ASPECTS OF ABORIGINAL STATION MANAGEMENT
by
R.G. Hausfeld
Sketch Map of Bandjalang Tribal Country with Dialect Areas Indicated by Shading. Note: Yukumbear and Gullyvul should be considered as one clan, as should Nerangbul and Minyungbul. Approximate scale: 20 miles to 1 inch.
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R.G. Hausfeld,
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1. **Introduction.**

In any consideration of Aboriginal Station management it is first necessary to establish what constitutes an aboriginal station in New South Wales, and why such stations exist.

Briefly, "aboriginal stations" are "reserves", constituted under the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1909–1943, for the use of aborigines, and over which the Aborigines Welfare Board exercises permanent supervision.

Supervision of Aboriginal Stations is carried out by resident Managers and Matrons employed by the Aborigines Welfare Board.

The duties of a Manager and Matron are given as:

"In addition to the general management of Stations, Managers and Matrons are expected to devote their energies towards the moral and social welfare of residents by encouraging them to acquire habits of thrift and personal hygiene and a pride in their homes and surroundings, so that eventually they may reach that standard where they could, if so desired, remove themselves from the Board's supervision and occupy, with credit, a niche in the community."

Implicit in the foregoing is the assumption that "aborigines" in New South Wales are a "social problem", and that Aboriginal Stations have been created as one way of
dealing with this problem. "The primary purpose of a Station is to provide a place of residence for those Aborigines incapable of fending for themselves in the general community because of age, illness or any other reason." 4.

Before the amendments made to the Aborigines Protection Act in 1940, the official policy was one of protection and segregation; but at that time the policy was completely changed and the emphasis was placed on "assisting aborigines to become assimilated into the general life of the community" 5.

"Assimilation" 6 implies "making like" or "being absorbed into", and it is in this sense that it will be used throughout this thesis. Assimilation will be used to mean "the absorption of aborigines into the general community so that they cease to be distinguishable from other members of it". Such a usage of "assimilation" implies "racial" as well as "social" absorption, and I believe it can be used meaningfully only in this way.

To cover what is intended by such terms as "social assimilation", "economic assimilation" and "assimilation without loss of racial identity", I propose to use the word integration.

Too, before proceeding further, it is necessary to establish what will be intended by the use of the term "aborigine". As there are scarcely more than 230 full-blood
aborigines in New South Wales, and as none of that number leads a solely tribal life, it is obvious that "aborigine" will have little use if restricted to its derivative definition. For the purposes of this thesis aborigine will be used to mean "any person of full or part-blood aboriginal extraction who considers himself, or is considered by others to be an aborigine". This definition excludes persons of part-aboriginal extraction who live as, and are considered to be, whites. However, it includes those part-blood persons who live as, and are considered to be, aborigines.

"Whites", "white man" etc., will be used to refer to non-aborigines of European extraction.

"Old law" (a term used by the subjects of this study) will be used to mean "the tribal law of the aborigines of the study area before European contact".

I will examine some aspects of Aboriginal Station management to see to what extent they are successful in promoting the stated policy of "assisting aborigines to become assimilated into the general life of the community".

To do this I propose to present a particular study carried out at Woodenbong Aboriginal Station where I have been the resident manager since 26th March, 1956. That any findings of this particular study may not be relevant to other Aboriginal Stations must be understood. However,
in Appendix IV, I have provided some additional material and discussed the possible extended relevance of the findings of this thesis, and have indicated possible lines for further research.

The study Station is 3 miles from Woodenbong and is cut by the road which leads to Urbenville, 8 miles from Woodenbong. Woodenbong is a small town situated on Tooloom Creek at the extreme northern headwaters of the Clarence River, 40 miles from the nearest rail-head at Kyogle.

The economy of the area is based on dairying and beef cattle raising, with the timber industry providing employment for many town dwellers.

Urbenville, to the south-west of Woodenbong, is the site of the District Court and the District Hospital. The Hospital, and a Government-subsidized Regional Doctor, serve the district's population of about 2000 of whom approximately 250 are aborigines.

My thesis is that the residents of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station are members of a distinctive culture; that an understanding of their culture is necessary in attempting a solution of the social problem they create; and that from such an understanding tentative conclusions may be drawn, which point the way to a solution of the social problems involved.
Sections 1-15 will establish the pattern of culture existing at Woodenbong Aboriginal Station, Sections 16-19 will carry the delineation further, and indicate how an understanding of the culture-pattern facilitates Station management and increases the well-being of Station residents. Section 20 suggests some possibilities which could lead to a solution of the problem.

By suggesting "solutions" based on fieldwork, the thesis is brought within the scope of "applied anthropology" and some consideration of my position in this regard may be considered necessary. I can scarcely do better than refer to Professor S.F. Nadel who discussed this problem in an "Inaugural Lecture" in 1953. He said: "Nothing can alter our responsibility as scientists to carry out our investigations as objectively as is humanly possible and present the results as truly as we can. The question is if our moral responsibility ends there. I have suggested that it does not. And I suggest, further, that the anthropologist who declines to go beyond purely factual accounts and to assert in addition his own views on desirable policy increases rather than lightens his moral responsibility".

I have endeavoured to carry out my investigations with objectivity, to present it with truth, and not to avoid the moral responsibility my unique position has imposed upon me.
My position as Manager and as anthropologist has had both advantages and disadvantages in the collection and presentation of my material. As an official, resident on the Station, I have been able to observe many facets of life which might well have been closed to an "outside" fieldworker. However, because of my official position, special problems have been created. I have not been able to enter unreservedly into all phases of Station life. I have tried to make full use of the advantages of my position, and to minimise the disadvantages, by continuing the study over an extended period of time (3 years and 8 months).

It will be established that the subjects of this study have hostile attitudes to whites, and to Officers of the Board. For these reasons, and also because of the nature of my position as Manager, the method of recording material directly from informants has not been followed (except where specifically indicated). Rather, the material is the result of the slow accumulation of small observations pieced together to form patterns. These patterns were then checked for validity by direct reference to reliable informants. This method of reference back to sources was only possible after much information and understanding had been achieved. In addition, section by section, this thesis has been read and explained to, and discussed with informants as a further check on accuracy.
The numbers given throughout the text refer to the notes and references of detailed information and discussion for each Section, which may be found in Appendix I under the appropriate Section headings. This method has been adopted so that the thesis may be followed with ease while, at the same time, the detailed material on which it is based is made available in a readily accessible form.

Appendix II contains brief biographical details of my aboriginal informants, and an assessment of their reliability in each case.

In Appendix III may be found some sample genealogical tables which are necessarily confidential and not for publication. These are included as it is from them that a great deal of useful information can be drawn.

A map of the area, giving specialised details, is provided as a frontispiece to this study.
Section 1. Historical Outline of the Study Area.

The portion of country with which we are directly concerned forms the western watershed of the Richmond River to the north of Kyogle, and the eastern watershed of the Clarence River to the north of the Peacock Range.\(^2\) There is tribal extension to the north, east and south of this area but the material presented here mainly concerns the aborigines of the area defined. However, we will turn our attention, from time to time, beyond the narrow limits of the study area.

The upper reaches of the Richmond-Clarence Rivers were first penetrated by Europeans in the 1830's\(^1\) and by 1846 all the lands along the two rivers were occupied by squattages.\(^2\) It is from this period, about 110 years ago, that the recorded history of the area dates.

For our purposes, the history of the area, and therefore the history of culture contact between the settlers and the aborigines, may be considered as having four distinct phases of about 30 years each. The first phase was one of violent conflict and adjustment between the two groups. The second phase is marked by acceptance of the new circumstances by both groups. Closer settlement by whites characterises the third phase, and direct local supervision of the aborigines is the keypoint of the most recent period.
Initial occupation by white settlers was made without organised opposition from the aborigines of the area, but isolated cases of conflict occurred in the very early period. Armed clashes took place in a number of adjacent areas, but there is no evidence to suggest that aborigines were killed by settlers in the local country of our study group.

While the incidents referred to in notes 4 and 5 occurred well down the Clarence from the area with which we are concerned, and while some of the aborigines involved belonged to a different tribe, they are significant as they appear to have been motivated in part by Pagan's death at Tabulam. Also, all whites, though widely separated in isolated groups throughout the area, regarded themselves as members of one community. The incidents were known by the aborigines of our study area and are symptomatic of white attitudes towards them at that time.

There are numerous cases of Europeans being killed by aborigines in the area during the period of early conflict, and of bones and skeletons of Europeans being found at various places in later times.

An aborigine attributed the killings to revenge by aboriginal men on white men who had taken sexual liberties with aboriginal women.
It is clear that, although the aborigines of the study area, and the area around it, did not offer any organised resistance to the European occupation of their lands, they did resent the settlement and failed to understand the implications of the "new law" introduced by the settlers.

It is also clear that the attitude of the early settlers was one of high-handed superiority in their dealings with the aborigines. There was no thought that the alienation of aboriginal lands was in any way wrong, or that the aborigines might be acting within their rights to kill a sheep or bullock which was grazing freely on their tribal lands.

The death of Pagan at Tabulam was thought to be "murder" despite the fact that the aborigines did not retaliate until after two shots had been fired at them. This incident alone is sufficient to reveal the attitude of the early settlers. Nor was the attitude of the early clergy much more sympathetic.

However, after the initial period of 20 or 30 years, open conflict between settlers and aborigines apparently ceased. Aborigines were employed on stations as stockmen and drovers, and by cedar cutters who were active in the area in the sixties and later.
Sheep, by then, had proved unsuitable to the area and were replaced by cattle which required far less supervision. One man was able to take care of several thousand cattle for most of the year. Four times each year the mustering, branding and sale of cattle took place and required additional labour.

The first major influx of Europeans occurred following the discovery of alluvial gold at Tooloom in 1857\textsuperscript{11}, but there is little evidence available to suggest that the Tooloom goldfield had any lasting effects on the aborigines of the area. For example, I have not traced the genealogy of any aborigine to a Chinese man of that time, though there were several hundred Chinese working on the field at the peak period.

Reference will be made however, in Section 12.11, to stories which date from that time and place. Too, certain aborigines continue to have a strong interest in the goldfield and still win small quantities of gold from it.

Some small European selectors moved into the area towards the end of the last century but were met with opposition from the squatters who did what they could to force the small men out.

By 1900 the whole of the area from Casino north along the Richmond and thence down the Clarence beyond Tabulam was still settled only by large cattle stations\textsuperscript{12}. The period of early conflict between whites and aborigines was past and a reasonably satisfactory adjustment appears to have been made by both groups\textsuperscript{13}. 
Between 1900 and 1921 the big cattle stations were sub-divided. Stations of 5,000 to 60,000 acres were sub-divided into farms of 100 to 500 acres. The European population increased greatly and townships sprang up at Kyogle, Wiangarie, Woodenbong, Urbenville, Legume, Old Bonalbo and Bonalbo to cater for the increased numbers. Too, the economy of the area changed from a predominately pastoral development to one which concentrated on dairying, pig production and the growing of maize.

The country which had been freely available to the aborigines, where fences were rare, and mountain ranges, scrubs and rivers had served as station boundaries, became suddenly transformed into small family holdings criss-crossed by fences. On such small holdings both wildlife and aborigines were unwelcome.

It was during this period (August, 1908) that the area now occupied by the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station was first Gazetted as a reserve "for the use of aborigines". Approximately half the area was revoked in 1937, leaving the station with its present area of 126 acres.

Alienation of the aborigines' lands in this area commenced about 110 years ago and from that time onward they were no longer completely free to control their own lives. However, it is clear that the practical alienation of their lands took place only 50 years ago.
If we include the 10 acres of the aborigines' reserve at Stony Gully, to the south of Kyogle, in our total, the aborigines of the study area now have 136 acres set aside for their use, whereas free access to approximately 800,000 acres was theirs until 1900.

It is in the light of these historical facts that the material presented in this study must be seen, as there are alive today many aborigines who can remember those former times when life was less confined. Too, the stories of those times have been passed on to the younger generations and play their part in the formation of attitudes amongst the present generation of aborigines of the area.

Ambivalence is the keynote to the history of European contact as seen by the aborigines. There is fierce pride in their aboriginal heritage, but there is also shame that they are aborigines. There is sadness for the loss of their corroboree, and joy for many in their acceptance of Christianity. They resent the loss of their lands but have no desire to return to a hunting and collecting economy.

While the white man is not held responsible for the decrease in population, he is blamed for the breakdown of the "old law". Each incident of direct interference by white authority had an important effect on the fate of "old law" customs, at least in their public manifestations. However, not all relations with whites were unpleasant.
Throughout the period before the commencement of closer settlement, clothing was only worn by aboriginal adults and then only when close to a station homestead or where whites were likely to be encountered.22

White closer settlement in the area brought big changes for the aborigines, relations with the settlers remained good for some years, social intercourse taking place between the groups.23 Such good relations no longer exist.

Aborigines date the change in attitude of the whites as being directly related to the appointment of a resident Manager about 30 years ago.24 While this may be historically correct, there are several reasons why a direct causal relationship between the two events may not exist.

Firstly, to require the appointment of a full-time resident manager, the aboriginal population of the reserve increased considerably, as did also the white population of the area. This population growth, and the onset of the economic depression of the 1930's may have been significant factors in changing attitudes.

Secondly, as the economic status of the white group improved, and that of the aboriginal group remained stationary or deteriorated,25 the economic gulf between the two groups increased.

Thirdly, arising directly out of the second point, the housing and furnishings of the two groups became more and more dissimilar, thus raising another barrier against continued social contacts.
Despite the foregoing points however, the aborigines believe that the presence of a Manager on the Station was instrumental in bringing about the worsening attitudes of the local white community towards them.26

The picture emerges of a gradually deteriorating situation from the aborigines' point of view. As the white population increased and travel became easier, whites became more sophisticated and less dependant on aborigines for labour and companionship. Improving financial circumstances for the white community, particularly over the post-war years, also worked against the best interests of the aborigines.

Too, there was increasing supervision and control by "authority" in the persons of police officers and resident managers. They began to hear instructions issued as to how they should behave and how they should not behave. Their nomadic life had vanished and their freedom as men and women seemed a thing of the past. They became aware of the bitter truth of their defeat, and of their new position as "something less than citizens".27

It is to their past we will turn repeatedly throughout this study as we seek to understand the present features of Aboriginal Station life at Woodenbong.
Section 2. Language.

A theoretical consideration of language is not necessary for the purposes of this study. However an understanding of some of the language problems involved is essential as they have a direct bearing on management. It is necessary to consider the use of both the Aboriginal and the English languages.

i. The Aboriginal Language.

Several dialects of the Bandjalang\(^1\) language are spoken by residents of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station, but that mainly in use is Githebul. It is not necessary here to consider the local boundaries of the dialect groups but this information has been provided in the notes\(^2\).

It may not seem important to distinguish carefully between the different dialects since there is little variation from one to another, and any Bandjalang dialect can be understood by a person who knows any other Bandjalang dialect; however it is regarded as a matter of courtesy to use Githebul in Githebul country\(^3\). Also, feelings of belongingness are bound up in the use of dialects.

Although all residents of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station belong to the Bandjalang tribe, a few are not considered by the majority of residents to belong to Woodenbong\(^4\).

Of the Bandjalang group belonging to Woodenbong, those over 30 all speak the aboriginal language; those between 20
and 30 either speak or understand it; and those under 20 understand much of what is said to them in the aboriginal language but, with one exception, do not speak it. In general terms it may be stated that the older the aborigine the more fluent he or she will be in Bandjalang.

It is significant that an abrupt change appears to have taken place between 20 and 30 years ago in the aborigines' attitude to their language. This change is coincidental with a worsening of local white attitudes towards the aboriginal group, and also with the introduction of immediate Governmental supervision in the form of a resident manager.

While seeking information which would establish or deny a correlation between the factors mentioned, I questioned a number of informants as to why the younger people no longer learned their aboriginal language. All the informants were people who speak an aboriginal dialect.

A variety of explanations were given but inherent in each was the feeling that social pressures from whites no longer made possible the general use of the aboriginal language. Without exception, informants all expressed the opinion that their own language should not be lost. Several explained to me that if New Australians could speak their own languages, aborigines ought to speak theirs.

Historically, the position was that until the first decade of this century, aborigines in this area spoke their
own dialects as a matter of course without feelings of shame or doubt, whether or not white people were present. Then followed a period when the aboriginal language was not spoken when white people might overhear. It is difficult to assess what attitudes might have been amongst the aborigines at that time, but an informed guess may be made that two factors were operating:

First, that feelings of inferiority and shame were induced by the increasingly "superior" and abusive attitudes of the white community;

Second, that there was a genuine attempt made by the aborigines to continue to live alongside the white community without provoking conflict and disharmony.

Probably the establishment of regular schooling for the aboriginal children in 1925, associated with the attitudes attributed to white settlers, meant that the children adopted English as their sole spoken language and also inhibited their parents from teaching them the various aboriginal dialects.

The only exclusive use of the aboriginal language noted has been when male informants have recounted "old law" stories. These are told in the appropriate dialect and then translated sentence by sentence into English with frequent side discussions as to the most appropriate English approximation to the original.

Except in the circumstances just mentioned, the
aboriginal language is seldom used in a pure form. The most obvious way corruption of the language took place is by the need for new words for new items and circumstances introduced by white settlers. Both the invention of new words within the Bandjalang language and the Bandjalang-isling of English words are noted. Also there is at least one example of the invention of a new word which formerly appeared in neither English nor Bandjalang.

Corruption of the language has also taken place in that one seldom hears a conversation of more than a sentence or two which is exclusively Bandjalang. Usually, many English words and phrases are mingled with the main flow of Bandjalang.

The Use of English.

Only once during the study period did I fail to make my meaning clear in English. An aged full-blood aboriginal woman was the object of my endeavours on that occasion. However, occasions frequently occurred when I was left in some doubt as to whether I had conveyed my meaning exactly, though it is far from clear whether these cases were the result of accidental or deliberate misunderstanding.

There is much variation, amongst Woodenbong aborigines, in literacy in English when we consider it in its widest sense of language use. In the narrower sense of reading ability, there is less variation.

I know of no case of an aborigine of the study group who is able to read fluently in English. Reading for them is a
process of saying the words slowly one by one to themselves, with lip and throat movements obvious. Thus, the meaning of a simply worded sentence can be lost if the sentence construction is complicated. My experience suggests that much that is read is misinterpreted, but the application of standardised comprehension tests would be necessary to establish the actual degree of understanding achieved.

There are at least five aborigines, of whom the youngest is about 30, who can neither read nor write. Of the remainder I have not noted one example of an aborigine who can write with ease, though there are many who can write with mechanical skill.

Any large body of printed or written matter appears to produce a psychological blockage which prevents most from attempting to read the material concerned.

In handling their lack of literacy in day to day matters with whites, various aborigines adopt different attitudes, all of which indicate feelings of inadequacy and shame. We might therefore expect to find avoidance of situations where such feelings are evoked; and examples of this kind of behaviour will be mentioned later.

Arising from these feelings, which occur when aborigines are faced with complex written material, or the need to produce written material, we may expect to find a reaction which takes one of two courses. Firstly, retreat may be complete and lead to apathy and reliance on others. Secondly, the reaction may
be expressed as resentment which would be noted, in its 
eextreme form, as belligerence.

The second course of reaction is more psychologically 
healthy, though it may manifest itself in anti-social 
behaviour (for example, in rudeness to a person applied to 
for assistance). It is, however, capable of redirection into 
socially useful paths.

The other reaction, which leads to apathy and dependence, 
is basically unhealthy and less susceptible to change though 
it facilitates management and administration by granting an 
appearance of acceptance without troublesome reaction.

Both these forms of reaction have been noted during this 
study at Woodenbong.

It may be suggested that signs of resentment, from 
aboriginal station residents seeking assistance in matters 
involving literacy, should be taken as evidence of a normal 
reaction to the situation. Such an attitude, though less 
personally pleasant to the manager, is more healthy, and 
therefore more desirable, than one of apathy.

Amongst the aborigines of the study group there is much 
variation from person to person in their command of spoken 
English. Some serious language limitations are apparent, but 
there is no correlation between such limitations and the 
mental ability of the persons\textsuperscript{17}. Under conditions of stress 
an aborigine may attempt to assert himself and misuse 
polysyllabic words he knows but does not understand.
Under relaxed and friendly conditions the same aborigine may be capable of expressing himself with brilliant simplicity and force.

Plural forms present difficulties to many and such forms as: furnitures, postes, mens (men), womans, and sheeps, are commonly heard.

Incorrect word order in such expression as "What it is?" "Where it is?" "Who air name?" (used for "What's her name?"), "What time it is?", "Where 'e go?", are also common.

What might be termed an aboriginal accent is apparent at Woodenbong and in other parts of New South Wales. The accent is characterised by long drawn out vowels in such words as: "Yeah, 'e gorn, long! "Eh"ending on a falling note, is used habitually by many aborigines in much the same way as "you know" is used by white Australians to terminate a sentence; it seeks confirmation without asking a question or requiring an answer.

Many English words have particular, strong emotional overtones for members of the study group, and great care must be exercised in speaking to members of the group if unintentionally aroused feelings are not to be invoked.

These emotional overtones to many words, together with the previously discussed idiosyncracies of language, produce difficulties and pitfalls for management directly in contact with the aborigines of the study area. It is clear that misunderstandings can arise quickly unless knowledge, care and understanding are used by a resident manager.
Section 3. Population.

i. General figures.

The population of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station at 31st December, 1959 was 169. Table I shows that the population of the Station for the preceding 8 years varied between 135 and 184. These figures suggest that, in a general way, the population has remained static, the 1952 population being 173 and that at the end of 1959 being 169.

An examination of the records, however, shows that of the 173 people recorded as living on the Station in 1952 only 88 now do so. Of the 85 who are not now living on the station there are perhaps 10 who may be assimilated into the general community. Of the 10, only 2 can be said to be living outside the sphere of the Aborigines Welfare Board, the one being a woman who married a white man and the other a child of that woman.

It is interesting to note that the 8 persons regarded as possibly assimilated are members of one family and that the family returned to Sydney to live after a period of residence at Woodenbong.

Some of the remaining 76 persons are dead and the balance have not improved their living conditions since they are now living in Queensland or New South Wales on other aboriginal stations or reserves, or in localities and conditions normally associated with aborigines of this State.
This evidence shows that only 2 Mandjelang residents of the 1952 population of the Woodenbong Station have been assimilated into the general community since that time. We must therefore seek other explanations of changes which have taken place in the Station population. To do this an examination will be made of the population changes which have taken place during the period I have been resident manager - June, 1956 to December, 1959.

Table II gives the detailed analysis of the December, 1959 population compared with that of 30th June, 1956. It is seen that 49 persons resident on the station at 31st December, 1959 did not derive directly from the population of June, 1956. However, 39 of that number were aborigines who had formerly lived on the station and had returned to it during the period, or were the wives and children of such persons. Of the other 10 persons, 4 were maritally linked to members of the station population and the remaining 6 were children of one of the four.

This evidence makes clear that there is a group of aborigines, much larger than the Station population at any one time, which looks upon the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station as "home"; and that non-resident members of the group are likely to desire to become resident members at some future time. Also, it suggests that aborigines who do not belong to this wider group rarely become resident
members at some future time. Also, it suggests that aborigines who do not belong to this wider group rarely become resident at Woodenbong Station except when a marriage links them to the group. The tribal origins of the group which regards the Station as "home" are discussed in Section 4.iii.

Table III indicates the way in which some families come and go frequently to and from the Station. In all the marked cases of this kind one member of the marriage has strong ties at Woodenbong while the other member either has conflicting ties elsewhere or does not wish to live under the supervision of the Aborigines Welfare Board. There are also families who are forced, by lack of employment locally, to leave the Station. Such families seldom remain away long but return immediately there is employment again available in the Woodenbong area.

There are 19 children of the five couples used as examples in Table III, about half of whom are of school age. The educational problems created by family moves will be discussed in Section 17.

i. Population ... by age groups.

Table IV gives the age and sex groupings for the Station population at 31st December, 1959. The most important figures in this respect indicate that 58% of the population is under 21 years of age, 75.7% is under 31 years of age and only 24.3% of the population
is over the age of 31 years. This marked unbalance of age-grouping will be discussed later.

The figures for males and females suggest a rough equality between the sexes up to the age of 40 years but a much greater proportion of males over that age. This suggests that males outlive females amongst the aborigines at Woodenbong.

To check this supposition a study was made of the marriages contracted (legal and de-facto) by the over-50 age group. It was found that 16 men (1 of whom never married) and 17 women had been involved; 12 of the 16 men are still alive whereas only 7 of the 17 women are now living. That is, 75% of the men involved are still living while only 41% of the women remain alive, which also supports the supposition that aboriginal men outlive aboriginal women at Woodenbong.

If research using wider samples supported this finding, the reverse of the position for the white community, (a significant pointer to living conditions amongst the aborigines of this area), would be established. However, because of the smallness of the sample, and the only roughly comparative method used, it would be dangerous to make too much of this point.
iii. Caste.

"Caste" as used in this study indicates degrees of ancestry of a particular type. It should not be assumed that there is any correlation between colour or physical type and caste. Many examples have been noted where the degree of aboriginal caste conflicts with what visual observation might indicate. Nor should caste be understood to imply correlated social factors.

The caste of each resident of the Woodenbong Station at 31st December, 1959 has been established by the arduous process of collecting genealogies in all cases. Many of these genealogies extend over six generations and samples may be found in Appendix III.

Of 169 persons whose caste was investigated, the caste of 145 has been established beyond doubt. The remaining 24 have varying amounts of possible error as set out in Table V. In no case is the error of significance in the use of caste figures in this Section.

Official caste classifications have been ignored as they are based only partly on knowledge of ancestry and partly on visual observations of individual cases. Further, only three classifications are in use, namely:—full-blood, half-caste, light-caste. Such classifications are unsatisfactory for our purposes. Too, such a method leads to erroneous conclusions being reached as the result of
assumptions being accepted which are not warranted—

For example, that the very light-skinned child of a known half-caste woman must necessarily have a white father.

The child in this case represents the third generation removed from the introduction of European ancestry. That is, the 2 parents and 4 grandparents were all half-caste aborigines. The 8 great-grandparents were European on the male side and full-blood aboriginal on the female side. The child has very fair skin, blue eyes and blonde hair, but has features readily identifiable as of aboriginal origin. On the simple arithmetical system of caste establishment used here, the child is a half-caste Aborigine, half-caste European.

The caste was calculated in each case to the nearest 1/32. One man was found to have no aboriginal ancestry, being 3/4 caste Pacific Islands and 1/4 caste European. He is married to a 3/4 caste aboriginal woman.

Except in the unique case just mentioned, the two lightest caste aboriginal members of the group are 1/4 caste, one being a man of over 65 and the other being a girl of 17. There are 4 full-blood aborigines, all are men and all are over the age of 60.

The average caste of the entire group is 19/32 of aboriginal ancestry. Expressed as percentages of the total, 10% are more than 3/4 caste aborigines, 74% are half-caste to 3/4 caste, or 84% are "aborigines" within
the meaning of the Aborigines Protection Act of 1909-1943. Only 16% are of less than half-caste aboriginal extraction.

Expressed as percentages of the group's total ancestry, the "racial" origin of the group may be said to be as follows:-
Aboriginal... 61%, European ... 34%, Pacific Islands ... 3%, Indian ... 2%, Chinese ... 1%.

iv. Degrees of aboriginal caste in age groups.

The figures given in Table VIII show that the average degree of aboriginal caste for the different age groups varies between 18/32 and 23/32. That is, that there is about 1/8 caste difference between the average caste of the oldest group and that of the youngest. The average for the 0-30 years group is 19/32 and that for the 31-and-over years group is 21/32.

When allowance is made for possible errors (see Table V) it can only be said that there is perhaps a slight decrease in the average aboriginal caste of the study group over the last 50 years. However, the degree to which the aboriginal caste of the different age groups varies is so slight that it is safe to say that the group consolidated its average aboriginal caste at about 5/8 caste level at least 30 years ago. Also, there are no indications upon which any change in this position can be predicted in the immediate future.
Certainly, the oft-heard comment that the mixed-blood aboriginal population is getting "lighter and lighter" is not true of the 1959 population of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. In fact, since 5% of the ancestry of the group is Indian and Pacific Islands in origin, and most of this recently introduced, there are some grounds upon which to base the suggestion that the average skin colouring of the group may get darker, not lighter.9

It is interesting to note that of 12 persons under the age of 26 who have one non-aboriginal parent, 9 are the legitimate children of their parents. The introduced parents in these cases have mainly Pacific Islands/Indian ancestry. Only three of this under-20 group result from matings with a full-blood European; and of the three mothers, only one remains on the Station.

v. Population forecast.

In view of the evidence that the study group is not being assimilated into the general community and that its aboriginal caste is consolidated above the half-caste level, some prediction of the future population of the group is essential to any consideration of its administration.

The following method of prediction is used, and is conservative.

Each family unit where the female appears to have ceased reproduction was listed and the resulting children now living noted. Two women who married but produced no
children were included. The result was that 17 women produced 88 children, or an average of 5 each. It was noted that most children were produced before the women reached the age of 31 years.

In order to predict the likely population resulting from the 1959 Station population the figures given in Table IV were used.

Firstly, it was assumed that no-one now over 41 years of age would be still alive in 20 years.

Secondly, that all those now under 41 years of age would be alive in 20 years.

Thirdly, that no woman now over 30 years of age would produce more children.

Fourthly, that the average family for the station would continue to be 5 living children.

On this basis there are 59 females who will produce a total of 295 children. When this figure is corrected by the number of children already produced by members of the group (26), the nett total is 269. Using assumptions one and two (see above), the nett population from those now living is 141. On this basis the anticipated population, 20 years from now, is 410 of whom 332 would be under the age of 31 years.

Assuming the continuance of the present situation, the Station population would be about two and one half times what it is now, requiring proportionate increases in
housing, school facilities, and amenities. Also, the multiplied labour force would place an unbearable load on an already strained work supply.

These considerations will need to be related to all other aspects of this study as such significant increases in population will play a major part in the future prospects of the group.

Section 4. The Land the the People.

1. The Tribal Lands.

The tribal lands of an aboriginal group in Australia are associated with languages and their dialects, ritual affiliations and the laws and social organisation of the people who occupy the area and recognise their belongingness to it. Because of the very loose type of social organisation which exists at the full tribal level, the smaller groups within the whole become increasingly important as they become smaller and their outlines more clearcut. Too, it is the smaller groups which carry totemic affiliations.

In a patrilineal, patrilocal tribal area it would be the horde, consisting of a group of males related by blood, their wives and their children, which would be the most clearly defined social group.

The Bandjalang Tribe, of which the study group forms a part, was organised on patrilineal, patrilocal lines. Land rights were transmitted from father to children, the male children marrying and bringing their wives to their
father's country and the female children marrying and going with their husbands to their husband's country. These departing females did not by marriage deprive themselves of their rights in their father's country, nor did they acquire rights for themselves in their husband's country. A man, therefore, remained in the country to which he had rights while a woman lived most of her adult life in a country in which she had no personal ties to the land.

It is obvious that the closer settlement of the Bandjalang aborigines onto Reserves and Stations must have caused a breakdown of the patrilocal residence rule\(^2\). We might also expect to find some breakdown, and perhaps complete breakdown, of the patrilineal inheritance of horde country.

That it has been possible to collect the information on which the map (given as a frontispiece to this study), was drawn clearly indicates that knowledge of the tribal country is still very much alive\(^3\). Much discussion with aboriginal informants shows that the question "What is he?" will usually be answered by giving the name of the dialect to which the man belongs\(^4\). (This applies whether or not the person concerned now speaks the dialect). Whereas, if one asks "Where does he come from?" the answer will usually name a jurraveel (totemic site) and then give the location in terms of the nearest place known by a European name.
This method of locating an aborigine by his jurraveel shows how the horde country of each person is still regarded as important by the aborigines themselves.  

ii. The significance of tribal country.

Since the tribal horde country of an aborigine in this area is no longer of economic significance to the individual we must look to other aspects of life to discover why aborigines in this area still retain and respect their knowledge of their places of ancestral origin.

A full discussion of these other aspects will be found in later Sections and sufficient here is to say that it is from the jurraveel associated with his horde country that a man draws his spiritual well-being and his feelings of belongingness. While a man still has such affiliations he does not feel himself to be completely adrift in a hostile environment but draws strength from his link with the Butheram ("dreamtime") through his jurraveel.

iii. The Station Population and its Origins.

If ties to ancestral horde and clan country still remain strong for members of the study group at Woodenbong it should be apparent in the composition of the Station population. An analysis of the origins of the Station population of 31st December, 1959 is used as evidence in this regard. It will be established later that dialect
groups are exogamous social clans\textsuperscript{9} and I will refer to them as such hereafter.

If a circle with a radius of 10 miles is centred at Wodenbong Aboriginal Station it will pass through the clan countries of the Gullyvul, Warlavul, Githebul, Yugurabul and Yukumbear so that it might be fair to say that anyone who had his/her origins in those clans had a right to feel they belonged to the Station.

Of the Station's population of 169 an analysis of origins revealed the following figures:

Persons whose father and mother belonged to one of the five clans \( \ldots \) 39

Persons whose father only belonged to one of the five clans \( \ldots \) 52

Persons whose mother only belonged to one of the five clans \( \ldots \) 38

Persons who, by adoption, belonged to one of the five clans \( \ldots \) 13

Spouses of above persons \( \ldots \) 4

Total \( \ldots \) 146

We may say then that 86\% of the population of the Station can claim to belong (by marriage, or through a parent) to a clan country whose nearest boundary is not more than 10 miles from the station.

Of the remaining 23 persons, 22 belong to a group which stems from a Kamilaroi man who was adopted into the Bandjalang tribe through the Bandjalang clan\textsuperscript{10}. 
This man has both marriage and kinship ties with the Woodenbong aborigines and is accepted as belonging to the group.

We may fairly say that only one resident of the Station does not have a right, through clan or marriage affiliations, to feel she belongs at Woodenbong.

Since the rule was formerly patrilocal and patrilineal it is valuable to examine the group whose affiliations to the Station stem from the mother only, there being 38 persons in this category.

Persons who are offspring of mothers who remained in own area after mating or marriage, and who claim allegiance to mother's clan.......................... 31

Persons also linked to group through marriage ...... 3

Two males and one female, not considered as belonging to the Station................................. 3

One man (Gullyvul) who is accepted at Woodenbong but who himself claims to belong to Kyogle.............. 1

Total .... 38

These figures show clearly that belongingness to the group can be obtained through the mother if the mother remains in the group and her children are born within it. Such persons account for 31 of the 38. Three others claim a link through marriage to other members of it in addition to that through their mother and so are also accepted with stronger claims on the group than a spouse of a group-member not otherwise connected.
There is strong evidence then, that indicates a continuance of the rule of patrilineal descent but with modifications to allow for descent through the mother in the special circumstances of birth and residence mentioned above.

Further, it was found that only 4 persons claimed a link because of allegiance to the Yukumbear and Yugarabul clans. In every case these persons were also linked to the group by marriage.

Without going further into the matter it may be said that all but one person had ancestral claims to belong at Woodenbong and that more than 80% based their claims on affiliations to clans whose nearest country was not more than 10 miles from Woodenbong. The one person not having a claim in the sense defined is a child of one of the 3 persons not considered as belonging to Woodenbong. All four are members of the Bandjalang clan and claim allegiance through the male line to Corakai which is less than 80 miles direct from Woodenbong.

The population of the Station then is 100% Bandjalang, is mainly derived from the Gullyvul, Wurlavul and Githebul clans, and shows an extreme localisation.

iv. The Significance of the Localisation of Population.

The extreme localisation of population discussed above is of considerable importance in considering aspects of administration. It suggests that there is as yet no
marked breakdown in this aspect of tribal organisation. This factor, in conjunction with the population prediction given in the previous Section, must have considerable bearing on future policies adopted at Woodenbong.

There is apparent a strong tie to ancestral country through which an aborigine feels close to his sources of spiritual strength and safe from unknown malevolent forces.

v. Hunting and Horde Country.

At one point during the study observation seemed to suggest that residents of the Station tended to fish and hunt in the horde country to which they had a direct tie. I suggested this to informant F. She said: "Oh no, I'll go fishing anywhere. If I don't know the place I ask one of the old men and he tells me what to say if anything goes wrong."

There are therefore at least some residents who still only feel safe in country which is known to them or in country about which they can obtain knowledge before entering.

vi. Outsiders.

We have already noted that certain aborigines are not considered as belonging to the Station. Apart from the 4 persons already mentioned a consideration of the
children referred to in 9 (d) of Table II (notes, Section 3) is of interest. The children's only claim to belong to the Station is that their mother is the de-facto wife of a man accepted as belonging to Woodenbong. In practice the other station children do not accept them, fight frequently with them, and tend to blame them for any wrongdoing which may be blamed on children. Also, this family of children do not attend the station school but travel to Woodenbong because they found they were not accepted by the other children at the station school. These children have been a management problem since becoming resident on the Station and a major part of the problem stems from their non-acceptance by the other station children.

It is apparent that strong in-group feelings operate for the Station population and that acceptance of "outsiders" is extremely unlikely unless there are special circumstances which breakdown the in-group feelings of rejection.
Section 5. Material Culture.

1. Food Habits.

Many native foods are still eaten by aborigines at Woodenbong. Most native foods are now difficult to obtain because of the laws protecting native fauna and also because of the limited access to some localities. For these reasons, and probably for them alone, native foods are now a minor part of the diet of the group. When available, such foods are regarded as delicacies to be shared.

Meat, bread, potatoes, pumpkin and onions, in that order of importance, are the main items of food for the group. Damper is frequently eaten in preference to bread. When a member of the group says he is "going home to bake some bread" he means "damper", not home-baked bread. Green vegetables are not regarded as a necessary portion of the daily diet despite much nutritional propaganda by Officers of the Board, but are eaten occasionally. Fresh fruit is purchased regularly by most parents. Puddings, as a sweets course, are not eaten every day, but are regarded as an essential Sunday item by most families. A baked sweet made of rice and milk is the usual pudding for such occasions. Many of the women are excellent cake cooks but make cakes for special occasions only.
Eggs are seldom purchased but about one third of the houses have a few fowls each and the occasional eggs produced by the poor quality stock are eaten by the families concerned. Fowl-keepers on the station become fond of their poultry and do not kill them for the table themselves. The fowls either die of old age or misadventure or occasionally finish up in the pot of another family on the station.

Ice-creams, sweets and bottled soft-drinks are purchased habitually by most members of the group. Consumption of soft drink appears to me excessive.

Generally, the diet of the group appears to be adequate for the maintenance of reasonable health and cases of outright malnutrition are rare. The danger period for a member of the group is from weaning time until about 3 years of age, during which period a loss of weight is noticeable for the children of the less responsible mothers.

It must be emphasised that the above observations are of a general nature and not the result of a detailed dietary study.

11. Shelter.

(a) Housing and Repair.

At the commencement of the study there were 24 cottages on the station but two were dismantled as uninhabitable during the study period, leaving 22 cottages occupied at the end of 1959.

The cottages are what is known as "old type" dwellings and the basic structure of each is 2 rooms with front and back verandah, the external walls being of splayed weatherboard, the
internal walls of tongue-and-grooved ceiling board, the roof of galvanised iron, and the flooring of tongue-and-grooved boards. As built, approximately 30 years ago, they provided an enclosed living area of between 210 and 240 square feet per dwelling.

Over the years additions have been made to three cottages, the largest of which now has an enclosed living area of 890 square feet. All other cottages have had all or parts of their verandahs enclosed with either weatherboard fibro or ply-wood. Because of alterations and poor or old painting, the general effect is now shabby and depressing. Some cottages have glazed windows while others still have wooden shutters.

Of the 22 cottages, 9 have bathrooms, 10 have laundries and only 7 have water on tap within the house. The average living space available is about 6 squares per cottage, or about 75 square feet per individual housed. The average number of rooms available for bedrooms is 3 per cottage, but because of the basic design and the manner of alterations there is usually only one bedroom which offers unimpaired privacy.

By comparison, the station manager's residence has an enclosed living area of about 17 squares, with three bedrooms with unimpaired privacy, and during the study period provided about 290 square feet of living area per individual housed.
This comparison suggests that white staff and family are regarded as requiring about four times the living area per head as that supplied for aborigines on the same station. The disparity is great and informant A made it clear to me that he was well aware of the different standards of housing provided.

The residents of Woodenbong Aboriginal Station are not required to pay rent for their cottages with the exception only of station handymen who are employees of the Board and have 10/- per week deducted from their wages for rent. Handymen are paid the basic wage, while some other residents in permanent employment receive much higher wages yet pay no rent. Informants A and E have both questioned the fairness of such a practice.

Residents, generally, resisted the manager's efforts to have them repair their own cottages with materials supplied by the Board. This resistance has gradually broken down over the study period and at the end of 1959 all but two of the cottages had been substantially improved by alteration, addition or repair during the period. This result appears to be an acceptance of the fact that the present manager will not arrange such work, rather than any conviction on the part of residents that repair work is reasonable recompense for rent-free occupancy.

Residents have little or no feeling of permanence in their cottages, believing that the Board can, and might, evict them for no good reason. Few families have
lived permanently in one cottage throughout their residency on the station, and some families have lived at various times in several different cottages. Such changes take place usually as the result of a family's leaving the Station for a time and then returning to it. The Board exercises the right to nominate tenants for vacated cottages and this too reinforces the aborigines' feelings that they have no "rights" to houses on the Station which most do not think of as their homes.

Residents make only one strong claim on the Station and that is to come and go as they please, to vacate a cottage and leave the Station and to be provided with the first vacant cottage when they return, or desire to return, to the Station.

(b) Grouping of Houses.

There was no clear evidence that occupants of cottages were grouped according to clan or other known tribal relationships, but it must be noted that the majority of families seeking tenancy of a cottage have little choice of cottage location. There was, however, suggestive evidence that families not of the Githebul or Wurlavul clans were grouped around the southern ends of the four unequal rows of cottages; the rows running roughly north-south. Despite this apparent grouping, it would be dangerous, where complete free choice of location has not existed, to place any importance on
dwelling location within the station area. The greatest distance between the furthestmost cottages is less than 300 yards.

(c) Aborigines' Attitudes to Station Housing.

Generally the attitudes of station residents to their cottages at Woodenbong is to regard them as temporary shelters which belong to the Government and over which aborigines have no control. With one or possibly two exceptions, tenants of the cottages do not regard them as homes. Rightly or wrongly, aborigines mention many instances where families have been moved from one cottage to another against their wishes, or instances where residents have been told by the manager to leave the station entirely. Only one such move was made during the study period, and the manager's action in that case had the support of the majority of residents.

Residents of the station have many times stated that all the houses should be destroyed and new houses built as those existing are unfit for habitation. It is probably true that not one cottage on the station would pass the usual requirements of a town building inspector. The attitude of some residents in this connection will be referred to again in Section 17,v.
Membres of the group travel about a great deal. Some of the travelling is essential and some is purely recreational. Local mill workers travel to and from their jobs by bus each day. Only one such worker usually travelled by bicycle despite a distance of only 3 miles along a terraced road. Bus fare has ranged from 1/- to 1/6 each way during the period of this study.

Other station members usually make their shopping trips to Woodenbong by taxi, or, when they are short of money or credit, by walking at least one way. Generally they appear to avoid the use of bus transport when possible. Aborigines walking to and from town are frequently picked up by passing motorists and given free transport. In view of the marked colour prejudice in the area, it is remarkable how many of the local white motorists provide such free transport. Some motorists who pick up walking aborigines do so through sympathy, tolerance and understanding; however, in an area where white attitudes are so strongly anti-aborigine, such a minority cannot explain the frequency with which station residents are offered free transport on their way to or from Woodenbong and other nearby centres.

While taxi transport for an economically depressed group appears as unnecessary luxury when viewed superficially closer inspection reveals that certainly not all such
transport falls within that category. For example, bus fare to and from Woodenbong would cost a station resident 3/-; while if five station residents jointly hire a taxi to make the same trip they can do so at the same cost and gain the advantage of travelling at their own convenience and also of having their shopping parcels transported right to their homes. Similarly, four persons wishing to travel to Kyogle and return can do so by taxi as cheaply as by bus.

Transport to and from many isolated farm and bush jobs can only be made by taxi or private transport and the same applies to trips necessary to visit the nearest Doctor at Urbenville in which case no reasonably timed bus transport is available.

The foregoing notwithstanding, members of the group do make much use of taxi transport in circumstances where alternative, cheaper public transport is available, though less convenient. It is significant that a station resident can operate a successful business as a Hire Car owner-driver, relying entirely on aborigines as customers and generally not having the complete station as his clients.

From one to five aborigines have had private motor vehicles at various times during the study period. The motor vehicles concerned are usually in poor to fair mechanical order and a great deal of changing of vehicles takes place in most cases. Only one resident consistently
drives a vehicle in good condition. Transport in such private vehicles is widespread and the good vehicle just referred to was much used in travel connected with Church activities.

Group transport from the station is made in hired buses. Most group trips have been connected with Church functions but non-members of the Church travel for purely social reasons in Church-hired buses.

It is apparent then that a considerable amount of travelling is done by members of the study group. Too, that while some trips made are for superficially trivial reasons, much use of public transport is necessary because of geographical isolation, and that taxi transport is frequently a more convenient and comfortable way of travelling for small groups without involving individuals in excessive comparable cost.

iv. Dress.

In general the members of the study group are poorly dressed on the station and while working, many adults not wearing shoes at such times. When away from the station on social occasions the standard of dress is good by general standards. An aborigine going to Woodenbong in dirty or untidy clothing meets censure from other station residents, but such censure is not severe when the aborigine concerned is travelling alone.
When a group leaves the station to make a visit elsewhere as a group, the standard of dress is high and any aborigine attempting to travel with such a group while poorly dressed is rebuked strongly. It is quite apparent that the station "in-group" feelings are invoked and that such feelings are intense.

Men usually appear better dressed than women on such occasions, since the adult males dress conservatively in dark suits and white shirts, whereas most of the women have something which will fail to match their general outfit, or lack stockings when they would be appropriate, or some such other flaw in style or taste which detracts from the overall effect. However, my wife assures me that her observations are that the women probably spend more on their "good" clothing than do the men.

The young male group when dressed to go out presents a spectacular sight of bright colours in jackets, shirts, jeans and shoes or moccasins. In their choice of clothing the young male members of the group appear to agree wholeheartedly with a section of the white teenage group.

All children have at least one good outfit, including shoes, for special occasions.

Because no local hairdressers are available to aborigines in the area, a number of station men act as barbers and males' hair is generally neatly cut and trimmed. No similar service is available to female members of
the group and their hair styling and appearance suffers in consequence. Cosmetics are rarely used by female members of the group though lip-stick was increasingly used by some teenage girls during the later portion of the study period.

v. Property
(a) Real and Personal.

No member of the study group owns any real property, though one man claimed that he once owned a block of land in Beaudesert, Q., which he sold because he couldn't afford to build a house on the land.

The personal property of group members is owned by individuals but borrowing among kin is general and appears essential to present group existence.

While some few cottages are adequately furnished at a basic level, very little of the furniture is new or near-new. One example was noted where a married couple and their 8 children were living in a cottage furnished with 1 double bed, 2 single beds, 2 wardrobes, 1 dressing table, 1 chest of drawers, 1 table cabinet, 1 table and 5 chairs. Other families have moved onto the station with no more possessions than they could carry comfortably amongst them.

Few houses have adequate chairs or beds and many houses have insufficient beds to provide sleeping accommodation at two persons per bed. The lack of
adequate seating in most houses is one factor in
preventing the members of a household from sitting
down to a family meal together. Meals are taken
sectionally, standing, sitting about away from the table
or as hunger dictates, the lack of adequate personal
property dictating the way of life.

Motor vehicles and furniture are bought on hire-
purchase and time payment and many members of the group
have had difficulties over such transactions.
(b) Standards of Value and Exchange.

One might expect to find an exaggerated value placed
on such property as furniture when it is in such short
supply, but quite the contrary is generally the case.
Property such as furniture and other durable items is
given away or abandoned on many occasions when a family
leaves the station. At the time of writing the manager
has locked in an official store, furniture and other goods
to a possible value of £100, which was abandoned in a
station cottage when the owner left the station hurriedly.

The sale price of an item being offered by an
aborigine of the study group is more frequently adjusted
to his immediate need for cash than to the real value
of the item. This principle operates in both the over-
valuing and undervaluing of items offered for sale.
Money is regarded for immediate use and whim purchases are frequent when desire and cash-in-hand coincide with the available item. Such purchases appear to be made without thought to near-future demands which will require cash for their essential satisfaction. It seems likely that this attitude, rather than economic possibilities, operates to prevent the accumulation of property of more lasting value, and appropriately higher purchase price, such as furniture.

While the group members lend and give away comparatively valuable property, they remain secretive about available cash-in-hand. Too, they do not trust one another with the handling of cash, and with some justification as numerous examples have come to notice where one member of a party of contract workers has collected payment for a job completed and then vanished with the proceeds.

Few, if any, members of the group operate personal banking accounts. Aborigines who accumulate money temporarily seem to distrust Banks generally and prefer to have some trusted white person (in one instance, a local storekeeper) hold their cash for them.

(c) Trade.

White businessmen complain frequently that aborigines default in payment of accounts, but the same businessmen continue to do business on credit with the aborigines.
It is therefore probable that there are few actual defaulters amongst the group though I have noted numerous cases where temporary incapacity to meet accounts did occur.

As a group they are purchasers of second-hand furniture and second-hand motor vehicles which have little or no value on the open market and must therefore be a boon to dealers in such goods. One dealer in second-hand furniture admitted that the aborigines were his only market for the class of furniture he sold them and that some defaulting in payments and some trouble in collecting arrears did not detract greatly from the value of aborigines as his clients.

The lay-by method of purchase is fairly commonly used at local stores for some types of goods and C.O.D. purchases through catalogue shopping is popular though not as successfully carried through as the local lay-by system. C.O.D. orders are placed when cash is available or soon available but it is frequently spent before the C.O.D. orders arrive. At least some C.O.D. parcels are not claimed but it has not been possible to establish any accurate percentage of the failures in this type of transaction.
vi. Inheritance.

All members of the group die intestate. The value of the estate is never great and is entirely represented by personal property. Inheritance passes according to the verbal "will" of the deceased, normally following kinship lines with the eldest member of deceased's family (i.e., oldest brother or sister of deceased), or eldest child of deceased inheriting. The beneficiary stands as trustee for the goods during the mourning period 10, whereafter the beneficiary is expected to distribute the goods to appropriate kinsmen.

Conclusion ... material culture.

The above outline of the study group indicates that the economic life of the aboriginal group is based almost entirely in the white man's culture, and that the group makes a real effort to present itself advantageously when in the white man's world but accepts for lower standards when segregated on the station.

Also, it is apparent that the attitudes of the white man towards property and money have not been accepted along with the material aspects of his culture. Further, that the tribal attitudes of the group's immediate aboriginal ancestors are still having a significant influence on the group's behaviour.
Section 6. Employment.

1. Types of employment.

Female members of the study group are restricted exclusively to employment as domestic servants. Most domestic work available to the aborigines is of a casual nature and is usually confined to washing, ironing, scrubbing and polishing. The nature of such work, and its casual nature, seems to exclude the possibility of any fraternisation between employer and employee that might occur were a wider range of tasks within the house provided.

The main stable employment for males in the area is in the timber industry which provides all the permanent positions available with the exception of 2 positions as "handymen" on the Aboriginal Station itself.

Casual work for males is available on farms doing such jobs as fencing, land clearing, corn-pulling and potato-picking.

There are no industrial developments in the area and no Local Government or State Governmental opportunities of significance to the aborigines.

Some general labouring and domestic gardening work is available in the two nearby towns from time to time. Teenage males are almost impossible to place in employment in the area until they are old enough and strong enough to accept a man's job.

Most land-clearing and much other casual work is offered as "contract" work.
ii. Degrees of skill.

Because of the limited opportunities available for gaining wide experience in domestic work, very few of the females could be considered as trained domestic workers.

The male working force of the group contains highly skilled men in all phases of the timber industry except engineering and management. One mill in the district operated successfully for some time with 8 aboriginal employees and two white employees. Of the two whites employed, only the engineer—sawsharpenener was not replaceable by an available trained aborigine.

Two men are trained and experienced dairyfarm hands and cattle handlers.

The "unskilled" section of the male group does have ability in tasks such as fencing, clearing and crop-picking. While such tasks are not generally considered to need "skilled" labour, it is nevertheless true that men without experience cannot do such work.

Few of the group engaged in the contract work referred to above are able to make accurate estimates of land areas or time necessary to complete work and are therefore at the mercy of the employer to estimate fairly the work available.

iii. Where employed.

Only one female aborigine left the immediate locality to seek permanent employment during the period of this study. This exceptional woman joined the Woman's Army and has since...
been trained as the first female Army cook of Aboriginal extraction. All other females have found their employment in the immediately surrounding area.

The majority of males also seek employment in the immediate district though some range further afield. Places where employment has been sought have been within the Bandjelang tribal area in almost all cases. One notable exception is a man permanently working as a driver of heavy inter-state road transport. In the few other cases where men have sought employment outside the Bandjelang area the men concerned have had kinship links with aborigines living in the areas to which they went to work.

iv. Wages.

Wages vary from award conditions to well below award rates. Cases of obvious cheating by white employers have been noted but are extremely difficult for an officer of the Aborigines Welfare Board to correct. Either the aboriginal worker has signed for money without knowing what he signed for, or has failed to complete a task when he realised he was being cheated, or he has made a verbal contractual agreement weighted against him\(^1\).

There are examples of proper wages being paid to aborigines of the study area and generous working conditions being provided. Such cases are not a majority. The majority of cases involve bargaining by the employer
who appears to seek the minimum expenditure for the maximum work and pays little or no heed to award conditions. In fairness it must be stated that some, at least, of the employers make no distinction between white and aboriginal workers. That is, they treat both groups badly.

Cases were noted, particularly in the field of domestic work for teenage aboriginal girls, where the white person seeking labour was offering (with considerable emphasis) "a good home" and "good food" and was avoiding mention of payment of wages. The most extreme case noted was one where a girl was sought to take full charge of a home on a dairy farm, including two young children, and assist the farmer in the dairy in the absence of his wife during confinement and convalescence. The offer was a "good home and a few shillings pocket money".

There are, too, still white people in the study area who believe that some cast-off clothing is a substantial reward to an aboriginal woman and a justifiable reason for paying approximately half the ruling rate of pay. It must also be mentioned that there are others who pay £2.0.0 per day for washing (with a washing machine) and also offer clothing in addition.

v. Treatment of employers by aborigines.

In their treatment of employers the attitudes of aborigines of the study group show quite clearly that they
have no feeling of pride in their work and no sense of responsibility to their employer. Any personal reason may be sufficient for not returning to a job, or for leaving it without notice at any time. Only three men of the study group remained in the same job throughout the whole of the study period. One of the three was self-employed as a hire-car owner-driver, one a mill worker and the other an employee of the Board.

Contract work is frequently spread over an excessive period of time, only sufficient work being completed each week to satisfy the needs of the moment.

vi. Treatment by employers

While the aborigines are regarded as a useful pool of labour for emergencies, employers in general indicate no sense of obligation to the group. Employers contact the station manager by telephone and demand labour and expect the manager to tell men they must accept the work offered. Many employers are reluctant, or refuse, to discuss rates of pay with the Aboriginal Station manager.

Many employers speak adversely of individual aborigines but continue to employ them casually as need arises.

There are a minority of employers who speak well of individual aborigines and have good relations with the group. The group appears to treat these employers far better than is their general rule.
vii. Conclusion.

While a sufficient amount of employment was available to the group during most of the study period, there were some brief gaps when the most eager aborigines could not obtain work. Teen-aged males are almost impossible to employ in the area and few skilled jobs are available to any members of the group. Men have more variety of employment opportunities than women.

Most members of the group are non-union labour and no Trade Union attempted to organise the members of the group during the study period.

White and coloured workers in mills eat separately during meal breaks and have no social intercourse away from their jobs.

The station manager acts as a go-between for employee and employer, but is rarely able to be more than a message-carrier.

A great number of aborigines in self-employment would increase the work status of the group and strengthen the group's bargaining power since it would not be dependant on white employers for its entire income.
Section 7. Art and Recreation

i. Art.

No general activity in carving, painting or drawing has been noted beyond the level practised by school children. Nothing marked off such school activity as belonging to an aboriginal group.

One example of esoteric carving has been recorded and will be referred to in Section 13, iii. This example was of simple form and treatment.

Music is a common medium of expression for the group and many play guitars by ear but no member of the group can read music. One man (P) has composed a number of songs which are in the "hillbilly" tradition in both words and music. Several of the older men and women still sing traditional aboriginal songs in Bandjalang and Kamilaroi. It is possible that these songs might be more generally used if it were not that the private ownership of such songs is still respected by the group. One example was noted of two school-girls singing a short song of this type.

Corroborees are no longer danced but were until 15-20 years ago. Many of the 35 years and over age group used to dance the traditional style when younger.

Few dances of European type were held on the Station during the study period though there was more activity of this type during the early portion of the period.
Informant (A) blames the present manager for curtailing social dances. It is probable that other factors played a greater part in curtailing social dancing.

ii. Recreation

One season of football was the only organised sport outside school during the study period. The football club was managed, kept financial, and generally supervised by the manager of the Station. The following season the manager declined to assist a football club unless the aborigines accepted full responsibility for organising and controlling it. No organised sport has taken place since.

An out-of-repair tennis court exists on the station and no attempt to repair or use the court has been made by the residents of the Station. Here again a manager is held responsible for the present attitude of residents.

Children play such games as rounders, hop-scotch, marbles, cricket and football in season.

No hobbies were noted in either the children or adults.

The playing of cards in a game known as "pups" is the usual pastime of the non-church section of the adult population. Money is played for in "pups" but it is extremely doubtful if this game could be established as "gambling". "Pups" is a game of five-card "rummy" with the two or "pup" being used as a "wild" card. Since
"rummy" is legally a game of skill and therefore not gambling, it seems that "pups" would also be so regarded.

Many stories of large sums of money being won and lost at "pups" were noted during the first half of the study period but in no case was the story established as factual. The only game disturbed by the manager during the study period had a total stake of four shillings.

Some women spent excessive time playing "pups" and warnings to various individuals were issued by the manager in cases where neglect of children was involved.

The consumption of alcoholic liquor was the main recreation for a minority group of males during the period under review. Disorderly behaviour resulting from drinking dropped off sharply over the period as changing attitudes by aborigines and management brought about changes in behaviour.

No difficulty was experienced by aborigines in obtaining all the liquor they required. When it was not available locally it could always be obtained across the border in Queensland. The drinking of alcohol by aborigines is impossible to prevent and the law forbidding its supply to aborigines is harmful and useless.

Church activities can be regarded in some aspects as recreational but this is discussed in Section 14.
A ball game played by young people is said to be derived from a traditional aboriginal game. It is played by opposing groups of males and females. According to (A) this is the only traditional aboriginal game still played.

Another aspect of station life at Woodenbong which must be considered as a recreation, despite its wider significance, is gossip. From the time of rising in the morning until retiring at night there is an everyday movement of aborigines from place to place. Small gossip groups form and break up and reform again with changed membership.

While gossip groups serve the recreational functions of such groups in white society, it is also clear that for the study group gossip is a powerful method of crystalising group feelings. It is through the endless flow of gossip that an injury or insult suffered by one aborigine becomes an injury or insult inflicted on the group.

The same group identification does not take place when a kindness or service is rendered to an individual of the group. In the latter case feelings of envy appear to be provoked from the group, which lead to an adverse reaction against the donor and sometimes also against the recipient.

Recreational activities outside the Aboriginal Station are extremely limited for members of the group.
Social functions organised by members of the white community are not attended by aborigines and it is clear that the white community expects them not to attend. The Woodenbong Police and Citizens' Youth Club banned aborigines from membership. The local cinema at Woodenbong exercises segregation of aborigines into the least desirable section of the hall. A cheaper price is charged and insult is added to injury by the display of a notice outside the theatre which gives the prices for "Adults, Children, and Aboriginals".

From the above outline it is clear that the group carries on no publicly discernable art or recreation of a distinctly aboriginal derivation. Also, that, in drinking and playing cards, members of the group have adopted forms of recreation of low social status in white society.

The group's art and recreational activities, therefore, fail to increase the social status of the group in white society; but emphasise the unity of the study group and its apartness from the white society in which it exists.
Section 8. The Family, Marriage, and Sex.

In this and the following two Sections it is not proposed to attempt a complete and detailed exposition of the Social Organisation of the study group as such treatment would require more space than is available within the scope of this thesis. Nor, in Sections 11 to 15 inclusive will be found a comprehensive treatment of the Ritual and Beliefs of the group.

It is my purpose only to establish the outline of these aspects of culture, to indicate the material on which the outline is based; to note what material has been recorded and to indicate what further material is available but not recorded during the fieldwork on which this thesis is based.

By the above it is not intended to convey the impression that Social Organisation, and Ritual and Belief are unimportant. In fact, quite the contrary is the case. It is only on an understanding of these aspects of the culture of the study group that an assessment of management and welfare problems can be made.

Because of the extreme secrecy of the group members, the material on which the following eight Sections is based was not difficult to obtain. In these aspects of the study the circumstances and methods of fieldwork both their greatest strengths and weaknesses. It was only the everyday contact with, and observation of the group
over a long period that made the material available. However, because that contact was as manager of the station, it has not been possible to obtain the unreserved confidence of informants.

In these aspects informants only discussed matters after they realised that my observations had revealed things they had tried desperately to hide. Once the written results of my work are available in part and could be discussed with informants, there was apparent a desire that I should write only what was true. It is anticipated that once a copy of this thesis has been handed to them, as promised, further material, as yet withheld, will become available. I am confident that any further material obtained will not invalidate the outline here presented. It can only expound and elaborate the cultural structure already established.

i. Marriage.

Prior to white contact with the study group a man was given a wife immediately he returned to his local group following initiation at the bora¹ or secret initiation ground. His wife was brought to his bungun² at night and left with him. The young man had no direct choice in the matter, nor did the woman who became his wife. Informants³ who gave this information claimed that there was no special ceremony involved in marriage.
A man might live for a time in his wife's country but he eventually took up permanent residence in the country of his father. From time to time he made visits, with his wife and family, to his wife's country. Important men could have more than one wife.

Once a marriage was made the wife could not leave her husband or commit adultery without risking her life. A widow became the wife of the eldest classified brother of her former husband who could forego his right in favour of a younger classified brother. Informant B claimed that a widow could exercise some limited choice of a second husband by working through her own male kin but that she could not voice her opinions directly to her possible future husbands.

Marriages in former times were arranged according to an Aluridja type kinship system which will be discussed more fully in Section 9.

The present situation is that marriage still follows the basic patterns of the past with a majority of all unions still conforming to the kinship rule. Those who do not marry according to this rule are said by B to be marrying "like dogs".

Thirty-nine marital unions were detailed during the study period, of which 33 were fully investigated and 24 of that number were found to be correct by Aluridja kinship rule. Only 2 unions were completely outside kinship influence.
One case involved the legal marriage of classified brother and sister (not blood kin), the marriage taking place so that the man could avoid prosecution for having carnal knowledge of a female under the age of 16 years. The other case was the marriage of an aboriginal girl to a white man. This girl was seldom on the station prior to her union with the white man.

One case, not recorded above, was noted where a Githebul man legally married his mother's sister's daughter. This occurred many years ago and the man (now in his 60's) raised his family away from Aboriginal Stations and Reserves. His children are now widely scattered and may be regarded as integrated into the general community. An informant (B) described the man as "the lowest mongrel on this earth". It is not surprising that the man has had little place in the "in-group" life on Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. However, during the study period, he returned to the Station for his brother's funeral and has remained on the Station for brief periods since 6.

Legal marriage is the rule, rather than the exception for the group, but there is strong evidence to suggest that many legal marriages took place as the result of pressure from a former Manager of the Station. Of 39 marital unions recorded, 25 (1 doubtful) were legally sanctioned, 12 were de-facto relationships where no bar existed to legal marriage, 1 involved a man whose legal wife was still
living, and I was a case where parental consent was withheld for aboriginal kinship reasons.

Many informants have told me that the Manager should make the young girls get married, "like the other managers did". The present manager knows of no legal way of compelling anyone to marry and has done no more than suggest that suitable unions, involving children, should be legalised in the interests of the children.

Of 12 unions formed during the study period, 9 were still functioning at the end of the period. The result of the policy of the present manager has been that of the 12 unions formed during the period only 1 was legalised by marriage. In this case the man was an invalid pensioner and upon marriage his wife was able to apply for and receive a wife's allowance. One other case, involving a white man is also said to have been legalised, but verification of this could not be obtained as the couple were not residents of the Aboriginal Station.

From the foregoing it is clear that there has been some breakdown in the aboriginal marriage rule of the group. It was noted that almost all breakdown has involved only an adjustment in generation level so that the partners to a marital union conform to the white man's ideal that partners to a marriage should be approximately equal age.

Only one marriage between an aborigine and a non-aborigine took place during the study period. This fact, in conjunction with the information given in Table IX (Notes to Section 3) is clear evidence that out-mating is
infrequent and not likely to increase while present influences remain operative.

Legal marriage is not important to the group except where there is some gain associated with it.

ii. The Family.

The immediate family provides strong ties for its members on the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station, but these ties cannot be understood in terms of the family patterns of the general white community of New South Wales. Superficially the family structure of father, mother and children exists for residents of the Station as it does for families of the general community, but beneath the most superficial level the demands of an aboriginal extended family pattern are paramount for the families of the study group.

Children, for example, refer to their father's brother as "daddy" and behave towards him and his household as they would towards their own household. After puberty there is a withdrawal from familiarity between brother and sister and a far more noticeable segregation of the sexes.

Adults provide meals and shelter for children who are not members of their immediate family but who form a part of the extended family to which they belong. Not the wife, but such kin as eldest brother, eldest sister and eldest cousin of a man arrange the funeral of a man who has died. An adult male's married sister avoids talking directly to her brother except for some serious reason. Conversations are carried on through a third person present (e.g. the
child of one of the adults) who is addressed by both brother and sister as if the person for whom the remarks are intended was not present.

While the author's position as Manager prevented the close observation of such behaviour in intimate family gatherings, it is clear from informants that the basic patterns of the family are controlled by the kinship rights and obligations of the extended family.

By using the authority vested in the person of "mother's brother" the present manager has on some occasions been able to avoid direct intervention in domestic disputes referred to him. The settlements of domestic matter by mother's brother has been final and the manager has remained free of accusations of favouritism.

A manager must be aware of the relationships and rights of Station residents if he hopes to be in a position to know whether complaints and information brought to him should be treated seriously, regarded as malicious tale-carrying, or simply accepted as items of interesting station gossip.

Marital unions remain stable within the family structure despite infidelity and other troubles which generally cause no more than temporary upsets. The male generally asserts his right as "head of the house" and the use of wife-beating as a means of maintaining his authority is not uncommon. Nor was it uncommon for wives to seek the support of the Manager and Police in domestic disputes.
by giving misleading or false information against their husbands. Once the present manager adopted the policy of refusing to contact the Police or take managerial action unless the wife was prepared to give a written statement of her complaint and agree to give evidence against her husband, the number of complaints of this type was reduced remarkably.

Because of the number of places where a child may consider himself "at home", there is not the close supervision of children that is accepted as normal in the general community. Discipline of children is therefore lax in everyday matters.

There is, however, another explanation of lack of discipline of children which must be considered. A number of aborigines have claimed to the present manager that it is his responsibility to chastise and control the children. The idea behind such claims is apparently that the manager, the school-teacher and the police have taken over the responsibility of teaching, controlling and punishing, and should therefore do the complete job.

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest some managers have adopted a high-handed attitude which implied complete authority in all matters. However, even if the law permitted complete supervision and control by authority, it is certain that it would not be acceptable to the aborigines.

Members of the study group are willing to surrender control of their children only in matters they regard as unimportant. In other circumstances aboriginal parents
can and do exercise control and discipline.

Generally, despite instability or misfortune within an immediate family, the children find emotional security in the extended family group. Because of the strong emotional security provided for a child within the extended family, the removal of a child from such a group to an institution or adoptive home might be expected to produce in the child an extreme emotional shock. For this reason the future health and happiness of the child could be damaged by the legal process which sought to protect it.

The foregoing indicates that management should be aware of, and use the extended family group in dealing with all cases of child of child neglect or misfortune. Only where care within the extended family is unavailable should a child be removed from the group.

iii. Sex.

The material presented in this sub-section should not be regarded as definitive. My official position precluded the collection of comprehensive material on the subject.

Generally, there is evidence, both direct and indirect, which shows that sexual relations are largely conditioned by aboriginal kinship affiliations and also by the mixed-kin nature of the Station population.

Sexual experimentation appears to begin at a very early age for both sexes and child play involving actual copulation is apparently widespread for males and females prior to puberty. Informant A insisted that such behaviour
followed kinship rule and was unknown to the group until about thirty years ago. (A) said: "You can blame the Board\textsuperscript{12} for that...putting everybody into one yard like a mob of cattle".

(A) explained that prior to supervised segregation on aborigines' reserves, children who stood in a kinship in-law relationship normally lived in separated groups. After the establishment of reserves such children were living side by side and those who stood in a husband-wife relationship to one another exercised the sexual rights associated with their kinship status. Insufficient information is available to establish A's explanation as the invariable pattern.

At puberty a strict supervision is exercised over girls and until they reach the age of 16 there is a continuance of control by parents. This control is successful in that no girl under the age of 16 became pregnant during the study period. The control appears to be motivated by a desire to avoid the official activity and resultant family disorder which occur in such cases. Males in the same age-group are not similarly supervised.

While the sexual activity of the over 16 age-group appears to be promiscuous, actual cases investigated revealed that the boy and girl concerned were in a husband-wife relationship.

Marital sexual relations are possibly very frequent though one man (Q), temporarily separated from his wife, said it was because he demanded too much sexual intercourse. This suggests that in some cases, at
least, the wife is far from being a submissive and uncomplaining partner.

Contraception by any other means than male withdrawal before climax is rare. One case was noted where male sheaths were used by one may. One case was reported of a woman using a mechanical contraceptive device.

Extramarital relations take place in many instances but such infidelity is not regarded as a sufficient reason for the permanent disruption of the union. Both males and females regard the sexual drive as being natural and something against which there is no point in fighting. In an extramarital relationship if one of the persons involved is not married, he or she is not considered to have committed adultery.

Prostitution within the group is probably rare and while the sex act may be associated with gain for the woman in some cases, the gain is regarded as a gift rather than as payment for services rendered. The possible exception is where old men are involved.

Sexual relations between aboriginal women and white men are rare for the study group. Only three cases of this type were noted and in no case does the female concerned now live on the Station.

Some cases of sexually deviant behaviour are recorded in the past but no case of this nature was noted during the study period. One case was brought to the attention of the Police in which an adult male was alleged to have attempted sexual intercourse with his niece aged 9 years.
This man, and those reputedly involved in aberrant sexual behaviour prior to the study period were all members of one extended family of "outsiders" which is no longer resident on the Station.

While the general picture suggests sexual promiscuity which commences at an extremely early age and continues until death or disability intervenes, it would be dangerous to ignore the kinship morality which operates. The group's sexual behaviour does not measure up to the general community's ideals of sexual morality but it may well agree with an in-group morality, valid for the study group.

It has been shown in the previous Section that aboriginal kinship is of great importance to the aborigines of the study group. No other one factor can have more importance in a consideration of aboriginal Station management. Once the continued operation of kinship rule is established, many seemingly inexplicable things may be understood.

While it is impossible within the scope of this thesis to present a detailed account of the material recorded, the following brief summary may be pertinent.

Thirty-three cases of marital unions were fully investigated. Twenty-four were correctly made by Aluridja-type kinship rule. Five were matings into the correct in-laws group, but into an incorrect generation. In each of those cases the union was established either one generation up or down from the correct one. One was between persons correctly related if the man's mother's second marriage was ignored. Yet another was with a person in the relationship of mother's brother's daughter's daughter's daughter referred to by Elkin, but was considered incorrect. The remaining two unions were outside kinship influence. One was between a classified brother and sister who were not blood relations. The other was between an aboriginal girl and a white man.

While this thesis was in preparation a graphic instance of kinship strength was noted. A girl, aged 19, was brought to the Woodenbong Station for a holiday. She had been a Ward of the Aborigines Welfare Board between the ages of 9 and 18 years. At the time of her committal she had been
living at Guyra. A liaison was quickly formed between this girl and a Woodenbong aboriginal boy of the same age. It was found that the young couple were in a correct husband-wife relationship in terms of aboriginal kinship.

The boy's mother's sister who was born in the Tweed River district, but now lives in Sydney, had established contact with the girl after she was released from the care of the Board. She then brought the girl to Woodenbong where matters were so arranged that "nature took its course". The young couple intend to marry because they are "in love".

The example just given offers a possible explanation of the fact that most ex-wards of the Board return to aboriginal communities upon release from the care of the Board. No assumption of this can be made, however, without further investigation over a wider geographical area and a larger numerical sampling.

In the last thirty years only three aborigines from the study group have married "whites". All three were women and one was the daughter of the man referred to in Note 6 of the previous Section. The other two women and/or their children would be welcomed back into the study group if they wished to return as members of it.

Kinship links extend outward from the study group at Woodenbong, and reach westward to Guyra and Moree, northward to Cherbourg Settlement in Queensland and southward as far as Taree on the coast. This clearly indicates that aboriginal kinship still affects aborigines over a wide area of New
South Wales. However, it would be unwise, on the basis of the Woodenbong evidence alone, to assume that kinship operates with equal strength in all areas of the State.

Other aspects of kinship noted are briefly stated below. The mutual aid provided by kinship obligations is effective for the group in maintaining all members of it whenever there is sufficient money available amongst its members to do so. This functioning of kinship responsibility can be of real service in difficult times. However, it does tend to maintain all members of the group at an average low standard of prosperity.

Avoidances associated with the kinship system produce real problems on the Station when housing is inadequate. Kin, (for example, "in-laws"), are sometimes forced to share a cottage and inevitable frictions arise. A manager may ask an adult to carry a verbal message to another adult. If the two aborigines are in an avoidance relationship the adult will most likely agree to carry the message but then pass it on to a child to give to the other adult. Such messages are sometimes not delivered at all, or are delivered in a distorted form. In this way a manager can find himself accused of saying things he did not, or of having failed to deliver an important message. Once a manager is aware of such avoidance relationships on a Station it is a simple matter to avoid trouble of this sort.

Also, because of the kinship ranking system where eldest brother speaks for a family, it is possible to hold a meeting with very few in attendance and yet have the whole station
represented effectively. The frankest discussion of the group's problems occurred during 1959 at a meeting at which few remained to speak following a showing of films. The few who remained were all males and represented every family on the Station.

It is clear that breakdown has occurred in the strict observance of kinship, but is equally clear that kinship still plays a dominating role for members of the study group. That the members of the study group do their utmost to conceal the operation of their kinship system from whites is also important.

There is a need to investigate the present position of aboriginal kinship throughout New South Wales. Any policy of welfare or management which ignores kinship where it is still operating has little or no chance of success. However, a policy which uses the strengths of kinship ties by working through them has enhanced chances of success.

At present an Aboriginal Station Manager in New South Wales has as his guiding policy "the assimilation of aborigines into the general community". He attempts to aid the assimilation of individuals or immediate family groups. Where an aboriginal kinship system is operating, a Manager is working directly against the whole group if he attempts to assimilate any member of it. For the group a loss of one member is the loss of an important link in the chain which binds its structure.

The present manager of the study group has not been successful in assimilating a single aborigine during his four years at Woodenbong. All attempts to encourage
individuals and families to leave the Station permanently have failed.

It is important to note that the subjects of this particular study were obstructive, deliberately misleading and uncooperation during the whole of the first half of the study period. B, for example, stated many times: "All that (kinship) finished fifty years ago". It was not until sufficient genealogies had been collected, and the general pattern revealed from them, that it was possible to discuss the matter frankly with informants.

Discussions revealed that members of the group had been "laughed at" by whites who told them that civilised people married for "love". My informants were amazed when it was explained to them that a majority of marriages throughout the world were still arranged unions which were not made on the complete free choice of the partners.

(A) explained the group's secretive attitude by saying: "They'd (the whites) taken all they could from us. We didn't want them to take that too".

While members of the study group continue to feel the need to hide the dominating forces guiding them, it will be extremely difficult indeed to establish good managerial relations with them.

In the Notes may be found some detailed material on the Githebul kinship terms and relationships.
Section 10. Social Groups and Social Control.

i. Social Groups.

The most important feature of the group activities of aborigines at Woodenbong is that there is no extension of basic group belongingness which links them in any way with the "white" groups operating in the general community. Aborigines of Woodenbong do not belong to Trade Unions, Political Parties, Lodges, Churches or other associations through which a member of the general community extends his feelings of "belonging" beyond his immediate family. All group activity is confined therefore to the aboriginal community.

Aborigines who, apart from the right to purchase liquor, now have all the rights associated with any other citizens, feel no belongingness to the Australian community. Though all adult members have the right to vote at both State and Federal elections, a maximum number of three have been enrolled during the study period. Others, who have been urged to enrol and vote, have declined to do so.

The study group is distinctly a group apart from the white community. It is a group in the community, but not of it.

It is necessary to understand therefore, the aboriginal groups to which members belong if there is to be any understanding of the functioning of group life.

In the previous Section was discussed the strong kinship bonds which unite members of the study group. The extension of these bonds of kinship form the wider groups
within the general Bandjalang area.

During the early portion of the study period several informants\(^1\) claimed that a Section System operated in Bandjalang society but that it no longer operated. All these claims were based on the fact that three male ancestors were said to have had Section names\(^2\). Investigation showed that there was no knowledge of the workings of the Section System nor any evidence of it having affected the earliest marriages within the Gitebul and surrounding countries. All three men with Section names were found to have married women from the country to the north of Bandjalang territory. These men acquired their wives about one hundred years ago while droving cattle as far north as Rockhampton in Queensland. Their sons did not have Section names.

It is reasonable to suppose that the belief in local Sections stems from three unusual marriages outside Bandjalang territory and that the present situation\(^3\) does not represent a breakdown of a former Section System, but a continuance of the Aluridja type kinship system which makes it impossible for a Section System to operate.

An examination of marriages in terms of dialect groups show that to the present day only three marriages have taken place within the study group which involved partners belonging to the same dialect. All three unions are admitted\(^4\) as being wrong\(^5\). Informants have confirmed that it is wrong to marry into the same dialect. The dialect groups, called "tribes" by informants, are therefore basically exogamous clans. No totemic link binds all members of a clan so that the dialect
groups may be considered as patrilineal exogamous social clans. These clans have continuing significance for the aborigines at Woodenbong. The wider tribal group of 10 clans appears to have minor significance only.

Within the limits set by kinship affiliations both age and sex groupings are significant.

Age groups are formed in the following way: Young children, roughly equivalent to the pre-school group; older children, post-puberty but unattached young people; adults; and old people.

Sex groupings cut across age groupings commencing at the age of about ten with males and females forming separate groups. At puberty girls are admitted to the young women's group and any subject is then discussed by women in their presence. A girl is not considered to be a women until she has borne a child. The division of the sexes is very marked from puberty throughout life until old age when males and females have a relaxed and familiar relationship.

This sexual dichotomy within the study group is of considerable importance in management problems. Very early in the present manager's period at Woodenbong he suggested the formation of a Station Council whose function it would be to make many decisions on station problems and advise the manager on all matters where the Council considered it necessary. Having been told that the "old way" was finished, the manager proposed that the Council should have both male and female representatives. Station residents declined to form a Council. The manager has since been told that
failure was because he suggested that women be appointed to the proposed Council.

Gossip groups may have some significance but because their outlines are not clearcut it has not been possible for the present investigator to establish their importance, while working in the dual capacity of manager and anthropologist.

Superficially the Station Church appears to be a significant group with permanent leadership, a core of permanent members, and a formal organisation. However, as will be discussed in Section 14, it is doubtful if the Church has any social significance as a group. The Church cuts across the important claims of clan and kin and lacks the cohesive strength to achieve group solidarity.

ii. Social Control.

Social control does not exist from within for the whole study group. Control is exercised to some extent through kinship authority and the present manager has been able to exercise considerable indirect influence through a careful use of authority vested in kinship relationships.

The past attitude of management seems to have discouraged members of the study group from exercising their own internal control and much reliance was, and still is, placed on "authority" in times of domestic or group crises.

Because of the loose form of social control within the group, and the pattern of fixed attitudes belonging to the group, the introduction of new ideas (for example, adult education) can only be achieved by winning over the leading
members of the kinship groups. The establishment and maintenance of good relations with the older section of the group is of overriding importance for all people seeking to influence the study group.
Section 11. Totemism.

Some material on totemism has been recorded during the study period but time has not been available to record the great bulk of the material which is still known to members of the group. The weight of evidence of this study suggests that a complete record could still be made of all the totemic sites and of the associated myths, at least for a great many of the horde countries.

To test the possibility of making a complete record of the Butheram (totemic and cult myths) of the study area, one man from each of the Gullyvul, Yukumbear, Githebul and Wurlavul clans was approached and in all cases it was possible to record material and only lack of time prevented the recording of many more myths. Three examples are given in the notes.

For the purposes of this thesis it is more important to establish the present reality and significance of totems for the Woodenbong aborigines than to set down and discuss the myths themselves. However, in the notes may be found some discussion of the material presented by Professor Radcliffe-Brown in his "Notes on Totemism in Eastern Australia" which my material generally confirms and elaborates. In some cases my material is in conflict with that presented by Radcliffe-Brown.

On two occasions I was able to spend a day with an aboriginal informant in his own horde country. With informant (L), a man of the country discussed by Radcliffe-Brown, I was able to confirm the 9 jurraveel, as recorded
by Radcliffe-Brown, and obtain some information concerning 6 others within the same horde territory. While with informant (I), a Wurlavul man, I was able to record some information concerning 9 jurraveel.

It will be realised from the foregoing that any attempt to record and discuss full information on the jurraveel of the whole study area would be a major project in itself and beyond the scope of this thesis.

Of more significance for our purposes was the attitude of each of the informants while in his own horde country. Each showed a remarkable detailed knowledge of the geography and history of his area and gave such a running commentary of place names, anecdotes, and water-quality that any attempt to record it all was beyond the author. When in close proximity to a jurraveel both men observed a grave and reverent manner. One man stood silently for some time with his hands pressed palm-down against a jurraveel rock. The impression made on me in this instance I can only describe as one of awe. The serenity, sincerity and conviction with which the man carried out this rite were convincing evidence of the present spiritual reality of jurraveel for him.

All members of the group avoid jurraveel to which they have no right. The present school-teacher has been unable to persuade groups of the schoolboys to climb certain mountains with him. It is clear that totemic affiliations are not just important to a few men who happen to be the present sentimental custodians of their Butheram. They are a present reality of significance to the whole group and
through them group members draw spiritual sustenance and support.

In these circumstances there seems little likelihood of establishing members of the group in town accommodation at any great distance from their ancestral country. Efforts to divorce such aborigines from their own country are most unlikely to succeed in the foreseeable future. An aboriginal Station Manager who attempts such a course of action is certain to be resented for his lack of understanding.
Section 12. Mythology.

1

i. The Dutharam.

In the previous Section it was indicated that mythology and totemism were parts of one whole, not separate things. It is quite clear from many discussions with informants that there is one reality, the Dutharam, which includes all features of myth, ritual and belief. No distinction is made between the jurraveel which has to do with a species of plant or animal and that which has to do with a mythical species or no species at all. All jurraveel are sacred places through which contacts with spiritual force and power are attained by aborigines of the group.

At one jurraveel a man, or woman, may, by "talking", be able to increase a natural species while at another a man by the same means can exercise magical influence over people or events. In all cases it is contact through a jurraveel with the Dutharam which is important. It is through such contact that an aborigine's wishes may be made known to his Dutharam. Mythology establishes the appropriate locations for various requests. Mythology also has the important function of providing spiritual authority for social behaviour and law.

Mythology, whether in song or story, provides the
knowledge of the Butheram and the jurraveel provides the means of contact with the Butheram. It is indicative of the past attitude of the white community of the study area that "fairy" is the only English word known to Woodenbong aborigines with which they can attempt to describe many Butheram beings. It is not surprising that members of the study group should be reluctant to reveal their Butheram to "whites" if the "whites" of the past have referred to myths as "just a fairy tale". Contacts with untrained, and in some cases unsympathetic, collectors of aboriginal legends in this area have not encouraged members of the group to give their myths to anyone who has not been tested by them.

From the above it may be seen that any person, whether Officer of the Aborigines Welfare Board or not, who scoffs at the Butheram, talks of "fairy tales" or in any other way decries the Butheram, is most unlikely to establish productive contact with members of the study group.

An example of a Butheram which reveals the many-sided purposes of the mythology is included in the notes. It is very much to the point of this thesis, as the informant attributes his present personality pattern to his association with the Butheram.
11. Folklore.

By folklore is meant the body of stories of recent origin which are told and retold and thus become a part of the social inheritance of group members. They play a significant part in the formation and maintenance of attitudes for the group.

No attempt has been made to record the many hundreds of stories of this kind. The collection and analysis of them could well prove a fruitful field for further research.

Briefly, all such stories appear to fall into two classes. The first class provides a warning of the evil results which follow from disbelief in, or meddling with the Butharam and the power of the "clever man". The second class of story indicates that there is nothing to be gained and much to be lost by trusting or too closely associating with "whites". Brief examples of some stories of each type are given in the notes.

It is safe to say that in the anecdotes I have called folklore we find a potted version of the beliefs and attitudes of the study group. These may be stated as:- 1. Stick to your own way and respect it, or you'll suffer for it. 2. Stay away from the white man and his ways, or you'll suffer for it.
Section 13. The Secret Life.

Sufficient material has been recorded to show that ritual initiation is not a thing of the remote past for aboriginal men at Woodenbong. Further, that magic remains a living force in their society, and that medicine men may be found amongst them, who still exercise considerable power and influence. Despite this, however, it must be stated that the secret life of the study group still remains largely a secret.

That this is so after thirty years of constant supervision by resident managers, fifty years of day to day contact with a closely settled white community and after a number of field investigations by anthropologists and allied fieldworkers, is a tribute to the group solidarity and intelligence of the aborigines. It is also a clear indication that aboriginal station management has failed to get close to the mainsprings of the aborigines' lives.

This, too, is clearly a field where further investigation by patient anthropologists could reveal valuable information on the tenacity of culture traits under conditions of culture contact. The present study in this field has been greatly hampered by my position as manager of the Aboriginal Station.
Initiation of men is a subject about which it is extremely difficult to obtain information. No man of the study group will admit he has been "through the rule". This applies even to a man of advanced years who is "clever". It also applies to two men who carry cicatrices.

At the commencement of the study period numerous informants insisted that no Mandjilang man then living had been "through the rule". Gradually, as more trust and understanding was established between informants and myself, information was forthcoming which established that some few old men, none of whom lived at Woodenbong, had been initiated at the bora.

Then, after about two years of the study period had gone by, a Woodenbong man of 56 was discovered who was marked on the chest. This man had never married and was said to have lived a celibate life. When asked about the markings on his chest this man expressed surprise, looked at his chest with every show of astonishment and said: "I don't know. I don't know what happened. They must have been there from when I was born".

Later still, in the study period, a man of 27 was also seen to have cicatrices on his chest, his right upper arm and also one mark on the inner part of his
left arm just below the elbow joint. This man is unmarried. He is not known to have had sexual relations with any woman, nor has any rumour to that effect reached me. He preserved a complete silence when questioned regarding the marking on his body. A photograph of this man is given, Appendix V.

I have pieced together from many informants what appears to be the most accurate account possible under the special circumstances of this study.

The two men carrying cicatrices are dedicated men "willed" by the elders to be set apart as carriers of the "law". They are called Boorumyunboon and must remain celibate. If a Boorumyunboon has sexual relations with women it is said that he will not live long. All available evidence suggests that both the Boorumyunboon mentioned above have remained celibate.

The younger man was initiated not more than 10 years ago. His cicatrices were probably made at a ceremony carried out in the Baryulgil area during the latter half of 1955.

Usually one, but not more than two Boorumyunboon are alive in each clan at one time. Of the two such men referred to here, one belongs to the Githebul and one to the Wurlavule clan.

Ordinary aborigines, not made Boorumyunboon,
are not marked with cicatrices. It is probable, but it is not established by this research that there are a great many initiated men who belong to the study group.\(^2\)

That magical practices are definitely still carried out can be established beyond doubt. One man used a magical ritual to "draw" two women to his house and his bed.\(^3\) The same man has a Batheram which enables him to ensure that all but the woman he desires will be soundly asleep when he pays a nocturnal visit.

The women's equivalent of this is "talking" while having the selected man drink something into which the desiring woman has secretly dropped some fine parings from her fingernail. A man thus "caught" is said to be unable to achieve sexual excitement unless it is directed to the woman who "caught" him.

Numerous other types of magical practices\(^3\) have been recorded, but sufficient has been given to indicate that the study group is in this way, as in so many others, controlled by the beliefs and practices of their ancestors.

The "clever man" has an important place in the lives of the aborigines of the study area. No sorcerer is admitted as being a member of the
group but other areas, particularly Tabulam and Cherbourg (Queensland) are said to have powerful sorcerers ("very clever" fellows). All sickness and death is attributed to sorcery or the direct intervention of the spirits of departed aborigines. Some few aborigines with whom the subject was discussed were prepared to concede that "white introduced" diseases were not the result of sorcery.

Very late in the study period a number of informants admitted that one man of the study group was "clever". Earlier information of an indirect kind had led me to the same conclusion. This man discussed a case with me where he had been able to cure a lad of an illness. This instance is set out in some detail in the notes as it has direct relevance to the following section. Briefly, this man is able to work through a powerful *jurraveel* to have two Butheram sisters do his bidding.

Details of other instances of sorcery and "clever men" are given briefly in the notes, but this is a field worthy of fuller treatment and investigation.
Section 14. Religion.

Many members of the study group claim to be Christians and a Church operates on the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. It is not proposed here to attempt a comprehensive study of this movement as it has previously been the subject of research. The material here presented is intended to have direct relevance to the thesis subject and should not be presumed to cover all aspects of religion.

Briefly, the "doctrine" of the Station Church may be summarised as 1. Conversion through Christ, achieving a "state of Grace"; 2. The necessity of testimony of conversion and faith; 3. The immediacy of the second coming of Christ; 4. The duty and privilege of Acts ... including healing, possession by the Holy Spirit, the "speaking in tongues", and prophecy.

While the position has varied from time to time throughout the study period it may be stated as a general rule that the allegiance of the Station Church has been given in name to one or more groups allied with, or similar in practice to, the Pentecostal Church.

However, it would be unwise to assume from outward resemblances that the Station Church usually practices extreme forms of worship associated with the
Pentecostal movement in some places. For the most part the witness and devotions of the Church take the form of meetings held in cottages at which prayer, preaching, the giving of testimony and the singing of hymns is the form. On Sundays and special occasions more formal services are held in the Church or in the Station Recreation Hall.

A considerable number of taboos operate in association with membership of the Church. Drinking, gambling, smoking, 'worldly pleasure' are all banned. 'Worldly pleasure' includes such things as dancing, singing secular songs, going to the pictures, playing organised sport, and attending such events as Shows, rodeos, and organised sporting matches.

All the taboo items are introductions of "white" society. The singing of aboriginal songs, fishing and also the corroboree dance are not taboo.

There seems little doubt that the "converted" members of this Church are absolutely sincere in their belief. Numerous instances could be mentioned of remarkable changes taking place in individuals' lives following conversion. One notorious drunkard joined the Church in early 1958 and has become a quiet, non-drinking member. Not all new members
remain within the Church. "Backsliders" are frequent, so that the membership of the Church group varies from time to time and probably reached its peak in 1958 when there was scarcely a cottage on the Station which wasn't linked to the Church by at least one member.

This Church has but tenuous links with locally based white Clergy. The main function of these men seems to be to perform burial services for members of the study group. The local Ministers of Religion have not actively pursued contact with the Station Church during the study period. It is also true that they would not have been particularly welcome visiting the Station Church during most of that period.

Quite obvious points of similarity between the particular type of Christianity adopted and the "old law" may be shown and some instances of this may be found in the notes.² During one discussion with (H) he explained to me how it was that he could be a Christian and still believe the "old law". His explanation was that the Rutheram were created at the creation of the earth, whereas man was made by God. The Bible and Christianity had to do with man whereas the "old law" had to do with man's relations with the created beings of the Rutheram.
There is sincere belief in Christianity held by many members of the Church and there is equally sincere belief in the Botheram held by those same people. The Station Church may therefore be described as a religious cult having features of both Aboriginal and Christian teaching.

During the first two-thirds of the study period relations between the Station Church and the present manager were not good. There was much assertion of freedom\(^3\) by the Church and a good deal of annoyance and frustrated hostility on the part of the manager.

Gradually, as more evidence accumulated which confirmed the true function of the Church for the group, the manager relaxed his attitudes, arranged his personal time "off duty" to avoid clashes\(^3\) and was able to suggest the formation of a Church Council which was to accept responsibility for Church affairs. With the approval of the Aborigines Welfare Board, a Church Council was formed to control and approve persons conducting religious meetings, and to accept full responsibility for all Aboriginal visitors attending the Station for religious purposes.

This removed many frictions immediately and gave to the Church Council the freedom to allow
their visitors to enter the Station without reporting to the manager as required by Regulation 6 (a) of the Aborigines Protection Act. Relations between the manager and the Church improved consistently from that point. No further need has been found to report Church activities in other than favourable terms.

Too, as friction decreased between the manager and the Church, so too did the membership and enthusiasm of Church members decrease. Church life on the Station now flows smoothly without the fierce bursts of activity characteristic of it previously.

It seems likely that the Church "in opposition" provided a mechanism for the channelling of feelings against authority generally, in addition to that quite obviously directed against the manager personally.

This relaxation of tension could only have been achieved after some understanding of the 'meaning' of the Church was gained. Perhaps the example of "leadership" in the Church best illustrates this point. The manager found it difficult to reconcile a man's position as leader of the Church with many of his attitudes. Many other men seemed obviously better fitted to lead than the "leader". He seldom worked, was mostly "suffering" from something though
several Doctors pronounced him in good health, was lacking in what is commonly called "guts" and simply didn't shape as a "leader". Other members of the Church were vigorous men of fine appearance, good address with excellent health and work records were content to be led. One such man did challenge the leadership and a split developed in the Church which was largely the challenger's near kin against the rest. The challenge failed.

I was discussing this with an informant when he offered the information that the "leader's" father had been a 'very clever man' and that the 'leader' 'must know a bit'. So it became clear to the manager that he was imposing his own views of leadership onto a situation where the group's views differed and where the Church Leader drew his strength from the "old law".

It is through such insights that the inexplicable becomes understandable and therefore not a source of annoyance and friction between management and people.

Against the background of intense 'in-group' feelings by Church members and that of the culture portrayed previously, it is not surprising that two female missionaries failed to make any close contact with the Station Church.
No resident missionaries were on the Station at the end of the study period and it is probable that until such time as other factors change, the presence of resident missionaries will intensify the 'in-group' hostility of the Church.

One man who is not a member of the Church said: "I've often heard the old people say, and it's true ... 'They took away the boomerang and the spear and gave us a Bible, and now look at us!'"

One man is said to be the leader of the Church, but he is supposed to be guided in decisions by the unanimous decisions of meetings of the members. Members, from the leader's own account, fail to speak at meetings but criticise the decisions afterwards, or fail to agree without discussion and so disrupt meetings. The loose organisation of the Church, with no direction from outside, or strongly invoked feelings from within to support it, is not an effective core around which wider group activities might be built.
Section 15. Death and Burial Rituals.

Death and burial can be problems for an Aboriginal Station Manager who feels it is his responsibility to arrange the funeral of a deceased aborigine. Theoretical responsibility does rest on the station manager in any case where a destitute aborigine dies on the Station.

The present manager has been criticised only once and that in a case where he failed to pass a message to the station people concerning a death of an aborigine. The dead man was not known to have any significance for Woodenbong Aborigines. A police call requested information from the manager late one night. The manager reported that the man was not known to him, nor was there any record of his having lived on the station. The police arranged a "destitute's burial" in the town closest to the place of death.

On the following day the manager was asked if he had known of the man's death. The manager explained the circumstances and was roundly abused for failing to notify the Station people. The aborigine then said: "If you hear about any blackfellow dying round here, you let someone know. That poor fellow is one of the best men ever born."

Far more recent information suggests that the dead man may have been a Boorumyunboon, though no
direct confirmation of this has been given.

Formerly burial was made with the corpse in a sitting position, face on knees, facing the east. The grave was dug down and then a cave hollowed in one side of it and the corpse was placed in the cave before the grave was filled with earth.

Aborigines at Woodenbong now bury their dead in a prone position in coffins. The head points to the west (i.e. the corpse faces the east).

Superficially the funerals are Christian and usually are conducted by a white clergyman or lay preacher. Some few have been conducted by an aboriginal Pastor.

Several examples (and particularly one) have been noted of funerals which carried marked overtones of "old law" belief and ritual. The present manager has acted officially as "undertaker" at all funerals conducted on the Station during the study period. This procedure saves the relatives of the deceased considerable expense.

Not once has anything been noted which might be described, even remotely, as "objectionable" from a white man's viewpoint. The present manager has assisted, when requested to do so, in the making of arrangements for a funeral. Otherwise, the relatives handle matters as they consider correct.
Briefly, the following points concerning death, burial, mourning and inheritance may be mentioned. Death is believed to be the result of sorcery and this is particularly the case with older persons. The death of children is not of comparative importance. The "eldest sister" in particular, and other female kin, wail a traditional dirge for the departed. The dead person is talked to and usually instructed not to return to "worry" people. Sometimes, but not always, relatives leave the station for a time following a death. A mourning period of 12 months is observed, during which the personal possessions of the deceased are locked away. At the conclusion of the period of mourning the goods are distributed or destroyed according to the known "will" (wishes) of the deceased. The time after the death of a marriage partner during which the living spouse does not re-marry depends on the "will" of the deceased. If this is not known the period of 12 months is considered appropriate.

In no other facet of Station life would it be possible to do such tremendous damage to good relations as in matters concerning death and burial, if the manager thoughtlessly stands between the relatives and "their" obligations and rituals at death. The simple, smooth way of non-intervention unless invited is appreciated by the aborigines.
Section 16: Attitudes.

It has been established in the preceding Sections of this study that the aborigines at Woodenbong are members of a distinctive culture which is unlike that of the general community.

They are members of a bi-lingual group which is increasing its population at about twice the rate of the general community. Their average skin-colouring is not likely to lighten from generation to generation if present trends continue but, on the contrary, it may darken as already introduced fractions of Pacific Islands and Indian ancestry become more widely dispersed throughout the group.

The group's social organisation and system of ritual and beliefs bind them firmly to the land formerly occupied by their aboriginal ancestors from whom their culture derives. Only the material aspects of the white man's culture have been adopted to any marked extent, and then not wholeheartedly.

Members of such a group, under supervision by resident officials of the Government, controlled by a special law, and under pressure from what is, to them an alien white community, are not likely to have a clearly thought out system of attitudes towards the various aspects of the dominating "white" society in which, but not of which they are.
It is therefore of some importance to assess, in a general way, the attitudes held by group members towards those aspects of life which are significant to the resident manager whose job it is to attempt to assimilate the aborigines into the general community. It is also important to know what attitudes are held by the local white person or persons involved in contact with the group.

This will be done under a series of sub-headings which are not mutually exclusive, but which are used for the sake of clarity.

1. Attitudes of and to "whites".

The attitudes of the local white community may be summed up in general terms as the seeking to maintain an economic advantage over and the asserting of social superiority to the aboriginal community.\(^1\)

The evidence of this study suggests that the assertion of social superiority is foregone in circumstances where it is opposed to the gaining of some economic advantage by a white person.\(^2\)

The attitudes of the aborigines of the study area towards "whites" are ambivalent. There is a desire for understanding and acceptance by white people, but there is also fear and hatred of the
white community as a group. A white man is a	symbol of material wealth and freedom of action,
but he also represents the Government which
supervises and controls an aborigine's life and
stands as a symbol for the infamies and injustices
inflicted on aborigines in the past.3

ii. Attitudes of and to Manager.

Since the present writer is also the manager
and has no doubt revealed himself throughout this
thesis, the reader is probably in a better position
to judge this attitudes than the writer himself.

One point, perhaps, is worthy of mention. The
manager is accepted fully neither by the white
community nor by the aborigines. He therefore
lives suspended between both groups, finding relaxed
companionship in neither. This situation tends to
bring gross reactions to minor stimuli, with
feelings of persecution being common. (These
conditions have been observed in other staff members
also.)

The attitudes of the study group towards
the manager are understood in terms of his status
for the group. Firstly, he is the only white man
living amongst them. Secondly, he represents the
Aborigines Welfare Board and the Government. Thirdly,
he represents external, white authority. A more
deadly combination of symbols is hard to imagine. On one person can be centred all the hatreds directed against the three things a manager represents. For a man placed in such a position to establish contact with the residents of the Station is not easy. The only real contact which can be established is by activities outside the scope of official duties. The present manager found that getting away from the office and out under a tree where he could sit on the ground and "yarn" was one way to divorce himself from officialdom and thereby establish contact with the aborigines. Another way is to work with the aborigines as a fellow worker, though this is probably less effective than the first way mentioned.

Extra-official gossiping is a time consuming business and once the method is put into use it can also be a tie which is extremely delicate. One rebuff, in a moment of haste or ill humour can sever a contact carefully built up over weeks or even months of time. An official action, no matter how necessary, which displeases an aborigine can also be responsible for destroying trust established slowly over a long period.
iii. Attitude of aborigines to Board.

This is quite clearcut and may be simply stated as hatred.

"The Board 'forced' us onto the reserves in the first place." "All the Board ever does is take our kids away from us." "Why don't they give us decent houses to live in? Look at it! Would you like to live like that?" (My honest answer was "No".)

Such expressions might be listed almost endlessly and it is simply of no value on such occasions to point out the many things the Board has done. Most of these things have not been desired by the aborigines, and even when desired have been given under conditions of supervision which negate their value to the aborigines. The present manager has, on a few memorable occasions, been surprised by an expression of real gratitude from an aborigine. In no case has it ever been for an 'official act'.

The position clearly is that the Board, through the manager, is offering nothing which reaches the real needs of the aborigines. The ideas behind the Board's efforts, no matter how well intended, are external to the situation in which they attempt to produce changes.
Change itself is a "good" to white society. "Progress" is the motivating force of a way of life, and it is based strongly in the idea of selfishness. Stability, unselfishness and group solidarity are probably the ideas which motivate the members of the study group. Research, through skilled psychological testing in "attitudes" and "emotional responses" should produce most rewarding results.

iv. Attitude to and of Police.

There has been no clearcut attitude observed which might be said to be that of "the Police". Attitudes vary a great deal from one Policeman to another and cover the range between an extreme anti-aborigine attitude to one of tolerance and sympathy. Perhaps the fairest statement would be that police don't like aborigines. The "average" policeman might say: "I don't like them. They make too much work for me."

The attitude of the aborigines is probably best stated as "fear". This fear may manifest itself as belligerence, ingratiating behaviour or flight (actual flight, or simply "keeping out of the way"). Police represent powerful authority and so are appealed to when the need seems great. For example, to report some offence, real or imagined, committed by the manager.
v. Attitude to Education.

Universal lip-service is paid to the value of education for the children, but there is little indication that any underlying attitude supports the words. Too, there is a great danger here in misunderstanding what is meant when a member of the group says: "I think education is good for our children. I want my children to get a good education."

To illustrate the point in question I mention one member of the group who considers her daughter is a "real good scholar". The girl left school the day after she turned fifteen, having reached her second year of G.A. classes at a Central School. The mother's claim was based on the fact that her daughter could read her letters to her, write a letter in reply, and read the Bible. It is clear therefore that there is no driving attitude in the study group, which urges children on to academic success above the bare level of literacy.

vi. Attitude to Assimilation.

The attitude of the study group on this question is very strong and consolidated. Assimilation is not wanted.

vii. Attitude to the Future.

The attitudes of the aborigines towards the
future is that they do not expect to be much different from the past, or the present. They do not regard themselves as having a stake in the future of New South Wales.

Some interest was provoked and continues in relation to the possibility of the establishment of an aboriginal co-operative at Woodenbong, but the majority appear to be "waiting to see".

In this respect one group member summed up their feelings in the following words: "Many times in the past we have been shown a rosy picture on a far-distant wall, but always, as we approached it, it faded and was gone."
Section 17. Education.

Many factors are involved in the attempts being made to educate the children of aboriginal descent in various centres throughout New South Wales. In all cases where there is an Aboriginal Station it is reasonable to assume that the attitudes of the children towards education will be directly influenced to some extent by Station Management. Freindly, smoothly-operating management is more likely to encourage station children towards a better education than is dictatorial, unsympathetic management. This being the case, it is also true that the school situation will in turn have its effect on the attitudes of children and their parents.

It may seem like a statement of the obvious to make such a point but it is necessary to draw attention to it. There appears to be little acceptance of the mutual roles of management and teaching beyong the immediate teacher-manager relationship. For example, while both locally based and Senior Officers of the Board have visited the Aboriginal School at Woodenbong during the study period, no District Inspector of Schools has visited the Station (as distinct from the school) during the same period.
It would appear then, that there is either a lack of interest in, or awareness of, the importance for education of the special situation created by Aboriginal Station Life.¹

It is not my purpose here to attempt a study of educational problems at the school level since comprehensive material has not been collected. However, reference to A.T. Duncan's paper on "The Education of Children of Aboriginal Descent"² is of special significance as part of the material on which it is based was obtained at the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station School.

One additional point is worthy of mention. In Table III of the Notes to Section 3 of this study is given some detail of moves made to and from the study area by aboriginal families. These moves have an adverse effect on the education of the children involved. If a sufficiently large number of such children could be studied and tested, the results, when compared with others obtained from tests on more permanently located children, could provide some evidence of the importance or otherwise of the special features involved. A comparison of both sets of results with those obtained by a study of the children of "assimilated", urbanised aborigines would add further value to the study.
Education, for the aborigines of the study group, commenced about 1925 in a segregated school on the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. A public school had been operating in Woodenbong for about 15 years prior to 1925 but aboriginal children were not allowed to attend. Many years before either of these schools was opened (in the 1830's or 1890's) some aborigines still living were schooled in an unsegregated school at Tooloom. What factors operated to bring about segregation have not been established. However, it seems likely that the change in attitude by whites to aborigines took place when the study area was closely settled in 1909 and succeeding years.

All teachers at the Woodenbong Aboriginal school until the mid-1940's were untrained as teachers. For two periods the teacher was also the manager of the Station.

An examination was made of the attainments of members of the study group who had left school up to the end of 1959. It was possible to check final attainment in 74 cases. The results are of interest as the people involved are, generally speaking, the present adult population of the study area.

It is important to note that the figures give only the grade reached in final year of schooling.
and is not an indication of standard of scholastic achievement. In Duncan's paper, referred to above, he makes it clear that the standard of achievement in any grade is somewhat less than that for normal white schools.

Of all children checked for grade reached, the average grade attainment was $\frac{3}{4}$. In terms of the adult members of the study group the results indicate that no-one over the age of 25 years reached 6th grade at school. No one over the age of 22 years reached the first year of high school, and no one over the age of 18 years reached the third year of high school.

Checking, not from records, but from the aborigines themselves, indicated that anyone now over the age of 40 years has had very little or no education at all. There are at least three members of the study group who cannot sign their names.

While no statistical comparison is possible, the above evidence suggests that the average school grade attainment for the whole group is not higher than the third grade. Only one member of the group is not higher than the third grade. Only one member of the group has attained an Intermediate Certificate.

These results are of very considerable importance to a consideration of management problems.
Since members of the group are very poorly educated, and very few of the houses have wirelesses, most sources of information normally available to the average adult white person are not available to the aborigines at Woodenbong.

Duncan's paper, referred to above, sets out the evidence to show that aborigines must be considered to be as well endowed mentally as any other human group. There is no evidence then, to suggest that an attempt to carry education to this group at an adult level would be unsuccessful.

During the study period the present manager became aware of the lack of basic knowledge by residents of the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. Through the interests of M. Praed, and subsequently also of J. Warburton, a trial programme of adult education classed was carried out over a number of months during 1959.

Prior to the first meeting, which was addressed by J. Warburton, a steady stream of propaganda was directed at key members of the station community by the manager. Therefore, at fortnightly intervals for some months, M. Praed conducted further classed at which films were shown and discussions ensued.

I understand from M. Praed that he proposes to write up the results of this experiment for possible
publication, but unfortunately the manuscript is not yet available for reference purposes in this thesis.

From discussions with Praed it is clear that he considers the experiment a success and worthy of further development, but that there are numerous obstacles in the way of continuance of the scheme on a permanent basis. The whole project was carried through under the auspices of the Adult Education Department, University of New England and the cost was borne wholly by the University. The publication of Praed's report and the further development of this scheme will be of great interest, particularly as it applies directly to the group which is the subject of this study.

One point which is of particular relevance here is that any programme for the study group must be based on visual education. "Seeing is believing" applies very much to members of the group. Also, when the very low educational attainment of group members is understood, it is clear that any verbal material must be kept to a basic list of words if meaning is to be conveyed with any accuracy.

The Aborigines Welfare Board attempts, through the monthly magazine "Dawn" to provide information for the aborigines of New South Wales.
However, it is unfortunately a fact that this material does not "reach" the aborigines at Woodenbong. The aborigines eagerly await the arrival of "Dawn" each month, and when they receive it the photographs are looked over and brief items about aboriginal friends are read, and "Dawn" is then discarded.

This is hardly surprising when the material presented is examined in relation to the educational attainment of the aborigines at Woodenbong. The April, 1959 issue of "Dawn" contained, among other things, the following terms: - "cole-slaw dressing", "croutons", "fascinating zoological heritage", "effigy", "uterine", "embryo", and "ventral region". All these are well beyond the ability of most, and probably all, members of the study group.

In addition, there are strong emotional reasons why material emanating from the Board is rejected by the aborigines.

There is, then, a need for some means whereby information can be passed on to, and accepted by the aborigines of the study group. Adult Education from an outside body, such as the University of New England, seems the most likely way of achieving results.
During this study period, the present manager at Woodenbong Aboriginal Station has noted a number of occasions when such everyday words as "enthusiasm" and "temporary" have not been understood by residents of the Station.

It becomes necessary for a manager to reduce his range of words to the bare essentials and adopt a "slangy" mode of speech in order to be sure that he is fully understood. There have been a few occasions when "gutter language" was necessary to enable understanding to be reached. Such situations are avoided whenever possible, but on at least two occasions such a situation occurred when aboriginal men were being questioned concerning an alleged sexual offence. In each case no commonly known, but acceptable, terms could be discovered.

This type of language reduction and looseness of phrase can be a trap for a manager, in which he can easily tend to become careless and give offence where none is intended. Particularly is this so when it is remembered that a resident manager of an Aboriginal Station is on the Station at least six days each week, and that he has few conversations with educated white people to reminding him of his former standards of speech.
Section 18. Administration.

Bearing in mind that the policy of the Aborigines Welfare Board "is still directed to the ultimate assimilation of the Aboriginal people into the general community", an examination will here be made of those aspects of Aboriginal Station Management which were important at Woodenbong during the study period.

The first point which needs to be made is that the situation at the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station was completely misrepresented to the present manager both before and after he reached Woodenbong. No information on the Station was supplied from Head Office of the Aborigines Welfare Board. He was told that the Station was "A" Class (i.e. his rate of pay would increase slightly), and the date he was expected to arrive at Woodenbong.

Some members of the Board's staff had called the Woodenbong Station "the worst in the State". The people were described as "a frowsy lot", and generally the incoming manager had the impression that he would be dealing with a group of hard-drinking, brawling, part-caste aborigines who had nothing of their "old law" and nothing of the "white's" law either. This impression was aided by lurid press publicity which the Station had received about two years previously.
At Woodenbong, the incoming manager was immediately barraged with complaints about the manager who had just resigned from the Board's service. The church group on the Station complained that nothing was being done about "drinking", "gambling" and "fighting". The non-Church group complained that its members were being "dogged around" by the manager and the police. First impressions confirmed the worst as far as the new manager was concerned.

The manager's official residence was a huge place with ten foot high ceilings which were blackened by smoke, and amenities were poor. Fly screens were not fitted to the house and the infestation by these pests was high. No one was happy and least of all the manager and his wife who had three young children and an inheritance of station problems to manage in strange surroundings.

Endless knocks on the door, numerous pleas for protection from "drunken" husbands and demands for more action to control the station poured in from station residents. All complainants were strangers to the manager and the "personal Files" in the Station Office gave little information about most families.

Soon after his arrival at Woodenbong, the present manager was "reported" for the first time,
and thereafter on the average of about once a month, for more than a year, he was reported again. Either verbal or written reports were sent to such various people as Members of the Board, the Board itself, The Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare and Justices of Peace.

This "reporting" of the manager was the continuation of a practice which had been going on at Woodenbong for years. The manager knows of no other Aboriginal Station which has a special office file headed "Complaints Against Manager/Matron."

Report after report contained lies, "half-trusts", or simply statements taken out of context and made to have a sinister meaning. Nevertheless, it was during that first year that the manager aided a football club on the station, enabling it to stay in operation and solvency. A number of residents boasted to the manager that they would "get him sacked", like they had all the other managers.

Had the manager been properly informed of the true situation at Woodenbong, a great deal of the trouble could have been avoided.

From the outset the manager continued with the managerial policy he had used on other stations. This may be simply stated in the following way:--

It is better to talk than to act.
Never do anything for station residents unless it is certain that they cannot, even if provided with advice and help, do it themselves.

The manager attempted to establish contact with some of the men but in the early period he obtained little reliable information. Before long he was, however, able to observe the extended family operating and other manifestations of aboriginal social organisation which provided the first clues for a reassessment of the situation.

By mid-1957 the position had improved enough to allow a woman to say to the Matron: "I want to tell ...(manager)... about it because I know he understands." The worry she wished to discuss with the manager was that her mother (recently deceased) had been killed by a "cl-·ver man".

By the end of 1959 the position had improved to the extent that a group of station residents presented the manager and matron with a "gold-glazed" coffee service. Also, during the whole of the Christmas-New Year period, Station residents came to the Office or house only at milk-issue time each morning and therefore allowed the manager and his family to enjoy the holiday period in peace. This was a far more remarkable gift than the coffee service.
In order to establish the process by which this change came about, various features of the problem are discussed under separate sub-headings and from these discussions the total pattern can then be drawn.

i. Law, Regulations and Discipline.

While a great deal could no doubt be said concerning the many restrictive features of the Aborigines Protection Act, and of the necessity of such restriction in the interests both of the general community and the aborigines themselves, the evidence of this study will not support such arguments. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that there is a direct casual relationship between "feelings of oppression" and "the need of restrictive law".

It has already been shown in Section 14 that as tensions decreased between the Station Church and the manager, and the Church operated with greater freedom and independence, so too did the intensity of Church activity and membership decrease.

This has a direct parallel in the incidence of convictions for various offences under the Aborigines Protection Act and its Regulations. I have already indicated that the "feelings of oppression" were very strong indeed prior to the commencement of the study period and at that the
situation gradually improved as the present manager gained deeper insights into the culture of the study group.

If my suggestions that "feelings of oppression" are casually related to "the need of restrictive law" has any validity, it should be apparent in the number of convictions under the Aborigines Protection Act and its Regulations. That is, that as understanding increases and "feelings of oppression" decrease so too should the number of convictions under "restrictive law".

All cases relating to offences committed on the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station are heard at Urvonville Court so that an examination of convictions at that Court should confirm or deny the assertion made above. The figures given below should be read from left to right for the years 1955/1959. Full details appear in the notes.

Regulation 6(a) 6 5 3 2 0.....Enter Station w/out permission
Regulation 11 16 14 7 8 3.....Under influence on Station.
Regulation 14 19 5 1 0 0.....Gambling on Station.

Unlawful Assault 5 2 2 1 1.....These offences on Station.

Total all offences 50 37 23 18 7

These figures give substantial support to the proposition that "feelings of oppression" are
causally related to "need for restrictive law". That is, that anti-social behaviour is a direct reaction to incompatible social circumstances.

If this evidence could be confirmed from similar studies elsewhere it would demonstrate that so-called vices of aborigines are, in fact, more genuinely the vices of the white community. That is, that the so-called vices of aborigines are not of individual psychological derivation, but that they are a manifestation of a social problem in which the aborigines are reacting.

This statement is further suggested by an examination of the individuals who were convicted for offences during 1959. If these convictions had any relationship to vice we would expect to find the poorest human material persisting longest despite improved social environment. In fact, the contrary is the case. One man was convicted twice under Regulation 11 (under influence on Station) and this man is a highly skilled timber sawyer with an excellent work record. The other man convicted of the same offence is in no way vicious, and while not permanently employed he is in regular employment and wholly maintains himself and assists kin when they are in need.

It can be said then, that understanding is essential to management of an Aboriginal Station
and that the understanding must be at far more than surface level. Also, the evidence suggests that it is likely that the best, not the poorest human material will demand most and persist longest with anti-social behaviour in a social situation which has elements of oppression in it. It will be accepted, I have assumed, that a social situation operating under specialised law supervised by specialised staff has elements of oppression in it no matter what the quality of that staff may be.

All suggestions in the past that the members of the study group were of poor quality, vicious, or in any other way defective are negated by the above argument. Further, it may be suggested that further investigation elsewhere would support the assertion that the best human material of aboriginal descent is likely to be found in those areas where lay opinion has claimed it was poorest.

There is good reason, therefore, to suggest that the Aborigines Protection Act should be completely overhauled and that all restrictive clauses of it should be totally removed or severely limited in their application. The existence of such restrictive law itself, whether used in practice or not, injects an element of oppression into the social
environment of the aborigines who live within its jurisdiction.

ii. Health and Hygiene.

The Matron of the Station is responsible for this aspect of Aboriginal Station Management. Rate of admissions to Hospital at Kyogle and number of Ambulance transports made of aborigines from the study area suggest that the position in relation to serious illness has remained much the same over a number of years. Since there is a very wide discrepancy between the ambulance transports used and the admissions to Kyogle Hospital too much reliance should not be placed on these figures.

Direct observation on the Station indicated that while a normally expected incidence of illness continues to occur, there is a very great change in the position regarding minor illnesses. The regular calls at the Station Treatment Room were but a Fraction in 1959 of what they were in 1956. Night calls have also been reduced very considerably.

This did not mean that aborigines needing attention did not receive it. The evidence indicated that the contrary was the case. On an inspection of the Station, by a Female Welfare Officer of the Aborigines Welfare Board, carried
out in 1959 the manager conducted the Officer around the Station. He observed one child with two small sores (impetigo) and the Welfare Officer observed none. The situation in 1956 was that a considerable number of children were infected with impetigo. In this respect it is usual that incidence of the complaint is greater during the winter months and this seems directly related to the poor bathing facilities available at about half the cottages. No serious epidemics of gastro-enteritis occurred during the study period. Vaccinations and immunisation campaigns were carried out at various periods so that the children were, by the end of the study period, fully protected against tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, tuberculosis and poliomyelitis.

The Matron's attitude in her dealings with the aboriginal women may be summed up as follows:— "The children are yours and it is your responsibility to care for them. If you are worried at any time, I'm always here to help. I'll show you how to handle all the minor complaints but you must give the treatment".

At first there was apparent some resentment by the women. They seemed to think that the Matron was dodging her responsibility.
As the study period progressed, however, it was not uncommon for the manager to answer a knock at the door to be greeted with some such statement as follows:- "Mummy wants some blackjack, a bandage and some cotton wool. And some of that gauze stuff. Ronnie's got a boil."

Too, in keeping a check on hygiene, the Matron has used the indirect method for all general inspection work. Any occasion when it is necessary to visit a house in case of sickness gives the Matron an opportunity to check it without formality. Also, by observing clothing when hung out to dry, by watching the children when they are about for other reasons, and by gossiping with women who come to the Treatment Room for Supplies, the Matron keeps in very close with women's affairs on the Station. All this is achieved without involving any direct and routine inspection.

When occasion demanded, and it has on two occasions, that particular attention was necessary in an individual case involving some degree of child neglect, the Matron made daily inspections at a time when most Station women would be watching. This action did not invoke group reaction but provided the opportunity for other women to point out that "she doesn't have to come up to see about
my kids". The negligent woman was thus shamed at a personal level and a few such inspections produced results.

Observation throughout the study period indicates that the women of the study group are perfectly capable of handling all the tasks normally expected of a housewife, including the treatment of minor children's complaints. Observation also suggests that they are quite happy to have the Matron do as many of these things as she is prepared to handle. "That's what she gets paid for, isn't it," was a not unusual attitude expressed in the early portion of the study period. This attitude changed remarkably after the Matron showed some of the women her pay cheque. The reaction on one such occasion was "Gee! That all you get. I wouldn't do it for that".

Similarly, the Matron has consistently refused to do any sewing for the women, but discussed patterns, drafted patterns, explained knitting instructions and other related matter. All the Matron's talk has been along the lines of "Look, I can do it. If I can, anybody can. See, I'll show you."

This deliberate undervaluing of her achievements has changed the attitude of the women from one of open hostility to one, at least, of tolerance.
During the latter part of the study period it was not uncommon for aboriginal women to report at the Treatment Room on some pretext in order to gossip with the Matron.

Since the present Manager and Matron have worked together as a mutually dependent couple during the study period, the Matron's information, collected from gossip sessions with various women, has played a considerable part in the growing understanding achieved.

iii. Management.

At the commencement of the study period the manager was faced with two different problems. The first was to convince the Aborigines at Woodenbong that he had not come to the Station to exploit them or scoff at them, but to do what he could to help them. The second was to persuade a local Police Officer that there were other ways of handling station disturbances than by arrest and conviction.

It is simple to quote an authority on the subject, but not easy to have him accepted. For example, John Bowlby says: "Skilled social workers have learnt to work with their clients, thereby developing their capacity for self-help. Only if the worker permits or encourages dependence by arbitrarily doing things for her clients, without their partaking, need a
dependent attitude result". The reply is usually: "Aborigines are different".

Bowlby's statement applies equally well to forms of social work other than the family situations he was discussing. It also, applies, by extension, to discipline and control on an Aboriginal Station.

In the Table given in Note 4 of this Section, it will be seen that 5 convictions for "Assault female" were made at Urbenville Court in 1956. No such convictions were recorded in 1955 nor in the years 1957/59. The explanation provides an interesting example of aborigines deliberately seeking a dependent status in order to achieve personal goals.

Word soon passed around that the new manager was "soft". He was then called on when a domestic scene took place in a Station cottage. These scenes occurred when the man had been drinking and there was always evidence of assault. The manager notified the Police at the request of the woman, the man was arrested and chose to plead guilty. The wife was not called on to give evidence.

It was then realised that the aboriginal women were using the manager as their ally to punish husbands for real or imagined marital offences, or to gain revenge for a beating administered by the husband for a marital offence committed by the wife.
In co-operation with the Police the whole procedure was changed. No call was made to the Police unless the woman was prepared to make and sign a statement, sign the Police Charge Book as the complainant, and give evidence if necessary. Very quickly the women realised the game had run its course, and behaved in such a way as to avoid trouble rather than to provoke it. Such domestic brawling as was common in 1956 has not been common since that time.

The Police realised that a sympathetic attitude did not lead to increased violence, their attitude changed. One Police Officer was prepared to visit the station, talk firmly but in a friendly way, and then leave without making an arrest. This attitude was appreciated by the men, who were far more prepared to listen than formerly and trouble rapidly decreased. It was then possible to persuade them to exercise self discipline.

The situation improved so much that during the latter portion of the study period the manager was assured he had no need to worry about serious trouble, as the men themselves were taking action to avoid it.

The same policy was adopted towards other aspects of station management.
The manager was prepared to explain his course of action again and again. When he did something he would offer a reason for it. If it was suggested that he had acted wrongly, he was prepared to discuss the matter fully. All explanations hinged on the idea that self-help brought self-respect and that self-respect brought respect from others.

The manager was prepared to do what he could to secure materials for house repairs, but not to provide handyman labour to do the work. Aborigines for some time resisted the manager's efforts to have them repair their own homes. Their attitude seemed to be that if they waited long enough, the manager would eventually have to repair their cottages.

The manager's reply to this was that it was their station, not his. It was therefore their concern to repair their houses, for which no rent is charged. He also refused to accept responsibility for the appearance of the station, pointing out that if his yard was clean and tidy he had no need to feel ashamed.

As relations improved the manager was pleased to note that two-thirds of the cottages had gardens and many were very attractive ones. There was a further dispute between the residents and the manager and within a short time only four gardens remained.
The manager then took care to explain to the people that he wanted no-one to grow a garden to please him. If they liked to have gardens he promised to help with the plants, cuttings and bulbs he could get, but he warned that they would get no thanks for gardens grown solely to please him. The result has been that a few aborigines who enjoy gardening continue to have gardens while the others are content to save the effort and miss the flowers. The present manager feels very strongly that change must come from within the aborigine. It must not be imposed from without.

Much the same resulted from various schemes to utilise station land for small-farming. One man did work very hard for a time and had crops planted. A long spell of wet weather spoiled them and he has not tried again.

Many stories are told of previous farming done on the station. The aborigines claim they worked on schemes but received no part of the crops unless they were on rations at the time of harvest. This type of story is told every time any farming scheme comes up in discussion. Basically, farming is not a desired occupation. There are enough circumstances in their history to support the belief that it would not be worth the effort.
Well developed group techniques are used to test a new manager. For many months the present manager was offered money in return for Board goods or for a service such as transport. On one occasion more than twenty aborigines offered £1 per head for a trip to Baryulgil in the official vehicle.

After bribes had been refused for some months, the manager took the opportunity to discuss the matter with a resident. He said: "You know they say every man has his price, and that may be true. But I'm afraid mine would be so high I'd be too scared to take it. Why don't the people admit I'm honest and give up?" That is precisely what the aborigines did. No further attempts were made to bribe the manager.

Many of the aborigines were inclined to use abusive and otherwise objectionable language if they became angry with the manager.

The manager declined to be offended or to prosecute for these offences. Then one night a group of rowdy men, all very much under the influence of liquor, became objectionable and one called the manager by a series of the filthiest type of obscenities.

The following morning the manager was approached by (B), who discussed the previous night's affair.
"Of course you'll prosecute him for it," (D) said. "No. Someone has to be offended before a charge of offensive language can be made. I wasn't offended, were you?" He didn't reply. The manager went on: "Anyway, I know I'm not one of those things. Besides, it takes a better man than I am to insult me. In his condition last night he wasn't the man. It was his mouth he dirtied, not mine."

Since that occasion the present manager has never been called anything worse than "bludger."

It becomes apparent, then, that the members of the study group know what they are about. They abandon a course of behaviour which fails to achieve the desired results. In the former case mentioned above the object was to corrupt the manager in order to maintain a "hold" over him; in the latter, to upset and anger him by the use of obscenities.

After having acquired deeper insights into the culture of the group, it was possible to suggest Adult Education courses to the aborigines, and through the meetings, to obtain frank discussion and fresh understanding. Relations between the manager and the aborigines continue to improve at the time of preparing this thesis.

The foregoing details, in conjunction with references throughout the text and notes, make it clear that good relations can be established with
aborigines on an Aboriginal Station.

The manager must be prepared to pursue a consistent policy based on knowledge of the station residents. He must be willing to explain his actions when questioned, and to learn from the aborigines as he hopes they will learn from him. This can be a time-consuming procedure and a manager may well be reprimanded, as the present manager has been, for allowing routine clerical work to be delayed while he patiently talked and listened to the aborigines.

While there is some justification for expecting an Aboriginal Station manager to take care of the minimum clerical work consistent with an audit being possible, the author has formed the opinion that much clerical work would be better done by trained clerical staff in the Head Office of the Aborigines Welfare Board. It has seemed to the present manager at Woodenbong, and is supported by this study, that real contact can only be made, and station problems understood, when a manager devotes the major part of his time to talking and listening.

This study makes it clear that much more needs to be known of the people managers manage. That is the field for the anthropologist, psychologist and sociologist.
If there are to be managers, the basic selection must be made almost exclusively on personality factors which specially fit applicants for the work. Any applicant who reveals feelings of personal or status insecurity should be avoided. After the selection has been made, it is then imperative that specialised training be given in the social sciences and in clerical procedures. Only then should the trainees be provided with the specialised local material which would apply to the areas in which they would work.

It has been shown that a continued withdrawal from direct management towards indirect supervision has brought about an improved social environment on the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station. Violence, drunkenness and other anti-social behaviour decreased significantly. This may appear to be a worthwhile achievement to have resulted from 4 years of effort by the manager and matron. This, however, would be an illusion.

All the attitudes, group loyalties and hatreds evident at the beginning of the study period were still evident at the end of it. There is no doubt that a change in management (or a change in the policy of the present staff) at the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station could bring into operation the old hatreds
which are now merely dormant. Unless a new manager and matron are able to pursue sincerely a similar course to that indicated above, and to achieve rapid and sympathetic personal contact with key members of the group, the evidence of this study indicates that social harmony on the station will disintegrate, in-group feelings will be provoked and the position will revert to that of the past.
Section 19. Assimilation

Assimilation, as I defined it in my Introduction, is the "absorption of aborigines into the general community so that they cease to be distinguishable from other members of it." This study has made it obvious that assimilation in this narrow, and I believe correct sense of the word, has no relevance to the Aborigines at Woodenbong.

If a wider interpretation of assimilation is taken the position is not greatly changed. Professor A.P. Elkin in "Aborigines and Citizenship" says: "assimilation means the Aborigines will be similar to us, not necessarily in looks, but with regard to all the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship"

In that sense this study has shown that the aborigines at Woodenbong have not sought to be similar to us. The members of the study group have the right to vote at both State and Federal Elections and with a possible two exceptions they decline to enrol. Similarly, they have no interest in nominating for membership of the Aborigines Welfare Board, nor any interest in voting for the Aborigines who do stand for election to the Board.

Further, of the population on the Station in December, 1959, 71 were over the age of 21 years.
The oldest of that 71 aborigines hold Exemption Certificates which they obtained solely to ensure that they could apply for and receive the Aged Pension. Of the whole group of 71 adult aborigines none was prepared to apply for Exemption Certificates except in the circumstances mentioned above. With the possible exception of 3 of the members, the adult population of the Station could secure Exemption from the Act.

Members of the study group believe that if they become "Exempted" from the Act, they become like white people and this they do not want. There has, to date of writing, been almost no assimilation of aborigines from the group under study. Nor can it be said that there is any indication that members of the group will seek assimilation in the future. There is no sign that the younger members of the aboriginal population are breaking away from the group. Two of the three most recent "marriages" have been correct marriages by aboriginal kinship rule. The two correct relationships are de-facto unions. So too is the union which is considered to be wrong, but the girl's father refuses to give his consent to the marriage.

One further example may be quoted to illustrate this point that the young are adhering to the group.
In 1959 a girl from the Woodenbong Station secured the first Intermediate Certificate won by a member of the study group. An offer of a scholarship to allow the girl to be fully trained in secretarial work was made. The parents declined to allow the girl to go away and accept the scholarship.

Further to the evidence of what has happened may be added the unanimous vote of all my informants and many other residents of the Aboriginal Station. They say definitely that they want to remain together as a group. The care with which they have tried to hide their Aboriginal culture is a further indication of its importance to them.

They seek only what they call "citizens' rights", and by that they do not mean exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act. Informant (E) explained what he meant by "citizens rights" by giving the following example: "Well, there's a pie shop in Lismore and they won't serve us. Why's that?" Many of the Aborigines feel they are entitled to some compensation for the deprivation of their lands. One man, with no idea of money values beyond a few pounds, named the figure of £100,000 000. When it was explained that that was a really tremendous amount of money he reduced his demand to £1,000,000.
When their history is kept in mind, it is not surprising that the aborigines feel cheated of their lands. (A') great-grandfather, for example was a grown man when the first white man entered his country. They are now still adjusting marriage lines within their kinship system because of the decimation of their population so recently that its effect is still felt. I have recorded genealogies which predate the first white squatters in the Bandjalang tribal country.

On present evidence, then there is no possibility of achieving assimilation for the group in either the sense I have used it, or in that used by Professor Elkin. There has been some minor improvement in their housing, a better regard for their health, and a slight lifting of the educational standard. Also, over the past 4 years there has been a decided improvement in their social environment but we have already seem that this is a delicately balanced set of relationships which is scarcely likely to repeat itself if any change takes place in either management or station policy.

There is therefore, an urgent need for a re-evaluation of policy which is at present attempting to fight against the strongest cohesive forces which bind the group members together.
Such a policy is doomed to failure. Such a policy can only mean the maintaining of the study group in a state of unrest, dissatisfaction and despair.
Section 26. The Future.

In this Section it must be recognized that the writer is stepping ahead of the observable facts of the study group's social existence. It may fairly be said, therefore, that what follows is speculation. It must also be stated, however, that it is speculation based firmly in the social situation revealed in previous Sections. For that reason it is far more likely to provide a solution which can be accepted by both the general community and the aborigines of the group. But before going further, an examination of all the possibilities must be made.

Firstly, the position can continue as at present. At least that is so until some new factor upsets the balance now maintained. If that occurred, and it must do so eventually if for no other reason than the predicted expansion of population which is already beginning, population alone will demand the expenditure of vast sums of money for new housing, even if those existing at present are still used. A complete rebuilding programme would probably cost some £200 000 which would allow only for 50-60 houses of a minimum standard, and some associated amenities. Employment would force the men to further afield, and this would create strain both on and off the Station. The position would inevitably deteriorate.
The second possibility is to abandon the present Station and offer no alternative accommodation. The evidence supports the suggestion that the group would attempt to maintain itself and suffer great hardship. Dispersal of the group members would occur and eventually some measure of assimilation would come about.

Aborigines would join with a group they hated more fiercely than they do at present. It is not likely such persons would make good citizens of the general community.

The third way is to examine the strengths and the weaknesses of the group's culture and seek a solution which seems to fit the facts, is possible to put into effect, and would be economically sound in order that Government finance could be made available.

The salient points raised throughout the foregoing, have been:-

1. There is a distinctly aboriginal culture at Woodenbong which is isolated from the general community both by the beliefs held and by the prejudice of the general community.
2. The study group has shown itself determined to maintain its own identity in its ancestral country. That it has done so over 50 years of closely settled
occupation of its former lands, seems good reason to suppose that it can continue to do so.

3. Thirty years of station supervision, with twenty years of that time being under a policy dedicated to the assimilation of the group, has not changed the group in any but the most superficial characteristics. There is seeming change, but little inner change within the group's members.

4. The acceptance that has occurred has been in the material aspects of the white man's way of life.

5. There is hatred and mistrust of both the Aborigines Welfare Board and of Aboriginal Station Management.

6. There is a Church operating within the group which believes in the Second Coming of Christ in the immediate future.

In seeking a solution to the problem it is reasonable to assume that a scheme would have most chance of success which worked with as many strengths of the group as possible, and contained within it a means to protect itself against the weaknesses inherent in the group's structure and beliefs.

The strengths of the study group appear to be:

1. A very strong in-group feeling.

2. Indications that there remain within the group strong internal controls (e.g. to maintain such a strong continuance of kinship correct marriages, and
also in the indications that troubles on the Station could be controlled from within).

3. The members of the group do wish the general community to think well of them. There is more group pride than individual pride. (This was seen in the effort made to outfit the school sports' children in new uniforms and the pride taken in their success, and it is also noted in the higher standard of dress and behaviour demanded of members if a number of them leave the Station as representatives of the group as when a bus is hired to make a visit).

There is a core of skilled and steady workers to call on.

The weaknesses of the study group appear to be:-

A. Hostility is diffuse except when in-group feelings are provoked.

B. The group relies almost exclusively on the material culture of the general community.

C. Individuals do not control their personal finance well, and have kinship responsibilities to honour, so group members are not likely to acquire working capital from their own resources.

D. There is mutual suspicion amongst the members of the group and some prefer not to be involved in making decisions.

E. There is a strong tie to the study group's own country, which makes it essential that any solution
be found there.

F. There is strong white prejudice which succumbed at least to some extent when economic advantage ran counter to prejudice.

G. The average educational standard of the group is very low.

H. The group has almost no links outward into the community beyond the ties of kinship which do not extend into the white community.

The Solution must therefore:

a. Work for and belong to the whole group.
b. Avoid clash and disruption by being divorced from the Aborigines' Welfare Board.
c. Accept the continuance of the groups' existence for some time and be a permanent solution.
d. Require no immediate changed in the group's ways, except in material aspects of culture.
e. Be internally controlled to utilise leadership available and also to ensure that the Aborigines Welfare or other outside organisation cannot interfere.
f. Be a focus for group pride to invoke the in-group's censure on anyone acting against it.
g. Use skilled labour available.
h. Pay wages to members but not allow them personal ownership of capital or reserve money, to guard against an irresponsible member misusing funds.
i. Provide some external assistance to counteract the group's lack of education.

j. Be economically possible.

Also, it should guard against the Church disrupting it with its attitude of "it's too late now"; and provide an answer to local white prejudice which would react against any advancement in the status rating of the Woodenbong aborigines. Too, if possible it should provide a means whereby the Aboriginal members of the study group could extend their links beyond the local group and into the general white community.

I believe a sawmill operated and controlled by an Aboriginal Co-operative would do all those things, but would such a mill be economically possible, and would it be financially successful?

At my request Mr. D.J. McKee of D.J. McKee & Sons, Manufacturing Engineers, Lismore, prepared a fully itemised account of costing, and expenses for purchase, construction and operation for one year. He also gives details of labour required and the Forestry license quota which it would be essential for the Co-operative to hold. The full details of Mr. McKee's estimates may be found in the notes.

Briefly, in round figures, the mill would cost £20,000 to purchase and install and to allow working capital.
It would provide 14 men with jobs and all the skilled men needed are available within the group. Only the bookkeeper would need to come from outside the group and he would need to be a skilled Co-operative Manager and prepared to school the Co-operative Board for a time.

MR. McKee estimates the profits available at about £5000 per annum after all expenses. This could be increased with the mill working at full capacity.

The recommendation I make is that the scheme be put through. It would be widely accepted by the aborigines of this study and has been discussed with them in detail.

It would be essential that the aborigines Welfare Board withdraw from the Woodenbong Aboriginal Station and lease the entire area to a Co-operative for a nominal sum of say £1, at the same time signing an agreement that if, at the end of 5 years, the Registrar of Co-operatives was satisfied with the progress of the Aboriginal Co-operative, the Board agree to sell the Co-operativize the Aboriginal Station, Sawmill and all other plant for a further sum of £1.

It would be essential that a Forestry Department licence with a quota of at least 1½ million feet of logs be granted.
This would cost the Government nothing since the Board would save at least £5 000 per annum by withdrawal from the Station, the Board would be better off financially by £5 000 per annum than it would have been had it not built a sawmill.

If the whole venture failed and nothing could be salvaged of the mill, the Board and the Government would have saved money. If the venture was successful and I am confident it would be, the Board would have achieved a solution to the problem of the study group. It would have achieved the success within 5 years at no cost to itself above what must already be anticipated. The Board, which now gains only hatred from members of the study group, would have provided the whole group with a stake in the future and a profit-making business which could expand into other fields.

Economic success for the study group would provide economic advantage to many sections of the white business world of the area and prejudice would be reduced. The Woodenbong Aboriginal Station could be the base from which the aborigines could go out with pride, and no longer a refuge to which they creep home in shame.