resigned 1874 (QPG, Vol 12: 12)
Reappointed Sub Inspector, 1875 (QPG, Vol 12: 135)
Dismissed 1876 (QPG, Vol 13: 49)
Died Java, 1882 (Ironside)
Staff file Unknown
Notes Son of London merchant Henry Wheeler and Sicilian noblewoman Portia Gaudiano. Married officer’s daughter Edith Knox, 1856. In command of detachment at Fassifern and Mt Flinders killings, 1860 (JUS/N1/60/8, JUS/N2/60/71 & JUS/N3/61/1); charged with murder at Banchory, 1876 (SCT/CG7/372)

Whelan, Daniel
Born Unknown
Appointed Constable
Promoted 1st Class Constable, 1897 (QPG, Vol 33: 234)
Promoted Acting Sergeant, 1900
Died 1911 (QBDM)
Staff file Unknown
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whelan, Edmond</td>
<td>Appointed as CPS at Ayton, 1896; reported by Protector Roth in 1903 for ‘forcibly recruiting’ for the Native Police (A/58783); appointed as Acting CPS at Boulia, 1905 (QGG, Vol 84: 363); stationed at Coen (1905-11), and actively patrolling on Cape York Peninsula.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Ireland, 1847 (A/40186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Constable, 1879 (A/40186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Senior Constable, 1884 (QPG, Vol 21: 170)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Sergeant, 1889 (QPG, Vol 26: 379)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>1891 (A/40186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/1813 (A/40186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Appointed Acting CPS at Cairns, 1884 (COL/E62/84/282 &amp; QGG, Vol 35: 618); complaints of gambling, fraud and drunkenness (1885). Officer in charge of Mulgrave River camp (1885-9); promoted and appointed CPS at Urandangie, 1890 (QPG, Vol 27: 350) but resigned from the Police just over one year later (QGG, Vol 53: 917), and returned to Cairns.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>White, John Warren</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Cadet, 1882 (POL/4/620)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>1st Class Inspector, 1907 (QGG, Vol 88: 1334)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1911 (A/40349)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>South Brisbane, 1947 (A/40349)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
<td>AF/2347 (A/40349)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Served at various Cape York Peninsula camps (1882-89) and captured the “Bunya Blackfellow” (a Melanesian man) in 1889. Married Elizabeth (Ruby) Barker in 1892 (QBDM) and his brother (CBB White) applied unsuccessfully to join the Native Police in 1897. Sub Inspector John White was a witness at the CIB RC in 1899, after the Gatton Murders.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whiteford, James</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Victoria, 1854 (Provenance unknown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Constable, 1881 (A/40348)</td>
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<td>Senior Constable, 1888 (QPG, Vol 25: 73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Senior Sergeant, 1905 (A/40348)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>On super, 1911 (A/40348)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Wooloowin, 1928 (A/40348)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff file</td>
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</table>
Notes  Son of Capt Whiteford of Campbelltown, Scotland; was station worker; married Annie Helena Smythe, 1883 (A/40348). Served at Cooktown and at Laura (1881-89), and in charge of Coen Native Police camp (1889-91), Musgrave (1891-9) and Coen (1899-1911). Died six months after his son.

Williams, Thomas Spence
Born  Unknown
Appointed  2nd Lieutenant, 1861 (EXE/E4/61/32)
Appointed  Sub Inspector, 1864 (QPG, Vol 1, No 1: 2)
Resigned  1865 (EXE/E11/65/34)
Reappointed  Acting Sub Inspector, 1872 (QPG, Vol 9: 59)
Dismissed  Financial irregularities and drunkenness, 1875 (QPG, Vol 12: 64)
Died  Unknown
Staff file  AF/1865 (A/40194)
Notes  In command of detachment at Tambo killings, 1872 (JUS/N36/73/64a); suspended and dismissed, with Commissioner Seymour noting he was ‘reappointed during my absence’ and previously dismissed for drunkenness in 1865; married Nancy Beamish
## Appendix 2: Native Police camps and stations by date of opening

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Opened Year</th>
<th>Closed Year</th>
<th>Pastoral District</th>
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The ‘Moving Frontier’ as shown by opening of Native Police camps

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Appendix 3: Recorded frontier deaths 1827-1904

Records of the deaths of Europeans and their allies are reasonably easy to determine. Accurate figures for Aboriginal deaths on the frontier are another thing altogether. They are extremely difficult to find, and this appendix reflects those found in the historical material to date. As we know, the records of Indigenous deaths are grossly inaccurate and insufficient but they should be counted anyway. Rather than estimate Aboriginal deaths, I have entered a figure of ‘1’ for each credible reference. Therefore, the numbers of Aboriginal deaths shown as ‘B’ (‘Black’) are extremely conservative. On the other hand, every reliable account of the death of a settler has been included, making the total ‘W’ (‘White’, ‘Chinese’, and ‘South Sea Islander’) figures close to complete. The total number of recorded ‘White’ deaths is 327. The total for Black deaths is 960.

Format is Year/Month/Day/Pastoral District/Event/References/Numbers of deaths
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<th>Day</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Event</th>
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Note: The table may contain abbreviations and dates that are not fully transcribed.
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North Kennedy
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North Kennedy
Burke
North Kennedy

NP killed unknown
LAN/A56/77/7028
Blacks killed Handley, Kegan & unCOL/A249/77/5704
Blacks killed Batten
JUS/N56/77/326
Blacks killed Chinese man
JUS/N57/78/11
Squatters killed unknown
POL/12M/G1/78/36
Blacks killed Manuel
JUS/N58/78/131
Blacks killed Price & unknown
COL/A262/78/2974
Blacks killed unknown
QPG, 31/8/78
Blacks killed Monday
POL/12M/G1/78/143
Blacks killed unknown
JUS/N59/78/240
Blacks killed unknown
COL/A267/78/4266
NP killed unknown
Queenslander, 8/3/79
NP killed unknown
POL/12M/G2/79/222
Miners killed unknown
QVP, 1881, Vol 2
Blacks killed unknown
COL/A286/79/4056
NP killed unknown
POL/12M/G2/80/3
Miners killed unknown
QVP, 1881, Vol 2
NP killed trooper
Queenslander, 1/5/80
NP killed unknown
Queenslander, 26/6/80
Blacks killed unknown
COL/A298/80/4813
Blacks killed trooper
COL/A306/81/296
Squatters killed unknown
Coote book
Blacks killed Dyas
A/38770/81/894
NP killed unknown
A/38789
Blacks killed unknown
COL/A310/81/1394
Blacks killed Turner
JUS/N76/81/154
NP killed unknown
POL/12M/G2/81/83
Blacks killed Kaye
JUS/N77/81/259
Blacks killed Chinese men
TRE/A24/81/1946
Fishermen killed unknown
TRE/A24/81/2029
Blacks killed unknown
TRE/A24/81/2070
Blacks killed Seliger
JUS/N79/81/319
NP killed unknown
Telegraph, 21/11/81
Blacks killed unknown
COL/A305/81/5351
Blacks killed Skene
JUS/N83/82/108
Grazier killed unknown
A/38710
Police killed Harry
JUS/N87/82/345

COL/A579/89/4281
COL/A249/77/5709

Brisbane Courier, 21/9/78

QPG, 12/9/78

COL/A272/79/858

GOV/27/79/101

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Port Denison Times, 29/1/81

COL/A305
Queenslander, 22/4/82

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Appendix 4: ‘Rumours’ – false reports of frontier deaths and other connected matters

24 June 1852  News item ‘The Search for Leichhardt’ (from the *Maitland Mercury*), saying Hely and Walker had travelled west of Surat [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24/6/52]

27 October 1859  News item “Flying Reports”, saying about four weeks ago a communication from Dalby was received, in which the writer stated that ‘a rumour was afloat that four gentlemen had been killed by the Blacks. We doubted the truthfulness of the rumour at the time, and therefore refrained from needlessly creating anxiety among the friends of the parties who were supposed to have been killed; and although several enquiries were made at our office on the day the rumour reached us, we did not satisfy them by divulging the names. It appears, however, that those spiders of the Press - the occasional correspondents of two of the journals below the Range - had no such scruples of conscience, or delicacy of feeling about them’ [*Darling Downs Gazette*, 27/10/59]

03 November 1859  Letter by WF Kennedy, saying ‘The vague rumour that four gentlemen were killed by the Blacks on the Dawson, which appeared in your issue of 6th instant, has I find been caught up by the correspondence of the two Brisbane papers. These journals have inserted the names of the supposed murdered parties. This is a course which I am sure you will agree with me, cannot be too strongly deprecated, where the information is not reliable and well certified, and the only evidence is mere hearsay, as I believe to be the case in this instance; for considerable unnecessary pain and anxiety may thus be inflicted on relatives and friends at a distance. It was surmised that their horses had come in after their owners were killed. Some of the Tieryboo Blacks told the Dalby postman at Condamine, who forwarded the news to Drayton, where it obtained access to your columns, only, however, as a rumour, in last week’s *Courier*, it has become un fait accompli. I feel confident the report originated in a mistake [*Darling Downs Gazette*, 3/11/59]

00 November 1861  Letter from JK Wilson at Mount Abundance (Roma) advising that he has received information from the Aborigines about the fate of Leichhardt. He advises that King Peter told him that Leichhardt and his party had been burned to death in a bushfire on the distant mountains visible from the Denham Range [COL/A22/61/2959]

28 April 1862  Article ‘Australian Tales’ by ‘Old Hand’, describing the killing of ‘fifty or more’ Blacks by Native Police [*Burnett Argus*, 28/4/62:3]

15 July 1863  News item re the rumoured killing of Kellett by Blacks at Kennedy district [*The Courier*, 15/7/63]

12 December 1863  News item from West Maranoa, saying the reported killing of Grenfel and Cannon at Mungallala is untrue [*The Courier*, 12/12/63]
06 April 1864 News item from *Queensland Times* saying William Frazer has been killed by Blacks at the Isaacs River [*The Courier*, 6/4/64]

09 April 1864 News item that William Frazer ‘one of the survivors of the family which was butchered by the Blacks at Hornet Bank’ has been killed by Blacks at the Isaacs River [*The Brisbane Courier*, 9/4/64]

13 April 1864 News item reporting that the Blacks have not murdered William Frazer as previously reported [*Brisbane Courier*, 13/4/64]

30 April 1864 News item on report of a white man living with the Blacks at Normanby station, near Ipswich; police sent to investigate [*Brisbane Courier*, 30/4/64]

23 June 1864 News item ‘More Murders By The Blacks’, saying ‘after the murder of Mr Vincent Dowling and his men and the attack on Tooth’s and Tom’s stations by the Blacks, they waylaid and murdered nearly the whole black police in the Maranoa district! Further, that they murdered three families of whites!! And speared Mr Tooth’s superintendent through the arm!!!’ [*Darling Downs Gazette*, 23/6/64:3]

07 July 1864 Letter ‘Alleged Outrage By The Blacks At The Maranoa’ by ‘J. M’A’, saying ‘on 30th June we published information we had received respecting certain alleged murderous outrages committed by the Blacks on the Maranoa’. A letter since received from Toowoomba said ‘In your paper of the 23rd instant I notice a paragraph about the Blacks, where it states that white men were killed on the Maranoa, and Mr Tooth’s superintendent speared. Such statement is incorrect. On the morning of the 22nd instant I saw Mr Tooth’s superintendent, and he was not speared, nor did one hear of any white men killed. Such statements when untrue are injurious to the district’. [*Darling Downs Gazette*, 7/7/64:3]

19 September 1864 News item from Upper Warrego, saying ‘people out here’ are not ‘in constant terror of their lives from the wild Blacks’ [*Brisbane Courier*, 19/9/64]

26 November 1864 News item about the rumoured killing of a Jewish pedlar by the Blacks near Rockhampton, and saying if so, the stock of jewellery would identify the tribe concerned [*Brisbane Courier*, 26/11/64]

13 December 1864 News item from Gladstone, saying a report that two persons were murdered when the Blacks attacked a station sixty miles from Gladstone was untrue. Said a man and his wife were attacked, ‘left for dead’ and survived [*Brisbane Courier*, 13/12/64]

16 December 1864 News item from Rockhampton, saying the pedlar reported killed by the Blacks has turned up. Said the ‘rumoured disappearance of this man supply to a correspondent the text of a diatribe against the Blacks’ but ‘the latter have more crimes ascribed to them than they really perpetrate’ [*Brisbane Courier*, 16/12/64]
13 February 1865  News item from the Maranoa (from the *Toowoomba Chronicle*), saying two Aboriginal men drove off a party of fourteen armed whites at Mitchell Downs *[Brisbane Courier, 13/2/65]*

25 February 1865  News item ‘The Blacks on Mitchell Downs’ (from the *Toowoomba Chronicle*), referring to previous item about ‘an engagement with two blackfellows’. Said this story was ‘a fiction’ and might have been based on the attempted capture of a Dawson black by a trooper some time before *[Brisbane Courier, 25/2/65]*

17 April 1865  News item ‘Aborigines’ Protection Societies’, referring to an article in *The Times* at London, saying ‘the end of the year is a dull time with journalists at home’ *[Brisbane Courier, 17/4/65]*

22 April 1865  News item from Bowen (from *Port Denison Times*) about reported assembly of Blacks ‘in great numbers’ at Cleveland and Rockingham Bay. The ‘killing or driving away of all the settlers’ is dismissed as a hoax *[Brisbane Courier, 22/4/65]*

06 May 1865  Letter ‘The Extermination of the Native Population of Australia’ (from *North British Agriculturist*) by ‘SA’, referring to an article in *The Times* of 30th December 1864. Said the statements made were wrong, as the natives died off ‘at a quick rate by natural though frequently obscure causes’ soon after colonisation by whites *[Brisbane Courier, 6/5/65]*

03 June 1865  News item from Rockhampton, mentioning the killing of Thompson’s Superintendent on the Queen’s Birthday *[Brisbane Courier, 3/6/65]*

12 June 1865  News item from Rockhampton, mentioning an attack on Turner, Superintendent of Mr Thompson’s station, had taken place recently *[Brisbane Courier, 12/6/65:3]*

16 June 1865  News item from Rockhampton, saying the report recently circulated that Mr Hood, the Superintendent of Mr Thompson’s station, had been killed by the Blacks ‘has been proved to be unfounded’ *[Brisbane Courier, 16/6/65:2]*

24 June 1865  Letter ‘Reported Murder of Mr Hood’ by TJ Thompson, saying the report in *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin* of 27th May about the killing of Mr Hood, the superintendent at Thompson’s station, by Blacks, was incorrect and was probably referring to the murder of a police officer ‘within seven miles of my present abode’ *[Brisbane Courier, 24/6/65]*

14 February 1866  Letter requesting permission for Inspector Marlow to travel to Belyando in search of Mr Leichhardt [COL/A76/66/434]

24 February 1866  News item ‘Traces Of Leichhardt’ (from the *Port Denison Times*). Article written from information supplied by Lieutenant Uhr of the Rockingham Bay
Native Police detachment. About eighteen months ago, Uhr captured two Aboriginal women near Logan Creek on the Suttor River, one of whom stated that she knew where the remains of some of Leichhardt’s party were. Uhr also states that he remembers seeing an ‘L’ on a tree in the same location [Darling Downs Gazette, 24/2/66:3]

04 August 1866 News item about the Leichhardt expedition [The Queenslander, 4/8/66]

02 July 1870 News item from Cleveland Bay saying that a white man was reported to be living with the Blacks at the Star River. Said ‘it would be worth the while of the Native Police to make a strong effort to capture this wild white man’ [The Queenslander, 2/7/70:10]

03 September 1870 News item from Herbert River saying report on 9th July of wild white man living with Blacks is untrue [The Queenslander, 3/9/70]

17 January 1871 Letter from Charles Birch to Governor Blackall (numbered 71/156), saying he was ‘on the eve of prosecuting a search for traces of the lost explorer Dr Leichhardt’ under instructions from Dr Von Mueller and the Ladies Committee ‘to make one more effort to dispel the mystery that hangs over the fate of Dr Leichhardt and success is more than problematised, if my plans are not wholly deranged, by a misguided Native Police official’, who has taken his two women interpreters [COL/A198/74/1714]

17 March 1871 Report from Sub Inspector Edward Wheeler to Chief Inspector George Murray about Birch’s complaint that ‘two Gins were taken from the Dar River’. Wheeler concluded, ‘the Gins mentioned were not brought out by him for the purpose of the search for traces of Leichhardt, but for cohabiting with’ [COL/A198/74/1714]

04 April 1871 News item from Cunnamulla saying Sub Inspector Gilmore has ‘just arrived from Cooper’s Creek’ and reports ‘unmistakeable evidence’ of Leichhardt [Brisbane Courier, 4/4/71]

05 April 1871 News item on search for Leichhardt’s remains by Sub Inspector Gilmour [Brisbane Courier, 5/4/71]

18 May 1871 Executive Council Minute approving expenses incurred in search by a detachment of Native Police looking for a white man (thought to be a Leichhardt survivor) west of Cooper’s Creek [COL/E7/71/134]

08 June 1871 Letter of acknowledgment from the Chief Secretary of Western Australia in relation to receipt of a Brisbane Courier article about Sub-Inspector Gilmore’s report on the search for a white man reported to be living with Aborigines. [COL/A157/71/1547, ‘Gall estray’]

25 July 1874 Article ‘Better Prospects at the Palmer’ by ‘The Miner’; reported attack by 40 or 50 Blacks on seven miners armed with Snider rifles; the Blacks, they said,
were ‘apparently urged on and directed by their gins, who were perched on a ridge’; also said ‘Cooktown was summoned to arms’ [The Queenslander, 25/7/74:10]

28 November 1874  Telegram from the Police Magistrate at Charleville reporting the death of explorer Hume on the Wilson River. Refers to Sub-Inspector Dunne and the Native Police who are out searching for a survivor of the expedition [COL/A200/74/2484]

07 December 1874  Inquest held by Fitzherbert Brooke at Bingara, in the Warrego district, into the deaths of Andrew Hume and Timothy O’Hea who died at Nockatungga while searching for a supposed Leichhardt survivor [Prov. unknown]

20 February 1875  Article ‘The Expedition in Search of Classan’ by ‘The Explorer’; writer said Sub Inspector Dunne was in charge of Native Police near Nockatungga who went on the search for the last survivor of the Leichhardt expedition [The Queenslander, 20/2/75:7]

05 August 1875  News item ‘The Supposed Leichhardt Remains’ said Maxwell Armstrong reported to Commissioner from Aramac that two graves had been discovered at Saltern Creek, disinterred and pronounced to be Aboriginal skeletons [Telegraph, 5/8/75:2]

08 February 1876  Letter from James Johnston at Dumfries, New South Wales to Commissioner re article on Native Police in Illustrated News of 27 September 1875. Referred to telegram advising that a search party had gone to the Roper River to look for ‘the murderers of Johnston’, said ‘I had a brother named Abraham Johnston’ who was last heard of at Ipswich and Maryborough, and asked for full name of Johnston found dead at the Roper’. The man killed at the Roper was named Charles Johnston [COL/A424/85/3652]

12 May 1876  Letter from Miss Agnes Craig at Edinburgh, Scotland to the Aborigines Protection Society in England, asking ‘Is it true that the Colonists in Queensland distribute poisoned flour among the Natives?’. Said this statement was made in a paper by ‘Jevous’ in ‘the last Fortnightly’; the article she said ‘was extremely wicked, as the purpose is to excuse ‘Vivisection’ as being a mild form of cruelty in comparison with others’ and she failed to see how ‘poisoning natives, and otherwise maltreating them in the Colonies’ justified ‘similar practices towards animals in London and Edinburgh’. Said ‘I should like to hear the truth about this’ and referred to a new society for ‘The Total Suppression of Vivisection’ [Australian Joint Copying Project, M/2427]

27 November 1878  Report from Sub Inspector Stuart at Port Douglas to Commissioner saying a story had appeared in the Port Douglas Times claiming that two timbergetters had been killed at the Daintree but ‘I am happy to say they turned up all right’ [POL/12M/G2/78/237]
24 May 1879 Article ‘Native Police Duty in the West’ saying Sub Inspector Kaye went out with Sub Inspector Gough ‘in pursuit of Blacks who had committed a murder at Murgah station, Lower Diamantina, and with his companion was falsely reported to have perished from thirst’ [The Queenslander, 24/5/79:668]

29 May 1880 Letter ‘White and Black’ by ‘Never Never’, claiming most letters submitted were false and accused the paper of ‘violating good taste and common decency’ [The Queenslander, 29/5/80:690]

08 January 1881 Article ‘The Way We Civilise’, reviewing pamphlet published by The Queenslander; referred to ‘a series of letters published in Sydney Morning Herald some time back’ and said ‘we do not think that the ‘yarns’ told in the ‘atrocity’ column strengthen The Queenslander’s position’ [Sydney Mail, 8/1/81:45]

13 January 1881 Letter from William Fillingham-Parr at Fiji to the Aborigines Protection Society in England, sending Queensland news clipping and referred to ‘the wholesale murders of these poor wretches. An enclosed clipping from the Pall Mall Budget of 15th October 1880 said a report in French and German papers demanded the attention of the Colonial Office. Included an alleged conversation with a police officer, who invited the correspondent from the Cologne Gazette to join a ‘hunt of Blacks’ [Aborigines Protection Society Papers, Rhodes House Library, Oxford Australian Joint Copying Project, M/2429]

25 October 1881 Telegram from Customs Collector Fahey to the Colonial Treasurer saying ten large native canoes have been seen at Lizard Island ‘where a Mrs Watson, her baby and two Chinamen were supposed to have been living’; said she was left on the island with ‘no means of escape’ while her husband was at Knight Island [TRE/A24/81/1946]

28 October 1881 Telegram from Police Magistrate Howard St George to the Colonial Secretary, saying ‘Carroll Byerstown mailman reports that Blacks on Normanby diggings four days ago killed and ate a Chinaman, name unknown’ [COL/A324/81/4709]

07 November 1881 Telegram from Fahey at Cooktown to Colonial Treasurer saying Watson arrived here last night and reported he left his wife on Lizard Island about 10th September [TRE/A24/81/2029]

21 November 1881 News item ‘Outrages at Lizard Island and Northern Queensland’, saying Mrs Watson’s fate was ‘now ascertained’. Sub Inspector Brooks brought two women to Cooktown who told him the Cape Flattery tribe attacked the beche-de-mer station on Lizard Island. Said she was seized and later killed with her baby; Inspector Fitzgerald found clothes at Lizard Island, but the Murdoch Point Blacks denied any involvement in her death [Sydney Morning Herald, 21/11/81:7]

03 December 1881 News item ‘The Lizard Island Tragedy’ including letter from Edward Snellgrove of Lower Herbert with notes from Mrs Watson’s diary. Said one of
the ‘supposed murderers’ was now in the lockup and had ‘made confession as to the manner of the murder’ [The Queenslander, 3/12/81:726]

07 January 1882 News item from Herberton, saying that a white woman was ‘detained in a Blacks camp’. Writer claimed that police were unable to apprehend the offenders, but ‘if black trackers been here, as they should be’ some ‘satisfaction’ would be afforded. This episode ‘proves the necessity of having troopers stationed here’ [The Week, 7/1/82:4 and The Queenslander, 7/1/82:7]

24 January 1882 News item saying the Colonial Secretary had received a telegram from Police Magistrate St George at Cooktown about the discovery of Mrs Watson’s remains. Her body was found by Capt Bremner in the schooner Kate Kearney at the islands of the Howick Group [Brisbane Courier, 24/1/82]

06 April 1882 News item ‘Death on a Desert Island’ (Mrs Watson), referring to previous stories of her flight from ‘the attack of the North Queensland Blacks upon the Lizard Island fishing station’. Said three skeletons had been found on an island with no water, her diary was found, and her remains were buried at Cooktown [New York Times, 6/4/82: 7]

29 April 1882 News item from Cooktown, saying ‘prior to the punishment of the natives for the supposed murder of Mrs Watson’, numbers had been brought into town but very few had been seen since. Also said ‘as events proved, the accounts given to the police were altogether untrue’ because the evidence of the natives ‘cannot be relied upon’ [The Queenslander, 29/4/82:525]

14 March 1885 Notice of missing friend Augustus Henry Page, a university graduate with ‘a roving disposition’; said he ‘went with Lieutenant Walters and a party of twenty exploring about five years ago, and that they were nearly all killed by the natives, but no account of such a party having gone at any time can be obtained’ [Queensland Police Gazette, Vol 22:104]

09 July 1887 Article ‘A True Story of Northern Queensland’, giving an account of an expedition to the Mitchell River in 1870. Said one white and an unknown number of Blacks were killed before the survivors decided to ‘thoroughly arm themselves and follow up the trail of the natives in order to teach them a lesson of retribution’ [Town and Country Journal, 9/7/87:84]

29 August 1887 Telegram from Police Magistrate Buttenshaw at Cooktown to Colonial Secretary saying ‘A supposed white woman brought in by police today from near Normanby. Saw her with Dr Korteum; believe her to be an albino but has brown eyes. Too ill to speak, having been thrown from horse coming down; cannot speak English’ [COL/A513/87/6739]

03 September 1887 News item ‘A White Woman Amongst the Blacks’ gave an account of the capture of a ‘white woman’ by the Normanby police and her conveyance
to Cooktown hospital where she died from injuries received during the ordeal; the Blacks tried to stop the troopers taking her and were fired on. Doctor Korteum said she was an albino not white [The Queenslander, 3/9/87:380]

23 November 1887  News item ‘The White Woman in the Bush’ (from the Mackay Mercury), saying the white woman who was ‘captured by the police’ at a Blacks’ camp had died; said she, and ‘her deceased brother’, were thought to be Scandinavian [New York Times, 23/11/87:7]

18 February 1888  Article ‘Attacked by Wild Blacks’ giving an account of an attack at the Palmer River. Said Sub Inspector White ‘got five of them’ [Queensland Figaro, 18/2/88:268 and 271]

09 June 1888  Article ‘A Scrap of Aboriginal History’ giving an account of the killing of three white men ‘near the headwaters of the Normanby River’. It took place ‘seventeen or eighteen years ago’ [The Queenslander, 9/6/88:901]

Unknown 1888  Book Among Cannibals by Carl Lumholtz, mentioning the death of a settler near Cardwell ‘a few years ago’. Said his name was O’Connor, claimed he was very kind to the Blacks but he and his wife were killed. Probably referring to William and Elizabeth Conn, who were killed in 1875 [Among Cannibals, 284-285]

16 April 1889  Report (false) of death of Senior Constable Alfred Wavell [Queensland Police Gazette, Vol 26:263]

11 June 1889  Telegram from Inspector Frederick Murray at Cooktown to the Commissioner saying ‘Sub Inspector Urquhart wires from Mein that he had dispersed five mobs of Blacks and had got some of the murderers of Mrs Watson and got slightly speared in the leg; was going out again’ [A/47932/89/6816]

00 November 1889  Correspondence from Thursday Island in relation to the alleged murder of Reverend Savage, of the London Missionary Society, at Kewai Island. Report was apparently incorrect [COL/A597/89/10010]


17 January 1891  Letter ‘Aboriginal Slaughter at Thornborough’ by ‘A Fourteen Years Resident’ at Thornborough referred to The Queenslander article on ‘the above’. Said that the ‘outrage’ took place on the Mitchell River, fifty miles from town and ‘there was no slaughter of aboriginals at Thornborough’ [The Queenslander, 17/1/91:106 and 138]
07 February 1891    Article ‘A North Queensland Tragedy’, giving account of a revenge attack on Blacks by a man named ‘N’ after the death of a woman and child [Boomerang, 7/2/91:7]

01 June 1891    Article ‘The Spear and the Rifle’, describing an attempted attack by North Queensland Blacks on a white woman and her daughters, that was foiled by an ‘unexpected avenger’ who shot three Blacks [Queensland Punch, 1/6/91:79]

07 July 1894    Article ‘Pioneering in Moreton Bay’ by ‘the late’ Mr F Campbell, giving account of ‘earliest outrage on Stradbroke’ when an old Aboriginal man was killed; his tribe waited and killed two messengers on the beach. Said the soldiers marched to Moongalba near Dunwich and a day long battle took place ‘but no one was killed’ [The Queenslander, 7/7/94:22-23]

14 July 1894    Article ‘Pioneering in Moreton Bay’ by JJ Knight, mentioning the killing (as ‘told to him by a convict in 1835’) of ‘about twenty Blacks’ at Moreton Island after a soldier was killed in revenge for the killing of a ‘king’. Said a military detachment was sent to Point Lookout with orders to ‘shoot every black that could be met with’. Three whites were killed, and Knight said ‘It’s all rot to say that the Blacks were treacherous. It was the other way about’ [The Queenslander, 14/7/94:75]

04 August 1899    Article about ‘wholesale slaughter of Aborigines’ at Goulbolba Hill near Emerald; writer said event took place in 1866 while Wheeler was in the area and claimed ‘about 300 of the natives were shot down or drowned’ [Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 4/8/99]

16 July 1924    Article by Mrs Millicent Alexander, wife of Allan Alexander who owned Milgarra station on the Flinders; gave account of massacre of Kalkadoon tribe by Native Police; said ‘Shooting commenced indiscriminately for no apparent reason. The officer in command was said to have been suffering from the DT’s at the time. After creating terrible havoc he rode off as suddenly as he came. The Inspector faded out of the landscape – also the service – for all time. Still out folk think he saved them a lot of trouble, although he gave them a dreadful task in burying the Blacks. The wild dogs uprooted them over and over again’ [The Grazier’s Review, 16/7/24:382-3]

15 January 1931    Article ‘An Historic Locality’ (in Caravan Tales series), giving an account of a visit to Cullin-la-ringo. With regard to the ‘Wills massacre’, said most versions had been ‘drawn from imagination’. Noted that a punitive expedition ten days after the massacre ‘shot down sixty or seventy until all ammunition was expended’ and said ‘both killings were intensely tragic’. Includes photos of graves and ‘the hill down which the attackers are said to have come’ [The Queenslander, 15/1/31:4 and pictorial]
Rule 1 was not included.

2. It is impossible to give precise directions for the execution of every duty which the force may be required to perform, or to anticipate every difficulty which its members may have to encounter, as, from the nature of the service, its duties must vary, and consequently the mode of execution must vary with them, and be directed by the circumstances of each particular case. Each member of the force should therefore endeavor to become acquainted with the nature of every duty which he may be called on to perform, and by zeal, energy, discretion, and intelligence, make every effort to supply the unavoidable deficiency in general instructions.

3. The officers will, however, be held strictly responsible for the execution and observance of all orders and regulations; for any deviation from which, and for their own acts and orders in such cases as may not or cannot be provided for by these instructions, they will be held responsible.

4. In the performance of their duty they are distinctly to understand that their efforts should be principally directed to the prevention of crime, which will tend far more effectively towards the security of person and property than the punishment of those who have violated the laws; and the very best evidence that can be given of their efficiency will be the absence of crime in their districts.

5. All officers are studiously to observe a strict neutrality in political matters.

6. Every officer of the Native Mounted Police Force should bear constantly in mind how essential it is to cultivate a proper regard for the honor and respectability of the force, and should be governed by the principle that the more they can raise those above or below them in public estimation, the more they elevate their own official position, and with it the general character of the force.

7. All commands devolve on the senior officer present. As the responsibility attaching to a superior may at any time devolve on the next in rank, it is essential that the members of each grade be acquainted with the duties that circumstances may call on them to discharge, in order to guard against injury to the public service.

8. Every subordinate is to receive the lawful commands of his superior with deference and respect, and to execute them to the best of his power; and every superior, in his turn, is to give his orders in the language of moderation and of regard to the feelings of those under his command.
9. The obedience and respect which are here required must be observed throughout the force generally, and not be understood in any partial or confined sense.

10. The conditions of admission into the force are stated here that no reason for complaint may exist upon their being enforced. It is to be understood at the same time that the power is reserved to the Commissioner, subject to the approbation of His Excellency the Governor in Council, to alter or amend any of these conditions, and also to make such new rules as may be found expedient:

   (1) Every officer must devote his whole time to the service.
   (2) He shall serve and reside wherever he is ordered.
   (3) He shall promptly obey all lawful orders which he may receive from the persons placed in authority over him.
   (4) He shall conform himself to all the regulations which may be made from time to time for the good of the service.
   (5) Three months' notice of his intention to resign his appointment must be given to the Commissioner; and he shall, on no account, absent himself from his station, unless specially permitted by writing under the hand of his immediate commanding officer.
   (6) Any officer who shall be dismissed cannot again be admitted into the Police Force, nor any other branch of the Government service.
   (7) Every officer shall, before leaving the service, deliver up all Government property that may be in his charge; and any such property that may have been lost or damaged by the neglect of the officer in whose charge it was, will be made good by deduction from his pay.

11. The officers are not to allow any person unconnected with the Native Police Force to interfere with or accompany them, or give orders to any of the troopers under their command.

12. They must be very careful of the health of their men; not to allow them to wear their jackets in hot weather; not to allow them to put on their newly-washed clothes before they are dry; nor to camp in low spots conducive to fever and ague; nor to camp upon ground wet from rain, but cause them to strip bark to put under them.

13. The arms, clothes, and accoutrements must be inspected as often as possible. No excuse will ever be admitted for dirty arms or accoutrements, as with a very little trouble they are easily kept clean.

14. Whenever an opportunity occurs, such as a day or two's rest, or a short stage, the officers are to practice the troopers in the usual drill and no other.

15. Before leaving the police station, the officer in command will see that such clothing as may not be wanted on patrol is carefully put away.

16. A daily account of all rations received and issued will be kept in a book supplied for the purpose.
17. The object in sending out patrol parties is principally that the hostile blacks, from the frequent visits of the police, may be deterred from murder and felony - this is the meaning of a preventive force.

18. It is however certain that, occasionally, the officers will have to endeavor to apprehend persons who have committed felony. When the officer holds a warrant his duty is very clear if he can identify the individual named therein, or has reasonable grounds to believe he can do so; and if he meets with resistance in the execution of such warrant, he is justified in making use of force against the man he wishes to apprehend, and any person assisting him. When he holds no warrant, if he can prove that a felony has been committed, and that he reasonable cause to suspect an individual, he is justified in apprehending him, and using force if resisted. With white persons it is not difficult to prove all this, but blacks are so much alike, and the evidence is generally so faulty, that officers must be very cautious. It has been frequently found that the statements made by individuals differed very widely from the affidavits when made on oath by the same persons. When an officer sees a felony or an assault being committed, as a matter of course, he is obliged to take all offenders in charge. In every case the same law applies to blacks as to whites, and if the officers go beyond the law they do so at their own risk. The blacks cannot be considered as men armed for illegal purposes, because their weapons are their principal means of obtaining food.

19. The officers must be very particular in always avoiding indiscreet discussions.

20. Upon returning from patrol, officers in charge of parties will report to the officer in command of the district everything concerning any collision that may have taken place, and given him full information, in order that he may collect any necessary evidence.

21. When a trooper is transferred, a return is to be sent with him, signed by the officer who sends him, of the arms, accoutrements, clothing, etc sent with him; this return is to be countersigned by the officer to whom the trooper is sent, and by him forwarded to the Inspector of the district.

22. Officers in charge of districts and detachments will be careful that under no circumstances are blacks, not being troopers, to be allowed in the police camp; and they will use every exertion to prevent the troopers from having any communication whatever with the aborigines of the district in which they may be stationed, or through which they may be passing; they will also be held responsible that no trooper keeps a gin without permission from head-quarters.

23. Every officer will keep a journal of all incidents happening in the course of public duty, whether during patrol or in camp, and of any circumstances that may have occurred within his district, in which he may have acted in his official capacity. He will also keep a diary of the duty performed on patrol, stating time of arrival at and departure from each station he may visit, to which, when possible, he will obtain the signature of the proprietor or person in charge.
24. He will be particular in collecting and forwarding, at the close of each month or quarter, all accounts against his own, or any outstanding accounts belonging to any other detachment that may have passed through his district; the accounts must be made out on proper vouchers, and officers must be very careful that all the necessary signatures are attached thereto.

25. He will be held responsible for the general duty of his detachment, and the proper fulfilment of the separate duties of the subordinate officers under his command.

26. He will be careful to instruct his acting Sub-Inspectors as to the duties they will be required to perform, which are principally as follows:-

(1) To take charge of the stores, and serve out rations to the troopers night and morning, and keep a strict account of all stores and rations issued to the detachment, to be laid before the officer in charge at any time he may wish to inspect the same.

(2) To drill the troopers every day they are in camp, until they are perfect in their exercise, mounted or on foot.

(3) And perform any camp duties which may be considered necessary by the officer in command.

27. Officers and troopers will at all times wear correct uniform when on parade, patrol, or other duty; and in this respect it is particularly necessary that the officers should be careful in showing a proper example; as through cleanliness in person, clothing and accoutrements must be rendered compulsory on the part of the troopers, every inducement should be held out to them to assume a smart and soldierlike appearance.

28. In no case are any of the native troopers to be allowed to take spirits from any one, except their officer or medical man in case of sickness.

29. No cartridges are to be expended by the troopers without the orders of their officers.

30. The whole of the horses are to be mustered regularly every morning by the troopers in turn, and a note to be made in the officer's journal of any horses absent; their backs must be carefully attended to, and should always be washed upon the troopers dismounting, and well rubbed down before saddling; the saddles should be examined frequently by the officer in charge, and the saddle cloths and girths kept clean.

31. It is the duty of the officers, at all times and opportunities, to disperse any large assembly of blacks without unnecessary violence; such meetings frequently lead to depredations and murder, and mistaken kindness or misbehavior of the officers in command only inspire the blacks with sufficient confidence to commit outrages. The officers will, therefore, see the necessity of teaching the aborigines that no outrage or depredation shall be committed with impunity, but, on the contrary, that retributive justice will speedily follow the commission of crime; nevertheless the officers will be careful in receiving reports against the blacks, as it frequently happens that mistakes are
made as to the identity of the aggressors. In case of any collision with the aborigines a report is to be forwarded to the Commissioner without delay.

32. Officers in charge of districts and detachments will make themselves, as soon as possible, acquainted with the general features of the country in their respective districts and vicinities, so as to enable them to take advantage of any information they may receive as to the route or hiding-places of any aborigines whom it may be necessary to apprehend, and to enable them to patrol their districts without keeping on the beaten tracts.

33. They will be careful to see the men's arms and ammunition placed where they can lay their hands on them at night for attack or defence.

34. The greatest care is to be observed in the preservation of the men's arms and ammunition; and as much injury is done to the locks of the carbines by taking them to pieces, it is directed that this shall be done as seldom as possible, and always under the superintendence of an officer.

35. The men shall be fully armed on all duties when mounted.

36. The men at out stations, when in quarters, will, invariably, parade on Sundays in full dress.

37. A compliance with this order will be entered in the monthly return of duties.

38. When in quarters, there will be a daily parade of horses; and officers will take advantage of those men who have been drilled to instruct their detachments in riding, as well as in the carbine, pistol, and sword exercises, on foot and on horseback.

39. The Native Mounted Police will at all times afford the magistrates and constables a ready assistance in the execution of their duty; but it is to be distinctly understood that, except in cases of special necessity, they are not to be employed in performing any of the duties of ordinary constables.

40. When escorts or orderlies are furnished by the Native Mounted Police, they will always, when practicable, be relieved at the nearest stations.

41. Whenever men die or become non-effective, the officer in charge of the station will immediately take charge of the spare horses, arms, and appointments, and preserve them in the best order.

42. Officers commanding stations will inspect all return patrols, and immediately report any irregularity they may observe in men or horses arriving at their posts.
43. The men of the Native Mounted Police are forbidden to appear in the streets unless dressed strictly according to order, and at all times they are expected to be smart and clean.

44. When not interfering with duty, each officer is permitted to employ a trooper as groom, but it is to be understood that he is always armed, appointed, and ready for any service that may be required. He is not on any account to be dressed in livery, or to be employed in any way unconnected with the officer's duties.

45. Every trooper shall have two horses, suited to his weight, told off to him, for which he will be held responsible in all respects. The trooper is not to be deprived of his horses, except for misconduct; nor are they to be changed, except on urgent necessity, without previous reference to head-quarters.

46. Officers in charge of detachments will be held responsible that the saddles are kept in good repair, and fit the horses so as not to injure their backs.

47. Upon the exertion and example of the officers mainly depends the efficiency of the force; their duties are never ending; their presence is required everywhere, and it is solely by their intelligence, unceasing vigilance, and watchful superintendence of the men, that the protection, which is the main object of the force, can be afforded. This can in no way be more effectually carried out than by the constant personal supervision of their different stations on the part of the Inspectors in command of districts, and more than ordinary care in visiting and patrolling the haunts of the aborigines in command of detachments.

48. When any trooper has been incapable of duty for a considerable time from sickness, a special report must be made, in order to his being brought to head-quarters for medical treatment, or removed from the force.

49. The particular attention of officers is directed to the different returns required to be furnished to head-quarters. If those returns are not carefully prepared, it is impossible to arrive at a correct knowledge of the state of the force, as well as of the stores, ammunition, equipments, and supplies required.

50. All returns and reports are to be made as full as possible, so as to afford every information.

51. In the monthly return of duties performed, the number of men on duty each day, the place visited, the number of miles travelled, as well as the nature of the duty on which employed, whose order, and any occurrence of an extraordinary nature, are to be entered.

52. The expenses of the corps must be kept within the narrowest limits consistent with efficiency. No expense, except of the most trivial nature, or under circumstances of emergency to justify it, is to be incurred without previous application to and authority from head-quarters; and in making requisitions the probable amount is to be stated, as well as the work required to be performed.
53. It is expected that the fences of the paddocks as well as the barracks, will, in a great measure, be kept in order by the men themselves.

54. On the first of each month every officer in command of a detachment will send to head-quarters a copy of the diary kept by himself, according to form, stating where he has been each day during the preceding month, the duties performed, occurrences, and any steps taken in consequence, detailing what stations he has visited during the month, the state of each, the condition of the horses, and if any of them are lame or otherwise inefficient, the state of the arms, ammunition, appointments, clothing, and necessaries, the general conduct and discipline of the troopers, and if they appear to have been attentive to their duties and careful of their horses.

55. Officers in charge of detachments are not to hand over their detachments without written authority.

56. Officers, except on duty, will not quit their districts without leave of absence, obtained in writing.

57. Applications for leave of absence are to be made in time to allow an answer to be returned before the leave requested shall commence.

58. The Government horses are to be kept strictly for the use of troopers.

59. When horses are taken to the forge, an officer is always to accompany them.

60. All saddlery repairs must be inspected, in order to ascertain that the charge is fair and reasonable.

61. The following returns will be sent to the officers in command of divisions, immediately after the first of the month, or quarterly:-
   (1) Return of horses, half-yearly.
   (2) Return of rations issued, monthly.
   (3) Officer's diary, monthly.
   (4) Return of arms, stores, etc, quarterly.

62. And whereas it is essential to the good government and discipline of the Native Police Force to prevent and punish certain offences, and that the following rules should be in force for that purposes aforesaid:-
   (1) Any person who shall by any means wilfully induce, or attempt to induce any trooper of the Native Police Force to desert from the service, or shall knowingly harbor, aid, or assist any trooper of the Native Police Force who shall desert, or attempt to desert from the service, or who shall by any means wilfully interfere with, or obstruct the discipline of the Native Police Force, shall be liable to pay a penalty not exceeding 20 Pounds, and in default of payment to be imprisoned with or without hard labor for any period not
exceeding three calendar months, or at the discretion of the justices before whom any such complaint shall be heard, to be imprisoned without fine for any such period as aforesaid.

(2) It shall be lawful for any two or more Justices of the Peace to hear and determine in a summary way any complaint under the preceding section.

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