Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report

“This Aboriginal Heritage Report may contain photographs, words, descriptions and images which may sadden and distress some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This Report may contain the names, images and descriptions of people who have passed away and which may sadden and distress some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This Report may contain language and terms used by an author that reflect an inappropriate attitude due to the historical context in which the records were created.”

Prepared for Orange City Council by

February 2012
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Introduction

NTSCORP has been engaged by Orange City Council to undertake an Aboriginal Heritage Study of land within the Council boundary. The purpose of the study is to:

- consult with the Orange Aboriginal community
- prepare a thematic history
- identify and assess sites of significance
- provide management recommendations

This report presents the results of the historical and anthropological research, community engagement and site assessment, and concludes with detailed management recommendations. A detailed methodology is also included.

Project Team

The project was managed by Dr Michael Bennett, NTSCORP historians, who also wrote the section on pre-contact sites and the narrative history. Anthropological analysis was provided by James Rose and Simon Correy. Documentary research was undertaken by Dr Bennett and Natalie Rugiano, NTSCORP research assistant. Other NTSCORP research staff members who participated in the project were Anupam Sharma, Jia-Wei Zhu, Om Beacom-Halliday (intern) and Laura Parsons (intern). The team benefited from the advice and support of Natalie Rotumah (NTSCORP General Manager), Dr Ken Lum (Manager of NTSCORP Projects Group) and Neville Kim (Manager of NTSCORP Community Facilitation). Financial management was provided by Sam Cherian (NTSCORP Assistant Accountant).

Acknowledgements

NTSCORP would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Orange Aboriginal community in undertaking the project, including members of the Orange Aboriginal Community Working Party (OACWP) and the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). Alison Russell, Community Liaison Adviser at Orange City Council (OCC), provided direction, encouragement and historical information. Ronald Briggs and Melissa Jackson, Indigenous
Service Librarians at the State Library of NSW (SLNSW) kindly provided information about carved trees. Staff at Orange City Library, Orange and District Historical Society and the museums at Canowindra, Eugowra and Millthorpe also provided information and support.

**Methodology**

The broad scope of the project includes the identification and assessment of pre-contact, historic and contemporary Aboriginal sites of significance. As such, NTSCORP adopted a multi-disciplinary approach using analytical techniques drawn from archaeology, history, genealogy and anthropology. Community consultation was an integral part of all aspects of the methodology. Three presentations were made during 2011 to the OACWP on various aspects of the project. Other interested members of the community were kept updated with progress of research via phone calls from Sydney. NTSCORP ran a stall at the Services day during NAIDOC week (held in October) where information about the project was distributed and interviews organised.

**Archaeology**

The brief explicitly stated that an archaeological survey was not to be undertaken as part of the project. Information for the identification and assessment of pre-contact sites was obtained from the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) maintained by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH - previously the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water). Some of the data was originally provided to NTSCORP in 2002. Subsequently, OEH has made a limited amount of site information available on-line and a search of this facility was undertaken to obtain more recently recorded information. Additional archaeological reports were provided by Orange LALC. Relevant documentary material was obtained from the Australian National University Library, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the State Library of NSW (SLNSW).
History

Detailed primary and secondary historical research was undertaken in the following institutions:

- SLNSW (including the Mitchell Library and State Reference Library)
- State Records Authority of NSW (SRNSW)
- AIATSIS
- Australian National Library
- Orange City Library
- Orange and District Historical Society

Newspaper articles and pictures were sourced using the Trove search engine operated by the National Library of Australia.¹

Building a picture of Aboriginal life from the colonial archive is a difficult job. For the most part, Aboriginal people were not thought important enough to write about. Their imminent demise was regularly predicted throughout the latter part of the 19th century. Few individuals were named or written about at length. Fewer still were given the opportunity to gain an education. Subsequently, there are only a handful of documents state-wide written by Aboriginal people and none were found for this study.

There are, however, numerous sources which mention Aboriginal people, even if it is only fleeting. Pastoral records sometimes contain the name of Aboriginal employees. Records of the criminal justice system contain details of Aboriginal people who were arrested and brought before the courts. Government records such as blanket returns and the correspondence of the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) often contain names and personal details. Descriptions of Aboriginal people in manuscripts and published material were often stereotypical and emphasised savagery, foolishness and other supposedly “natural” characteristics. Awareness of these conventions is helpful when reading colonial documents and extracting useful information from them.

Genealogy

Over the past decade, NTSCORP has built up significant genealogical resources conducting oral and documentary research for native title claims in NSW. Genealogical information on over 56,000 individuals is stored in an editable Gedcom file using commercially available software (Family Historian). Relevant genealogical material has been used in this study following family consultations. The advantage of genealogical information is that it allows patterns of kinship and movement to be traced over time. Historical information about other matters such occupation and mortality is also discoverable. Our genealogical records were supplemented during the community interviews. NTSCORP offers a free family tree service to all Aboriginal people in NSW and to this date, five have been prepared and sent as part of the study.

Aside from interviews, genealogical information was obtained from the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Original copies of certificates of relevance to the study were identified and ordered on-line via the NSW Registry’s website. Genealogical relationships are determined by comparing the oral and documentary records. For the recent past, oral information tends to be favored as it is based on the direct experience of the informants. For the distant past beyond living memory documentary evidence is given greater weight.

Anthropological Interviews and Analysis

Thirty six members of the Orange Aboriginal community were interviewed for the project during two weeks of field work (held in early August and October). Interviews were also conducted with people from Bathurst and Cowra. An additional phone interview was conducted in June 2012 with a community member from Cowra after the period of public display for the draft report had finished. Most interviews were with individuals although members of Daroo Elders requested to be interviewed as a group. There was approximately an equal mix between resettlement and Wiradjuri interview subjects. Questioning focused on themes such as sites of significance, traditional knowledge and practices, genealogical

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2 http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/Index/IndexingOrder.cgi/search?event=births
3 Unless requested, informants have not been personally identified in the report.
4 The NSW Government operated a voluntary resettlement project for Aboriginal families from Western NSW beginning in the late 1970s and many moved to Orange (see the thematic history for more details).
links, the experience of living in Orange, employment history, strength of connection (to Orange or elsewhere).

**Thematic History**

Many Aboriginal histories written over the past three decades in NSW and throughout Australia have focused on the resistance of Aboriginal people to colonisation. Much has rightly been made of the efforts of Aboriginal people to retain their traditional customs and gain recognition of their rights to land and culture. These histories were important as Aboriginal people were largely absent from mainstream discourse over the past two centuries.

Another important theme, however, has been the ability of Aboriginal people to adapt to dramatically altered circumstances. Frontier violence and disease decimated many groups and those remaining had to adjust old skills and learn new ones to survive. Some Aboriginal people were attracted to the material possessions of Europeans and actively sought them out. Strategies of accommodation were used on both sides. Both themes are examined in this study and a degree of balance is sought.

Patterns of migration are also worthy of thematic investigation. In pre-contact times, Aboriginal people were mobile but the movement was not without structure. Aboriginal people had particular territories and movement was partly governed by the availability of resources, although the maintenance and strengthening of kinship links were also a factor. The changes wrought by colonisation made it extremely difficult for Aboriginal people to move about the landscape as they once had. Many settled where they could, but patterns of movement continued as Aboriginal people visited nearby groups with whom they had longstanding links to organise marriages and maintain social connections. Movement and kinship is an enduring theme of this report and a means by which the significance of sites is assessed.
Previous Studies

There are only a limited number of published works which address the Aboriginal history of Orange.\(^5\) Read’s detailed study of the Wiradjuri people, which provides important contextual information (particularly about the impact of settlement and government policy), mentions Orange only in passing.\(^6\) Similarly, MacDonald’s study of the cultural distinctiveness of the Cowra community in the 1980s and her subsequent work among the Peak Hill and Wellington communities does not deal explicitly with Orange.\(^7\) Kabaila’s wider study of Wiradjuri sites of significance in the Macquarie River valley includes information on The Springs, an Aboriginal camp to the south of Orange (see Figure 2). Kabaila interviewed Josephine Ingram (nee Moynihan) who was born at The Springs in 1938.\(^8\)

There are several unpublished reports which contain relevant information about the Aboriginal history of Orange. Bennett’s report to Millie Ingram and the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council summarises an extensive collection of archival material relating to Orange and Molong.\(^9\) The Aboriginal Community Profile and Research Report (prepared by the Orange City Council in 1988), although not historical in nature, contains useful information about the impact of the Aboriginal Family Resettlement Scheme on the composition of the Orange Aboriginal community.\(^10\) The heritage assessment of the Springs by OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management Pty Ltd contains a brief historical section; the majority of the report, however, is archaeological in nature.\(^11\) Michael Milston, in collaboration with members of the Orange Aboriginal community, presented a paper at the 2009 AIATSIS conference in Canberra which contained an overview of local Aboriginal history.\(^12\) Overall, there is scope for a detailed investigation of Orange Aboriginal society and history.

\(^5\) General heritage studies (such as Kass 2003: 10-11) devote little space to Aboriginal history and culture.
\(^6\) Read 1988.
\(^7\) MacDonald 1986 and 2002; Powell and MacDonald 2001.
\(^9\) Bennett 2000.
\(^10\) Orange City Council 1988.
\(^11\) OzArk 2010.
\(^12\) Milston 2009.
Traditional Life

It is generally accepted that Orange was occupied in traditional times by speakers of the Wiradjuri language. The language was spoken across a wide area of central NSW including long segments of the Murrumbidgee, Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers. It was closely related to the Ngayampaa language to the west and Gamilaraay to the north. Linguists refer to the three languages as the Wiradjuri group. A distinctive feature of the group was that they began with the term for “no” (“wira”) and concluded with the term for “having” (“djuri”).

Wiradjuri spiritual beliefs were organised around a network of sacred sites associated with mythical heroes known as jin. There were at least 18 Wiradjuri jin and probably many more. Each was associated with a particular animal or plant. Jin were inherited from a person’s mother’s mother along with the responsibility for maintaining associated sites. Wiradjuri people were also divided into four sections. Specific jin were connected to each section and together they regulated the marriage system. Stories were told about the travels of jin, the places where they stopped, the social rules they set down and the features of the landscape which they made. Individuals learned the stories, songs and dances of their jin and were not allowed to eat or damage them. They became the embodiment of them. Wiradjuri people also worshipped several mythical heroes in common, including Biami, his emu wife Gooboerangalnaba and the giant serpent Kurrea. Biami and the others also travelled and created; some stories told of their interactions with jin.

Many of the stories associated with the mythical heroes have been lost, although some about Mount Canobolas are known. Sections and jin no longer regulate the marriage system, but the basic principle of preventing close marriage still applies. Also, many people still know their totems and avoid eating or damaging them. The language is no longer fluently spoken, but many words and phrases are known. Wiradjuri people had to adapt to survive, but it is important to acknowledge that not all was lost.

13 Mathews 1907; Keen 2004.
14 Grant and Rudder 2005; Howitt 1904: 108.
15 JIn are sometimes referred to as totems and colloquially as “meat”.
16 The four Wiradjuri sections, also common to Gamilaraay and Ngayampaa, were Murri, Kubbi, Ippai and Combo (along with their feminine equivalents of Matha, Kubbitha, Ippatha and Butha). To give an example of the marriage rules, Murri emu could marry Ippatha eaglehawk, Ippatha possum, Matha brown snake and Kubbitha native bee (Mathews 1897: 173-174).
17 Mathews 1895, 1897, 1898; for general information on totems, see Gammage 2011: 125-129.
Pearson’s analysis of the early ethnographic literature for the Orange and Bathurst districts suggests that day to day, small groups of approximately 20-40 closely related people occupied local creek and river valleys (Summer Hill and Cadiangullong Creek for example). Water was available throughout the year indicating that the area was permanently occupied, although the lower lying river valleys may have been unsuitable for camping during the winter months. The smaller groups came together to feast on seasonal resources, although Pearson does not name them. Ceremonies attracted larger groups as did inter-clan fights to resolve disputes about trespass and the kidnapping of women.\textsuperscript{18} Community consultation indicated that male initiation ceremonies (called \textit{burbung}) were once held on Mount Canobolas (probably closer to the higher Old Man Canobolas peak rather than the lower Young Man Canobolas peak); several scatters of stone tools have also been recorded near the summit and an engraving nearby.\textsuperscript{19} There are numerous sites showing signs of occupation within the study area and close by.

Fire was used to manage the environment in the Orange district. On his 1817 expedition, Oxley described the country between the Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers (except for the dividing range) as “thinly timbered, with rich intervening valleys, through which flow small streams of water”. There was a “park-like appearance” to the land.\textsuperscript{20} As noted by Gammage, this is often a sign of the careful use of fire to promote grassland and attract kangaroos.\textsuperscript{21} In a similar area, Allan Cunningham came across grassy country which had recently “been fired by the natives” and was abundantly stocked with kangaroos and emus. Other parts were thickly wooded.\textsuperscript{22} Different types of fires were used to create different environments and encourage different plants and animals. An unfortunate consequence of the fire regime is that it created grasslands which were ideal for grazing cattle and sheep.

\textbf{Pre-Contact Sites}

The following map is based on information drawn from the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) maintained by OEH (previously the Department of

\textsuperscript{18} Pearson 1984: 63-68
\textsuperscript{19} Sivaraman and Rogerson 2007.
\textsuperscript{20} Oxley 1964 [1820]: 4-6.
\textsuperscript{21} Gammage 2011; Haglund also identified the possible use of fire in the Orange district for managing the environment (see Hughes Trueman Ludlow 1986: 12).
\textsuperscript{22} See Gammage 2011:191.
Environment, Climate Change and Water). A search of the on-line facility in July 2011 showed that an additional 40 sites had been recorded since 2002.  

There are no dates for Aboriginal sites in the Orange district. The oldest date obtained from a site in the wider area is from two rock shelters at the Granites approximately 60km to the south-east of Wellington. Occupation began at this site in 7150BP. Occupation of the Australian continent began over 30,000 years ago. It is likely that Aboriginal people have been living in the Orange district for most of that time.

Limited archaeological surveys have been conducted in the Orange district. Additional surveys, particularly along creek lines, but also in more elevated areas, are likely to reveal

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23 A rectangular area was searched bounded by Cadia in the south-west, Borenore in the north-west, Ophir in the north-east and Millthorpe in the south-east – see Appendix 1. An additional search to the west (including the Molong district) could not be completed due to technical problems with AHIMS. Sites identified to the west of Orange on the map come from data supplied to NTSCORP in 2002.
24 Koettig 1985: 53.
25 Mulvaney & Kamminga: 130-146.
26 All Aboriginal sites (marked with a red dot) are stone tool scatters or open campsites unless otherwise indicated.
more sites. Most sites have been recorded as part of commercial and residential developments, although Pearson recorded several as part of his doctoral research. The following graph shows the various types of sites found in the study area.

![Graph showing the frequency of site types in the Orange district](image)

**Figure 2: Graph showing the frequency of site types in the Orange district**

Open camp sites, consisting of stone artefacts and hearths, are the most common type found in the Orange district (see Figure 2). They were commonly found close to reliable water sources. Several scarred trees were identified in the immediate vicinity of Orange. The scars are produced when bark is removed for the manufacture of containers such as coolamons. Similar sites are found in the Molong district. The carved trees marking Yuranigh’s grave at Gamboola (see below) are an exception, although similar examples from Orange were probably cut down long ago.

Archaeological surveys have identified some of the important living places in the Orange district. Numerous artefacts were found in the vicinity of Suma Park Reservoir which dams the water of Summer Hill Creek, a tributary of the Macquarie River. Another important camping area was in the district of Browns Creek at Lewis Ponds where numerous artefact scatters and a burial have been located. Campsites were found on the ridges and slopes overlooking the creek, but not on the flat.27 According to the archaeologist who recorded most of the sites, their absence from the flats was due to poor drainage and cold temperatures

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27 Ross 1981: 3.
in low lying areas. A survey of a slope overlooking Broken Shaft Creek at Borenore found 28 artefacts made of fine grained mudstone.\textsuperscript{28}

Limited evidence of occupation, including several stone flakes and a scarred tree, was found along the banks of Cadiangullong Creek, a tributary of Summer Hill Creek, which flows along the south-eastern border of Mount Canobolas. Another scarred tree was found on the site selected for the Ridgeway gold mine. The valley slopes were probably too steep for camping; the river flats were more suited for occupation, although isolated artefacts were found on ridges in the Cadia area. Bracken fern, a staple plant food, grows abundantly in the area and animal sources recorded in the valley include kangaroo, wallaroo, snake, lizards, birds and yabbies. The absence of recorded sites is along the creek is probably due to the impact of European mining in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century and geomorphic processes which are likely to have obscured many sites.\textsuperscript{29}

Another important camping site was found on the northern outskirts of Millthorpe close to a creek line. The survey identified 40 artefacts and there was potential for more material below the surface. The site was heavily disturbed by potato cultivation.\textsuperscript{30}

\textbf{Carved Trees}

Agriculture and pastoralism have also destroyed many sites in the Orange district. A distinctive feature of Wiradjuri country was clusters of carved trees which marked burials of important people and initiations sites. The trees were richly decorated with geometric and figurative designs. Sadly, few carved trees remain standing. An exception is Yuranigh’s grave on Gamboola Station near Molong, which was marked by five carved trees, three of which still stand.\textsuperscript{31} Yuranigh was a guide for Sir Thomas Mitchell and when he learned of Yuranigh’s death in the 1850s, he organised for a headstone to be place on the grave. The bark has mostly grown over the carvings on the three living trees. The site is recorded on the AHIMS database and is protected by the \textit{National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974}. More information about Yuranigh can be found in the thematic history.

\textsuperscript{28} Heritage Concepts 2003.
\textsuperscript{29} Ross 1981: 4-16; Cadia Holdings 2008.
\textsuperscript{30} OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management 2008.
\textsuperscript{31} A fourth tree is on display at the site, but it was caged after it died.
Another carved tree was found on Boree Nyrang, a property approximately 25km west of Orange. It recorded by Edmund Milne, Deputy Chief Commissioner of Railways and Tramways, NSW, and informant of R. Etheridge. Milne thought the design was “possibly anthropomorphic” but it is clearly geometric. It is regarded as a burial tree, but the identity of the individual buried there is unknown (see Figure 4).

Figure 3: Photograph of Edmund Milne standing next to a carved tree at Yuranigh’s grave

Figure 4: Boree Nyrang Carved Tree

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32 State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW): SPF/1150. Please note that Milne did not use the axe to cut down the tree, although he may have used it to remove the bark which had grown over the design.

33 Milne 1918 [2011]: Plate XXIV, Figure
Distinctive ceremonies were conducted for the burial of important individuals. William Govett, surveyor, observed an Aboriginal funeral near Goulburn in 1836. He wrote:

…I was struck with the peculiarity of the noise… I soon perceived before me three native black women, and rode up to them. They were sitting around a mound of earth, with their heads depressed and nearly touching one another… I waited some time in astonishment observing their actions, and listening to their horrid lamentable yells. They were each of them striking their heads with a tomahawk, holding the instrument in the right hand, and wounding particularly the upper part of the back of the head… They weep this way, wailing and cutting their heads, until they become perfectly exhausted, and can shed tears no longer… The trees all round the tomb were marked in various peculiar ways, some with zigzags and stripes, and pieces of bark otherwise cut.34

A similar display of grief is said to have accompanied the burial of Yuranigh along with the burning of grass in the vicinity of the grave.35

Mound graves marked with carved trees were also characteristic of the Wiradjuri on the Lachlan River, as was observed by John Oxley, surveyor, and his assistant, George Evans, in 1817. Oxley was particularly impressed with the effort taken to carve the designs, describing the trees as “…a work of great labour and time”.36 It is not known whether Yuranigh was buried in a mound grave before the European headstone was added.

In July 1913, Milne and others set out from Condobolin to see if they could locate some of the carved trees mentioned in Evans and Oxley’s reports. Before setting out, Milne spoke at Orange with an old Aboriginal man from the Lachlan River named Jackey Narang. The information proved crucial as the party was able to locate a carved tree with the same design as one drawn by Oxley at the mound burial site. The remains of the mound, however, could not be seen. Milne also spoke with Billy Boyd, another old Aboriginal man from the Lachlan River, who related a story told to him by the “old men of the tribe”. Boyd said that the grave identified by Oxley contained the remains of a “celebrated doctor” or “koradga” who was

34 Quoted in Briggs and Jackson 2011: 8.
36 Briggs and Jackson 2011: 12.
drowned as he set out in a canoe on an expedition to the Bogan River. Further information about Jackey Narang and Billy Boyd has not been found, although the surname “Narang” (sometimes spelled “Nerang” or “Narange”) is associated with Peak Hill and the Bogan River).

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 5: “The Grave of a Native of Australia”**

Photographs of carved trees were the subject of a recent exhibition at the State Library of New South Wales which was curated by Ronald Briggs and Melissa Jackson, Indigenous Service Librarians. The exhibition is toured regional venues, including Orange and Dubbo. Many of the photographs of carved trees from Wiradjuri country were taken by Clifton Cappie Towle, an amateur site recorder who travelled extensively throughout rural NSW in the first half of the 20th century, although he does not seem to have visited Orange. The exhibition includes the photograph, shown in this report, of Milne at Yuranigh’s grave site.

38 National Library of Australia: nla.pic-an8955101
39 Briggs and Jackson 2011
An important message communicated by the exhibition is the ongoing significance of carved trees to Aboriginal people of NSW, particularly traditional owners. The Orange City Council has provided NTSCORP with a description and assessment of a carved tree held by the Orange and District Historical Society. The carved tree was originally located on Corroboree, a property in the Orange district. It was cut down in the middle decades of the 20th century as a precautionary measure against bush fire and given to the Historical Society in 1970. It is not currently on display. The design, characteristic of other Wiradjuri carved trees, displays a geometric diamond pattern. The condition of the tree is described as “fragile” and the carving is weathered and worn in several places.

A similar tree is on display at the Eugowra Public School (see Figure 6). The tree was moved to its current site in 1980 and is originally from a property approximately 15km from

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40 Two other carved trees were previously destroyed by fire on the property.
Eugowra along the Goolagong Road on the Lachlan River. According to the information panel at the school, the carved tree originally marked a mound grave, the remnants of which could still be seen in 1980. Further research is required, but the grave may have been the same one observed by Oxley in 1817. Reference is also made to a further two carved trees on nearby Mandagery Creek.

The base of the carved tree is encased in concrete. It is protected by a roof, but otherwise open to the elements. There are signs of rotting in the base and it is likely that urgent conservation work is required. During a recent site visit, the Principle enquired if funding is available for conservation measures. It is clear that immediate action is required to ensure the appropriate preservation of this significant object.

Carved trees have already been returned to the care of Aboriginal communities in NSW. In 2010, a carved tree previously held by the Museum Victoria was returned to the care of the Baradine Local Aboriginal Land Council. Orange City Council will have to give consideration to working with the traditional owners of the Orange Aboriginal community about the appropriate management of carved trees and the potential return of examples to the care of the community.

41 Dubbo Weekend Liberal 13 April 2010: 11.
Thematic History - Introduction

Orange is situated in the central western plains of NSW approximately 200km west-north-west of Sydney. The first European incursion into the district did not occur until after the Blue Mountains had been crossed in May 1813 by William Wentworth, Gregory Blaxland and William Lawson. Two years later, Governor Macquarie proclaimed a Government Stock Establishment, staffed by soldiers and convicts, at the present site of Bathurst. The government established a convict station in the Wellington Valley in 1823.\(^\text{42}\)

Oxley explored the district in 1817 and 1818, taking note of the park-like appearance of much of the landscape, which as we have seen can be interpreted as evidence for Aboriginal firing. James Meehan passed close-by to Cadia in May 1820 on his way to the Wellington Valley. Not far from Cadiangullong Creek he observed a substance called “manna” which he described as a “white congealed gum distilled from the Blackbutted Gum”.\(^\text{43}\) George Evans had previously found the substance when exploring the Lachlan River district in 1815. “Manna” is known as a delicacy for many Aboriginal groups throughout Australia. It is produced by lerp insects feeding on the under-side of gum leaves.\(^\text{44}\) Although not observed directly, it is likely that Aboriginal people at Cadia collected and consumed some of the “manna” which Meehan saw.

Occupation of the Orange district commenced in the late 1820s. A village reserve called Blackman’s Swamp was gazetted in the late 1820s. There were also small settlements at Fredericks Valley, Chinaman’s Bend and Shadforth from the late 1820s through to the 1840s. The local parish was named Orange. A village was not established on the gazetted land at Blackman’s Swamp until 1846 and it was given the name of Orange.\(^\text{45}\)

Many peoples first reaction to the name of Blackman’s Swamp is that it must have been an Aboriginal camp. Swamps generally are known to have been rich in resources and Aboriginal people probably camped at the location. However, available evidence suggests that the swamp was named after James Blackman, an assistant to John Oxley on his 1818

\(^{42}\) Griffin nrm 2004.
\(^{43}\) Quoted in Cambage 1921: 253.
\(^{44}\) Gammage 2011: 294.
expedition.\textsuperscript{46} James Blackman has Indigenous descendants, but not from the Orange district. His son Charles Blackman had at least two daughters born on the Castlereagh River to an Aboriginal woman named Bridget. Little is known about Bridget, but her two daughters, Euphemia and Louisa Florima Blackman, helped establish well known Aboriginal families north of the Castlereagh River such as the Tighes and Talbotts. The story about the connection of James Blackman to Orange is known by some his Bridget’s descendants to this day.\textsuperscript{47}

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\textsuperscript{46} Selkirk 1924: 229; Selkirk incorrectly names him as John Blackman.
\textsuperscript{47} Community interview, Redfern, August 2011.
conflict over Aboriginal women arose. Aboriginal resistance to European occupation occurred most clearly at Bathurst. From 1822, the Wiradjuri (led by Windradyne) attacked numerous pastoral stations in an attempt to wrest back control of the land. Governor Brisbane declared martial law in May 1823 and a punitive expedition was dispatched to capture Windradyne and his attackers. An unknown number of Aboriginal people were killed by the expedition and it is believed that others fled north to the Mudgee district to escape. Hostilities ceased when Windradyne marched east over the Blue Mountains to Parramatta where he attended the annual feast and blanket distribution.\textsuperscript{48} The impact of these events on Aboriginal people in the Orange district is unclear. It does not appear that the punitive expedition ventured as far as Orange, but it is likely that Aboriginal community would have been aware of Windradyne’s resistance and the government’s response.\textsuperscript{49}

It is also uncertain what impact early efforts of missionaries had on Aboriginal people at Orange. After the convict settlement ended at Wellington in 1830, the land and buildings were given to the Christian Missionary Society who sent Rev. Handt, Rev. William Watson, and later Rev. James Gunther to Christianise the indigenous inhabitants of the district. The mission did not run smoothly. Only a few Aboriginal people showed an interest in religious instruction. Rev. Watson alienated many Aboriginal families when he attempted to forcibly take children into his control. In February 1834, he took several Aboriginal children from the Dubbo district, including a blind girl\textsuperscript{50}. Attempts were made to retrieve her, but what became of her is unknown\textsuperscript{51}.

Disputes between the Reverends further hindered the operation of the mission. Rev. Handt left in 1836. Rev. Watson was dismissed from service in 1839 and he set up an alternative mission at nearby Apsley soon after.\textsuperscript{52} The missionaries made numerous expeditions in the central west of NSW to attract new residents at Wellington, but they do not seem to have visited Orange.

\textsuperscript{48} Read 1988: 8-11.
\textsuperscript{49} Read 1988: 11.
\textsuperscript{50} http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/wvp/group/amrhd/wvp/vol2/185.html
The Aboriginal population of the Orange district was devastated by a smallpox outbreak in 1830 and 1831. Locally, the disease was first reported by Andrew Brown, an overseer at Wallerawang, who said that he had encountered five Aboriginal people on the Castlereagh River with the disease when travelling to the north-west. It first appeared in the Wellington Valley in October 1830 and the localized epidemic continued for two months. The Wiradjuri in the district blamed the disease on Captain Sturt who had recently passed through the valley on his way to the west. It was also said that one of their “sages” had predicted a “grievous calamity” would come from Mount Harris, which is over 175 km north-west of Wellington and destroy them. The disease seems to have then moved to the east and south: outbreaks at Bathurst and the Lachlan River Valley soon followed, and by August 1831, there were sufferers at Wallerawang, although some escaped by heading over the Blue Mountains to Emu Plains.

John Mair, a surgeon from Sydney, was sent by the colonial authorities in late 1831 to investigate the outbreak. He did not arrive in time to observe the sufferers directly as “the disease had finished its work of desolation, and left only its traces behind.” Mair, who relied on eyewitness reports when compiling his information, was convinced that the disease which afflicted the Aboriginal community was smallpox. A Bathurst doctor, George Busby, was less certain, but Mair’s greater experience and knowledge of the disease – he was an advocate for smallpox inoculation – gives his opinion greater credibility.

Mair’s investigations brought him to the conclusion that the disease had swept down from the north-west. George Clark, an escaped convict who had been living with Gamilaraay people to the north of the Liverpool Plains, reported that none of the groups with whom he was in contact managed to avoid it. The victims included the “King or Chief” of the tribe with whom he was living. The local “Kradjee”, described by Mair as a “Soothsayer”, treated the headman by immersing him in water, but that did not prevent his death. The “Kradjee”, who said he only had a supernatural understanding of the disease, then tried pricking the pustules

53 SR CSIL 4/2130 31/10001.
54 SR CSIL 4/2130 31/10001; also see Campbell 2002.
55 The descriptions “King or Chief” are a misnomer: such formal political structures did not exist in Indigenous society, although people who had demonstrated prowess in social, economic or political matters could exercise greater authority in some circumstances.
of sufferers with a fish bone point and “squeezing out the fluid contained in them with the flat part of the instrument”. This was similar to a treatment advocated by some white doctors and it may have hastened the drying of the pustules to a scab. Another approach which the “Kradjee” took was to “scorch” all the hair from the bodies of the patients.

The impact of smallpox, which the Wellington and Lachlan River Wiradjuri called “Thunna Thunna”, was devastating and Mair estimated that it killed between one in three and one in six of all Aboriginal people in the areas to which it spread. At Bathurst, he heard “melancholy” singing at a “solemn” corroboree commemorating the victims. Mair said that the affliction was “chiefly fatal to adults and old people, seldom to children, and that those who had suffered from the disease at a former period as indicated by the marks on their skins escaped it altogether”. Mair undertook some vaccinations during his trip, although it is unlikely that they proved effective as the epidemic had already passed. George Rankin had vaccinated three Aboriginal men living on his property at the Lachlan River in 1827 and all three survived while their father passed away. Members of the Grant family vaccinated about 10 members of the “Miles” and “Camberrang” tribes.

Smallpox also struck an Aboriginal family living at Emu Swamp near Orange and at least one man and his son died. A surviving daughter came to the house of a white family named Coddy who were living at Emu Swamp and she was given quart pots of fresh milk to take back to her relatives. She was eventually taken in by the Coddy family who suffered their own tragedy when their two year old daughter contracted the disease and died.

**Blanket Returns**

Despite the impact of frontier conflict and disease, a considerable number of Aboriginal people were living in the Orange district in the middle decades of the 19th century. This is evident from the blanket returns, an official record showing the names, probable age, number of wives and children, “Place or district of usual resort” and tribe of the recipients. Reece

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56 SR CSIL 4/2130 31/10001; smallpox struck the Sydney Aboriginal population in 1789 and it is likely that the same epidemic swept through areas to the west of the Blue Mountains.
57 The territory occupied by the “Miles” and “Camberrang” tribes (and Mair did not use this term with any anthropological understanding) is uncertain. A member of the Bathurst Wiradjuri stated that he knew of an Aboriginal man named King Miles from the Lithgow district, although no reference to him has been found in the archival record (Community interview, 7 October 2011).
58 Blanket distributions ceased between 1843 and 1847 and resumed after 1850 (Reece 1974: 209-12).
argued that blanket distributions began in Sydney when Governor Macquarie commenced the annual feast at Parramatta in 1814 as part of his program to end the violent cycle of frontier conflict occurring on the Hawkesbury/Nepean River.\textsuperscript{59} Smithson’s review of the evidence, however, indicates that blanket distributions did not begin systematically until the late 1820s when they were used to reward Aboriginal people in the 19 settled counties\textsuperscript{60} for capturing bushrangers and to encourage friendly relations with the colonists. One of the earliest distributions took place at Bathurst in 1826 following the period of martial law outlined above and another soon followed in the Hunter Valley where fierce confrontation between colonists and Aboriginal people had also broken out.\textsuperscript{61}

Records show that a blanket distribution took place at Wellington on 29 August 1830.\textsuperscript{62} Only two “tribes” were mentioned (“Binjung” and “Boohgan”) and neither seems to have been located in the Orange district. It is tempting to place the “Boohgan” tribes to the west near the Bogan River, but this cannot be done with certainty. One member of the “Boohgan” tribe was known as “Bathurst Billy” but this does not necessarily mean that he came from Bathurst: Aboriginal men were sometimes given names of the places they travelled to outside of their territory.\textsuperscript{63} Two members of the “Binjung” tribe were “King Burrendong” and “Duke Burrendong” suggesting a link to the Burrendong Dam area about 65km north of Orange. However, the same argument as for Bathurst Billy might apply in this case, too. In all, 40 Aboriginal people were given blankets, 28 from “Binjung” and 12 from “Boohgan”. Five Aboriginal men collected blankets from Bathurst on 29 May and 3 July 1833.\textsuperscript{64} Four gave their “Tribe” and “Place of usual resort” as Mandurama, while the remaining man said Coombing, suggesting that all five came from the Mount Macquarie area approximately 35km south of Orange. Four had surnames recorded (Jemmy and William Rodd, Sandy West and Jackey Wilcox), however, no facts about their lives are known beyond they collected blankets.

\textsuperscript{59} Reece 1974: 124.
\textsuperscript{60} There are surviving blanket returns in the period of 1826 to 1843 for Batemans Bay, Bathurst, Carcoar, Eden, Hunter Valley, Illawarra, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Shoalhaven, Southern Highlands, Sydney and Wellington.
\textsuperscript{61} Smithson 1992: 74-76.
\textsuperscript{62} Aborigines, Returns of Aborigines, 1833-36, SRANSW 4/6666B.3.
\textsuperscript{63} See the case below of Port Phillip Charlie who had ties to Orange and the Turon but drove stock to Port Phillip for Benjamin Boyd.
\textsuperscript{64} Aborigines, Returns of Aborigines, 1833-36, SRANSW 4/6666B.3.
A group of eight Aboriginal men from Molong and Boree travelled to Wellington in 1834 to collect blankets. Only two admitted to having children, namely King Bogin of the “Boree Tribe” with two boys and Jemmy, also of the “Boree Tribe”, with four boys. All eight men were living at Molong except for King Bogin who was living at Boree. And all eight were recorded as belonging to the Boree tribe except for Saturday, who belonged to the “Newrea tribe” (which may have been located in the vicinity of Lyndhurst and Mandurama). Windradyne was also known as Saturday, but he was dead by 1834. Also, the Saturday who attended Wellington was a young man, giving an estimated age of 22. Perhaps he was a son or relative of Windradyne, or wished to draw on Windradyne’s reputation by taking his name.

Three Aboriginal men from Molong and Boree who missed out on receiving blankets at Wellington in 1834 travelled to Bathurst instead. Seven others came from Belubula, Coombing and Mandurama, including Jackey Wilcox and Sandy West who had collected blankets the previous year. In one year, Wilcox and West’s tribal designation changed from Coombing and Mandurama respectively to Belubula, demonstrating the dubious anthropological value of the information. Nevertheless, as we have seen, all three places are in proximity, indicating that both men had a strong attachment to the wider area.

Some familiar names from the Orange district collected blankets at Bathurst in 1836, including Tommy Raine of Boree, and Jackey Wilcox and Sandy West (whose tribal affiliations returned to Coombing and Mandurama). Billy Wentworth of Boree also picked up a blanket. His name suggests an association with William Wentworth, co-European discoverer of the route across the Blue Mountains and owner of property in the Orange district (including Frederick’s Valley).

At the distribution held at Carcoar in July 1841, 73 Aboriginal people (comprising 38 men, 27 women and 8 children) came forward to collect blankets. They had come from Coombing, Belubula and Waugoola (25km south-west of Carcoar). Only two names reoccur from previous lists: Jackey Wilcox and William Rodd; the remaining names are new entries. Several names are worth mentioning. Billy and George Lambert of Coombing may be

66 King Bogin was also known as Tommy Raine – see 1836 Bathurst blanket return.
68 SRNSW Colonial Secretary’s Correspondence: In letters (special bundles), Aborigines, Distribution of blankets, 1838-43 4/1133.3.
related to Jane and Rose Lambert, two sisters who lived much of their lives in the Rylstone district producing numerous descendants. In 1926, an Aboriginal man named Jim Clements visited Orange, proclaiming to be the son of King Billy Lambert and to have been born on Mount Canobolas in 1848. The dates fit as Billy Lambert’s age was estimated to be 25 in 1841. No further details about Billy and George Lambert are known.

Another recipient at Carcoar in 1841 was Billy Collit who age was estimated to be 50. Billy may have been related to Betsy Collit who was born at Cowra in 1838 and is an important ancestor of the Coe family. She married John Coe at Grenfell in 1863 and died at Cowra on 2 May 1912. Some of her descendants later lived on The Springs during the Great Depression. Both Billy and Betsy Collit may have had an association with James Collits, a settler on the Lachlan River who Sir Thomas Mitchell encountered on his third expedition to Australia Felix in 1836.

The blanket returns show conclusively that Aboriginal people survived the smallpox epidemic of the early 1830s, but they cannot be relied upon to give an accurate population count. As noted by Smithson, the government did not intend for blankets to be given to all Aboriginal people, only those deemed to be of assistance. This policy was relaxed somewhat as the 1830s progressed, hence the increased numbers handed out in 1841. But we cannot know if all Aboriginal people came forward to collect a blanket and it is probable that some did not for a variety of reasons. The number of children recorded is low and this may reflect the impact of smallpox. By this time, however, the mission at Wellington had been operating for over 10 years and Watson was known to take children without the consent of parents. Knowledge of these acts may have encouraged parents to keep their children away from blanket returns, thus keeping the count artificially low.

Governor Gipps reduced the scale of blanket distributions in the early 1840s as economic conditions in the colony tightened; he suspended it altogether in 1843. After an outcry from magistrates who said that Aboriginal people were extremely dissatisfied with the decision, the policy was reinstated in 1848. A committee was formed to oversee the distribution. As

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69 Orange Star 21 May 1926.
70 DC of Betsy Field, 1912/005538.
71 See below for more information about The Springs, a fringe camp south of Orange occupied in the 1930s and early 1940s.
before, the Colonial Secretary sent out a letter at the beginning of each year to police stations and magistrates asking whether Aboriginal people in the district required blankets for winter. The Queen’s Birthday was set as the date for distribution, although in reality blankets were handed out whenever Aboriginal people applied.73

In the 1850s, at least four blanket distributions were held at Orange. The Orange Bench of Magistrates requested and received 40 blankets in 1850. They wrote to the Colonial Secretary:

“In reply to you circular letter… requesting to be informed what number of blankets would be required to be issued to the native blacks of this district, I have the honour to inform you that we consider forty blankets will be necessary as the number of blacks applying for them as the last occasion of their being issued, exceeded our supply by a great many.”74

Unfortunately, the surviving correspondence does not include the names and details of the recipients. It does indicate, however, a sizable Indigenous population in the Orange district.

A scandal erupted in late 1856 when it became apparent to the Orange Bench of Magistrates that several of the police appointed to distribute the blankets had been misappropriating them. Initially, Magistrate Arthur Templer’s report, dated 23 December 1856, indicated that all was proceeding as usual:

In reply to your circular letter… we have the honor to state that the 100 blankets therein alluded to were received in time to be issued to Native Blacks on the Queens Birth Day. The blankets are issued to the Blacks as they make application for them, few of whom live in this immediate locality, merely causing the issue not to take place in every instance on the day named.75

It is not known where the recipients from outside the “immediate locality” were not living, but perhaps they had travelled from Molong, Boree, Coombing and Mandurama to collect

74 SRNSW CSIL letter 50/801, box 4/2885.
75 SRNSW CSIL letter 57/924, box 4/3353.
blankets at Orange as was the case in the pre-1843 distributions when Bathurst was the distribution point.

It was in the following paragraph that Templer reported the corrupt conduct. He wrote:

In making enquiries relative to the latter part of your letter, much to our astonishment we discerned that the several constables attached to this station have been in the habit of using these blankets for their own purposes. We further learn that there are 30 now in hand but from the above cause are in a very filthy state.

The district constable who had charge and control of said blankets was lately dismissed from his office and it is from the chief constable… lately appointed, that we learnt the inequality alluded to.

Mr John Lane, J.P… ordered some blankets to be issued to certain blacks, when he was informed the supply had been… exhausted whereas it appears at the time the constables had many parcelled out amongst them.  

Investigations continued in the New Year and by 26 January, Templer was able to identify for the Colonial Secretary the names of the perpetrators, their current status with the police and the number of blankets (totaling 30) they had misappropriated.

- Ordinary Constable Ciman (dismissed): 6 blankets
- Ordinary Constable O’Dea (resigned): 4 blankets
- Ordinary Constable Newton (dismissed): 4 blankets
- District Constable Herrick (dismissed): 8 blankets
- Ordinary Constable Daly (in police): 3 blankets
- Ordinary Constable Monahan (in police): 5 blankets

Templer recommended that action be taken against the two officers still employed to ensure that such a situation would not arise again. He wrote:

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SRNSW CSIL letter 57/924, box 4/3353.
Under the circumstances there are only two of the above who can be surcharged for the blankets, but as it appears to us so great a dereliction of duty, particularly in the part of the late District Constable who as head of the police at the time he held office had more immediate charge of such matters, that we deem it requisite such steps should be taken as may prevent any thing of the kind recurring again.77

The Colonial Secretary took Templer’s recommendations seriously. William Elyard78, public servant in the Colonial Secretary’s office, made the following request to the Civil Crown Solicitor on 25 February 1857:

In transmitting to you the enclosed papers from which it appears that some of the Constables at Orange have misapplied certain blankets which were sent to the Bench for distribution amongst the Native Blacks – I am directed to inform you, that Constables Daly and Monaghan who are still in the police will be surcharged with the cost of the Blankets they have appropriated to their own use and to request that you will have the goodness to say whether any steps can be taken to punish the other men concerned who have left the force.79

The Civil Crown Solicitor’s office considered the evidence but decided not to take action against the two officers who remained in the force. The reply to the Colonial Secretary, dated 6 March 1857. Stated:

Referring to your letter of the 25th… respecting the misapplication by some of the Constables at Orange of certain Blankets which were sent to the Bench for distribution amongst the Native Blacks, and requesting one to state whether any steps can be taken to punish the constables, I do myself the honor to state that the Blankets were only used by the Constables and not otherwise appropriated by them, I do not think that any proceedings can be taken against them.80

77 SRNSW CSIL letter 57/924, box 4/3353.
78 William Elyard was not unsympathetic to Aboriginal people of NSW and the conditions under which they lived. His family frequently employed Aboriginal people on their properties in the Shoalhaven district and his brother Samuel (who also worked for the Colonial Secretary) sometimes went fishing with Aboriginal men on the Shoalhaven River (see Bennett 2003: 85-90, 112).
79 SRNSW CSIL letter 57/924, box 4/3353.
80 SRNSW CSIL letter 57/924, box 4/3353.
Despite the unwillingness of the Civil Crown Prosecutor’s Office to proceed with legal action, it is clear that the Orange Bench of Magistrates took the issue seriously. Blanket distributions were considered to be very important and the case lends weight to Smithson’s contention that far from being an act of charity, they played a significant role in creating peaceful and workable relations between the colonial authorities and Aboriginal people. Smithson also argues that from the Aboriginal perspective, blanket distributions were a means by which they could draw colonial authorities into their own reciprocal system of gift-giving and create personal relationships. Blankets were partly seen as compensation for the loss of land and resources which followed from pastoral expansion. In their own eyes, Aboriginal people were owed an obligation by Europeans and the blankets were seen as a right. 81 This perception is evident from a much later distribution at Molong in the 1880s. In August 1887, an Aboriginal man named Mr Doyle (who was also known as Tarpot) asked J.E. Kelly, his local State member of Parliament, for a blanket. Evidently, Mr Doyle had previously asked the Premier for a blanket as Kelly wrote to Sir Henry Parkes in an exasperated tone:

> When in Molong yesterday Mr Tarpot waited upon me to say – ‘Sir Henry was like rest of ‘em, out of site out mind… no plurry blanket yet… no fear of him –’ Upon my word it is bitterly cold up country just now – and this is just to job your memory re Mr Doyle alias ‘Tarpot’ – and also the same in the matter of Mrs Mary Cain of Coonabarrabran (sic). If this don’t bring those blankets I shall give the job up and send a cheque myself to both local storekeepers and see what that might do.

The letter achieved its objective and Parkes directed Edmund Fosberry, Chief of Police and Chairman of the Aborigines Protection Board to send two blankets to Molong. An acquiescent Parkes wrote that the blankets “ought to have been sent before”. 82

Mr Doyle’s sense of entitlement is implicit in his statement to Kelly. He expected the obligation to be fulfilled and was frustrated (but perhaps not surprised) when it was not done in a reasonable time.

82 CSIL letter 87/8910, box 1/2654.
There is little evidence to demonstrate precisely where Aboriginal people were living in the 1850s. There is a report that people gathered at Newman Park, East Orange, before proceeding to the police station to collect their blankets.\(^83\) A more permanent Aboriginal camp may have been located here, but corroborative evidence is lacking. In the early 1850s, Aboriginal people were camped near Denis Hanrahan’s public house (known as the Limerick Castle) on the Cargo Road at Campedale.\(^84\) It is likely that some of the residents came forward annually to collect a blanket. Other recipients probably lived and worked on nearby pastoral stations (see below).

Later blanket returns for Orange have not been located, although blankets were distributed at Bathurst by the police between 1867 and 1888. They recorded details such as the date of issue, name and residence of recipient, and, on one occasion, the Indigenous name of recipient.\(^85\) Some of the beneficiaries lived at Killongbutta, a pastoral station on the Macquarie River approximately 30km east-north-east of Orange.\(^86\) Sarah (sometimes known as Sally) Medley was living there in 1867 and 1868 when she went in to Bathurst to collect a blanket. Born circa 1819, Sarah’s son John Rowland Harpur was born in 1839 and baptized in Sydney on 15 December 1854.\(^87\) He married Honora Sullivan on 14 October 1865 at Orange. Their infant son William Harpur died at Orange in 1866.\(^88\) Honora (who was also known as Hannah) collected a blanket from Bathurst in May 1872.\(^89\) Afterwards they moved west to Nyngan where their daughter Nora Harpur was born in 1885. Sarah Medley remained in the Bathurst and Orange districts; she died at Killongbutta on 20 April 1892 and was buried at the station on the following day.\(^90\)

Other recipients at Bathurst were members of the Bullock family. John Bullock, for example, was living at Kings Creek near Bathurst in May 1868 when he collected a blanket in town.

\(^83\) Anonymous 1928: 21.
\(^84\) Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 23 April 1853: 2; Sydney Morning Herald 22 March 1854: 2; Hanrahan’s public house may have been on ground where the boarding houses of Kinross Wolaroi School are now situated (see the section on the murder of Port Phillip Charlie by Jemmy D’Arcy for more information on the camp’s location).
\(^85\) The Indigenous name of the recipient was only recorded in the 1867 return. There are no other post-1850 returns which record this type of detail.
\(^86\) Number of Blankets served out to Aborigines at Bathurst, 1867-1888, ML A3016.
\(^87\) Baptism certificate of John Rowland Harpur, 1854/2513 Vol 56.
\(^88\) DC of William Harpur, 1866/005697.
\(^89\) Number of Blankets served out to Aborigines at Bathurst, 1867-1888, ML A3016.
\(^90\) DC of Sally Medley, 1892/01050; although we do not know where Sarah Medley was born, the fact that she spent her entire life in the Bathurst and Orange district, particularly around Killongbutta, suggests that she was born in the area. Given that she was born circa 1819, she may have been a survivor of the violence following the declaration of martial law in the mid-1820s.
The surname also has an association with Orange, although the precise family connections are uncertain. Betsy Bullock died aged 25 at Emu Swamp on 26 October 1875 from an abscess of the liver. She was buried near Icely the following day. Her birthplace was given as NSW and no parents were recorded. Polly Bullock, a domestic servant, died from “congestion” of the lungs at Orange on 12 June 1883. She was buried in Orange the following day. Again NSW was given as the birthplace and no parents were recorded. John, Betsy and Polly may have worked for or lived on the land owned by the non-Indigenous Bullock family who has descendants in the Orange district to this day.

**Interior Exploration**

Outside of the blanket returns, the names of Aboriginal people rarely appear in the documentary record in the 19th century. It is difficult to build up a picture of their lives. Virtually nothing is known of the hundreds of names that appear in the NSW blanket returns from the late 1820s until the 1840s. Some names suggest a connection to prominent pastoral families and colonial identities. One such name from the 1841 Carcoar blanket return is Tommy Mitchell (Aboriginal name Gudgoodjem) of Coombing who may have had an association with Sir Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor-General of NSW who used Boree near Molong as the starting point for several of his interior expeditions. Mitchell’s journals, however, do not mention his Indigenous namesake so the connection may only have been peripheral.

Another man mentioned in the 1841 return was Jemmy Piper, possibly John Piper from Bathurst who first joined Mitchell on his third expedition to Australia Felix which commenced from Boree in March 1836. The local Wiradjuri held a corroboree the night before Mitchell and his team departed, but there is no indication that Piper participated. The expedition proceeded to the Lachlan River and Piper proved invaluable in acting as interpreter and diplomat to the Wiradjuri people that were encountered along the way. He was also skilled at tracking lost cattle, climbing trees to scout the course ahead and finding scarce sources of water. At Lake Cargelligo, much to the astonishment of Mitchell, Piper

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91 DC of Betsy Bullock, 1875/008831; the certificate identifies her as an Aboriginal woman.
92 DC of Polly Bullock, 1883/011197; the certificate does not identify Polly as an Aboriginal woman, but evidence such as absence of parents’ names, her employment as a domestic servant and the presence of known Aboriginal people with the same surname suggest that she was.
managed to obtain a wife from the local group. Travelling west, the party eventually reached the Darling River. Mitchell’s previous expedition to the Darling had resulted in the shooting deaths of several Barkandji. As news of Mitchell’s arrival spread, a revenge party of Barkandji was assembled. On 27 May, several of Mitchell’s convict assistants began firing. Mitchell, Piper and the other assistants joined in the shooting and at least seven Barkandji were shot dead. After this incident, Piper was less successful in mediating with Aboriginal people met with along the way.93

Piper was joined as a guide for Mitchell’s 1845-1846 expedition to tropical Australia by Yuranigh94, a young Aboriginal man from the Boree district. The party departed Boree in December 1845 and travelled to the Bogan River before turning north. Initially, Mitchell regarded both Piper and Yuranigh as vital members of the party, however as they proceeded north, he learnt of Piper’s intentions to leave and go in search of young Aboriginal women near the Macquarie River. Piper denied the assertion, but it was confirmed by Yuranigh, and Piper was sent back to Bathurst. Yuranigh remained with the expedition as it advanced beyond the Tropic of Capricorn to Mount Douglas on the Belyando River. He proved to be particularly valuable on the Narran River when he placated a group of Aboriginal people who seemingly had menacing intent. When the expedition returned to Sydney in late 1847, Yuranigh, who had been to Sydney before, delighted in showing another Aboriginal guide named Dicky the sights of the city.

Yuranigh died in the 1850s and was buried on Boree Station. Initially, his grave was marked with five carved trees, a sign of his status within the Aboriginal community. Later, Sir Thomas Mitchell, who regarded Yuranigh as his “guide, companion, councillor (sic) and friend” organised for a headstone to be erected at the gravesite, creating a unique memorial. Yuranigh’s grave has been listed on the State Heritage Register and is managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service as an Historic Site. Members of the local Wiradjuri community believe that other important Aboriginal people are buried nearby, but no further details are known. Community opinion about Yuranigh is equivocal: he is remembered as a

94 There is no obvious mention of Yuranigh in the blanket returns, although he was probably too young to have his name recorded. For the most part, only adult men had their details written down.
significant Wiradjuri identity, but also as a man who assisted with the dispossession of other Aboriginal groups.\textsuperscript{95}

\textbf{Gold Rush}

A discovery not long before Yuranigh passed away had a significant impact on Aboriginal people in the Orange area and throughout the colony. The first payable gold in Australia was unearthed by William Tom jnr. and John Lister on the 7\textsuperscript{th} April 1851 at the junction of Lewis Ponds and Summer Hill Creeks, north-west of Orange. By mid-May, there were several hundred people at work panning for gold on Summer Hill Creek at Ophir. The gold rush had begun.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{images/historical.png}
\caption{The Lower Part of Church Hill, Ophir District}
\end{figure}

The effect on the township of Orange was immediate and dramatic; its population tripled in a matter of months. The structure of the population altered as a mix of middle class travelers (from Europe, America and China as well as the British Isles) and labourers arrived en-masse. Previously the town had been dominated by convicts, poor assisted migrants and

\textsuperscript{95} This information was provided to NTSCORP during community interviews held in the week of 3-7 October 2011.
squatting families. Gold laid the foundation for great prosperity in the local area and throughout the economy.

The benefits of the gold rush to local Aboriginal people were less certain. Gold seekers were concentrated on the creek banks at places such as Ophir and Lewis Ponds. Their presence and activities occupied large tracts of land and polluted the water, making it difficult for Aboriginal people to camp in the area. Nevertheless, the gold rush attracted Aboriginal people who made the best of the situation which confronted them.

In July 1851, an Aboriginal man and former resident of William Watson’s mission at Wellington found numerous fragments of quartz (weighing a startling 106 pounds) which contained a significant lode of gold. The discovery was made at Wellwood, a pastoral station on Louisa Creek, owned by Dr Kerr. The discoverer had worked as a shepherd for Kerr for seven years. He showed Kerr the discovery and was rewarded with two flocks of sheep, a dray and a team of bullocks. This represented a tidy sum, but Kerr undoubtedly got the better part of the deal. There is no evidence that gold played an important part in either the economic or ritual lives of Wiradjuri people (although quartz crystals were particularly significant), but Aboriginal people recognised that gold was of value to Europeans. The shepherd had been casually cracking lumps of quartz with a tomahawk knowing that any gold would attract the interest of his employer.

William Watson soon heard of the discovery. His report for 1852 mentioned that three Aboriginal employees of Kerr had found the gold: Daniel, Tommy and Jemmy Irvin. It appears they cashed in part of their reward as they “soon appeared dressed in the first style… riding about like other gentlemen.” But the principle of sharing was maintained as they “did not forget their less fortunate brethren in the district but sought them out, and invited them to

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96 Louisa Creek is approximately 60km north-north-east of Orange.
97 South Australian 19 August 1851: 2 (the find was reported in the press throughout the colony and fueled a “delirium of golden fever” – see Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 19 July 1851: 2); Diary of Hugh Hamilton NLA MS 956.
98 It gave clever men the power to “see right through into a person’s mind, and to fly” (Elkin 1977: 86).
99 Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 19 July 1851: 2; also published in Sydney Morning Herald 18 July 1851: 2; see also Cornwall Chronicle 2 August 1851: 482 (the Cornwall Chronicle was published in Launceston, Tasmania). Interestingly, the Sydney Morning Herald’s copy of the article, which credits the Bathurst Free Press as the author, was published the day before. This is probably because the Herald was published every day during the week whereas the Bathurst Free Press was printed less frequently. The Bathurst author probably wrote the piece earlier in the week and forwarded the copy straight to the Herald who were able to publish it before the Bathurst paper could.
go and share in their good fortune.” Watson went on to report that as a consequence of the discovery and the material benefits which flowed, 11 Aboriginal people from Apsley went to Wellwood to look for gold. Mixing with hundreds of other miners, they probably used tomahawks and hammers to break open lumps of quartz. They were unsuccessful, however, and returned after the death of several children. The great rush of miners brought with them disease and Aboriginal people, whose immunity was less, were among those to suffer.

Figure 9: Summer Hill Creek 1852, (artist unknown)

Other Aboriginal people remained on the periphery of the gold rush and did not become directly involved in mining. Hugh Hamilton, a farmer from the Lachlan River, initially came to the diggings as a prospector, but soon took on the role of a gold field commissioner selling licenses to other diggers. In July 1851, he arrived at the Ophir goldfields, giving his horse to a “Blackfellow” before going down to the creek. Pictorial evidence shows an Aboriginal presence on the goldfields. An Aboriginal man and woman appear to be walking out of a mining camp accompanied by a dog at Ophir in the drawing shown in Figure 8.

101 *Sydney Morning Herald* 3 September 1851: 2.
104 Diary of Hugh Hamilton NLA MS 956.
appears to show three Aboriginal women on the left draped in blankets and watching the miners at work.

**Pastoral Workers**

As labourers abandoned their old jobs and headed to the goldfields, pastoralists and squatters turned to local Aboriginal men and women as an alternate workforce. At Old Dubbo Station\(^{105}\), Aboriginal shepherds were “practically [taking] charge of the flocks and herds” in the absence of white workers.\(^{106}\) John Robertson, Commissioner of Crown Land for the Bligh district which included the lower reaches of the Macquarie River, commented that local Aboriginal woman were:

> a very fertile source of labour for the squatters… In my official tours throughout the district, I have met ‘Gins’ or female Aborigines herding or, as it is technically termed, tailing cattle in the bush and these females shepherd flocks of sheep with greater care and diligence than many European shepherds, so much so that some of the best flocks during last year have been under the guidance of the Aborigines. I have myself seen at farms or squattages other ‘gins’ or females performing all the operations required at a dairy while their husbands or brothers I found acting as stockmen… Indeed during the present great scarcity of Labour from the discovery of Gold I do not think the pastoral interests of the District could have been carried on without the Aborigines… Wherever I went, I found the Aboriginal labourer happy, well clothed, well fed and receiving fair wages from their employers.\(^{107}\)

Pastoralists were clearly experiencing shortages around Orange, which is not surprising given the short distance which labourers had to travel to reach the goldfields. Captain Thomas Raine of Boree Cabonne wrote in his diary on 16 May 1851 that “All the people in the Valley have gone to the mines… there will be great work for want of labour.”\(^{108}\) Detailed pastoral records for the Orange district have not been located, but there is clear evidence of Aboriginal employment after the gold rush began. Jemmy D’Arcy was working as a shepherd on a

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\(^{105}\) Old Dubbo Station, established by the Dulhunty family in the early 1830s, was located approximately 5km south-east of what later became Dubbo township.

\(^{106}\) Dulhunty Papers ML A1755: 36.

\(^{107}\) Governors Dispatches Vol. 64, quoted in Goodall 1996: 60.

\(^{108}\) ML MSS 5745/1/2.
property near Mount Canobolas in 1853 before being arrested on a charge of murder. His victim, Port Phillip Charlie, had been working as a horse-breaker on another nearby station.\(^{109}\) In 1861, an Aboriginal man named Billy Mitchell received £2.0.0 for working on Gamboola Station.\(^{110}\) (A quarter of a century later, Billy was living in the Bathurst district when he came forward to collect a blanket.\(^{111}\)) Employment continued into the later decades of the 19 century as well. William Ashmore was working as a labourer in the district in September 1887 when he passed away at Orange.\(^{112}\)

Aboriginal men also worked as drovers, using their knowledge of the landscape to help move herds of sheep and cattle vast distances. It was a profession which attracted young candidates. Tommy Gone of the Macquarie River was 15 years old when he died of pneumonia at Orange on 30 January 1880. His death certificate recorded his occupation as “drover”.\(^{113}\)

Particularly after the gold rush began in Victoria and demand for meat increased, much of the movement of stock, sometimes accompanied by Aboriginal drovers, was from north to south. The aforementioned Port Phillip Charlie gained his name by droving stock to Melbourne.\(^{114}\) Three major stock routes from Queensland met just north of Dubbo. From the 1870s onwards there is a strong presence of Queensland Aboriginal men in the central-west of NSW and it is known that at least some travelled south as drovers. A Queensland Aboriginal drover named Jackey died at Dubbo on 14 October 1874 aged 18.\(^{115}\) A 20 year old Aboriginal man from Queensland named Nemo died of tuberculosis at Mudgee on 31 January 1879.\(^{116}\) John Malachi (also known as John Marichi) died of cardiac failure and pneumonia at Orange on 6 November 1894 aged 39 years. His marriage certificate, which identifies him as an Aboriginal man, indicates that he was an employee of the police force at one time\(^{117}\) (he may

\(^{109}\) *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 23 April 1853; *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* 23 April 1853: 2.

\(^{110}\) ML MSS 2646.

\(^{111}\) MLA 3016.

\(^{112}\) DC of William Ashmore, 1887/012258.

\(^{113}\) DC of Tommy Gone, 1880/008984.

\(^{114}\) *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 23 April 1853; *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* 23 April 1853: 2.

\(^{115}\) DC of Jackey, 1874/004674 (the death certificate identifies Jackey as an Aboriginal drover who was born in Queensland).

\(^{116}\) DC of Nemo, 1879/006995.

\(^{117}\) MC of John Marichi and Mary Weeks, 1885/004005.
have worked as a tracker).\footnote{Tracking required sound knowledge of the landscape and good horsemanship, skills also possessed by many Aboriginal drovers.} An accomplished athlete, Malachi was listed to compete in a handicap running race over 130 yards on Anniversary Day in January 1887.\footnote{\textit{Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal} 11 January 1887: 2.}

Employment of Aboriginal men and women on pastoral stations as labourers, shepherds and drovers in the post-gold rush period was the continuation of a well-established pattern. Aboriginal families began living and working on pastoral stations in the Orange district soon after the era of frontier violence ended in the 1820s. The identity of some workers can be found from the brass breastplates they were given. King Joe was given a breastplate in 1844 by the Kelly family who owned Bangaroo Station near Canowindra (see Figure 10). Breastplates (or kingplates as they were sometimes known) were given for a variety of reasons such as a reward for completing work or as a means to establish or maintain peaceful relations with local Aboriginal people. Their distribution, however, represents a misunderstanding of the political structure of Aboriginal society, where power was not concentrated in a single individual, but spread throughout the group and based on achievement and ritual knowledge.\footnote{Troy 1993: 14.}
Other evidence of pre-gold rush employment is found in the records of pastoral stations. For example, Captain Thomas Raine of Boree Cabonne employed Aboriginal people in May 1850 to “…cut bark for us, Yellow Box, and cut the stack of hay for our own use.” One of the workers may have been Tommy Raine (aka King Bogin) who is recorded in the blanket return in the 1830s and 1840s. Tommy was also given a breastplate which is still in the hands of the non-Indigenous Raine family. Family records also indicate that he was involved in ritual combat.

Continuation of Traditional Practices

Despite intensified European land-use through pastoralism, agriculture and gold mining, Aboriginal people not only maintained a presence in Orange district into the 1850s, but

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121 The breastplate is on display in the Canowindra Museum.
122 Thomas Raine: An Early Pioneer by Margaret de Salis ML MSS 5745/1/2 (the manuscript includes quotes from the diary of Thomas Raine).
123 The Way it Was by Margaret de Salis, ML MSS 5745/1/4; see the following section for more details about the death of Tommy Raine.
sustained cultural practices and links with groups to the east, south and west, although the meetings were sometimes combative when disputes occurred. A raiding party from the Boorowa district attacked and killed three Aboriginal men at Molong early one morning in December 1850. The attack was led by King Andy Lane who was seeking to avenge the death of his wife, Charlotte, who had been accidentally killed by a boomerang thrown by Billy Dolly. Dolly fled to Boree Nyrang and was pursued by Lane and several mates. Drawing on an account published in the *Yass Courier* in 1871, Lloyd wrote:

The raid commenced when Andy, who was dressed in a black coat and wearing a sword, a legacy of his police days, ‘appeared as a half painted warrior and half policeman’. He and his companions travelled by night to avoid the Lachlan River tribes, they then made their raid on the unsuspecting Molong tribe camped at Boree Nyrang Station, belonging to Barton and Darvall. ‘With fearful whoops and yells and the trampling of feet and clatter of spears’, Andy attacked, leaving in his tracks ‘two or three old greybeards who lay(ed) around the house pierced with many spears’, for which the gins ‘crept out of their hiding places to howl and lament over the dead and dying’. Charley, one of the ‘best specimens in his clan’ belonging to the Molong Blacks, was reported as being cut up and carried away on spears.

It is not known whether Billy Dolly was among the dead. Revenge was a common cause for attacks among the Wiradjuri. The report suggested that one of the victims had part of his body taken away by the perpetrators. It is known that Wiradjuri clever men sometimes used the fat of dead men in sorcery, “extracting it through an elongated incision below the last rib on the right side”.

Orange Aboriginal men also sometimes fought with raiding parties from the Bogan River. One report stated that a battlefield at Kerr’s Flat near Orange was strewn with bones after one such encounter. A similar story was told about the death of Tommy Raine who was killed in a battle near the mill at Frederick’s Valley by Aboriginal men from Bathurst.

According to an article published in the *Orange Advocate* (circa 1930):

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124 *Sydney Morning Herald* 6 December 1850: 3.
125 King Andy Lane had worked as a tracker for the Mounted Police (Lloyd 1990: 4).
126 Lloyd 1990: 4 (with quotes from the *Yass Courier*, 2 June 1871).
This mill was the scene of a fierce tribal fight between the Macquarie River and King's Plains blacks, and was probably the last tribal fight in the Orange district. The Macquarie tribe was defeated and as their chief was running to the Mill for shelter… he was speared and killed and Mr Carroll secured his womerah and spear which was passed onto the Raine family.\textsuperscript{130}

It is uncertain when the last initiation ceremony was held on Mount Canobolas or elsewhere in the Orange district. Initiations in north-western NSW were held in the 1890s\textsuperscript{131} and on the north coast in the 1930s. There is evidence that an initiation was held at Goolagong, 40km west of Cowra, around 1920.\textsuperscript{132} The \textit{Town and Country Journal} published an account of an initiation ceremony held to the west of the Hervey Ranges in 1872.\textsuperscript{133} The reporter was travelling between Obley and Bulgandramine when he was met by a young Aboriginal man on a grassy plain soon after passing through a gap at the northern end of the Hervey Ranges. The clothing worn by the Aboriginal man was of particular interest:

He was dressed in a most picturesque manner. Round his loins he wore a white sash with four ornamental tassels suspending before, behind and on either side of him. A sash of similar network was artistically wound round his head. He had four small arrows in this sash tapering on his forehead, the tips of two nearly touching the root of his nose, and the tips of the other two pointing upwards. The light yellow feathers which adorned the string end had been taken from the top-knot of a white cockatoo. He also had a spear and a boomerang.\textsuperscript{134}

The Aboriginal man asked the reporter to avoid an area ahead as “we are now making young men”. A second Aboriginal man dressed in a similar way appeared with two others outfitted in “tattered” European clothes. They informed the reporter that young men were made by “knocking out” a front tooth and secluding them from “the white man and his habitation for

\textsuperscript{130} Quoted in the reminiscences of Margaret de Salis: \textit{The Way it Was} ML MSS 5745/1/4. The original article has not been sighted.
\textsuperscript{131} See for example Mathews 1894 (an account of an initiation ceremony held at Gundabloui by Gamilaraay people).
\textsuperscript{132} Read 1980: 104-105.
\textsuperscript{133} The Hervey Ranges are located approximately 100km north-west of Orange.
\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Australian Town and Country Journal} 27 April 1872: 4.
three months”. They had been appointed to act as “sentinels” and guard the four initiates from contact with Europeans.\textsuperscript{135}

The ceremony took place in Wiradjuri country and it is likely that initiations on Mount Canobolas followed a similar pattern. The extraction of a front tooth was a common feature of initiation rites among the Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi, as was the period of seclusion following the ceremony when initiates were given instruction and subjected to numerous physical tests.\textsuperscript{136} The secrecy of the rites is clearly seen in the attitude of the “sentinels” guarding the initiates from European intrusion. Observers in other parts of NSW often found it difficult to elicit comprehensive descriptions of ceremonies from their informers.\textsuperscript{137} Stories about Mount Canobolas are known today but kept out of the public domain.

Public corroborees were sometimes held, although the non-Indigenous audience was required to pay for the privilege. At Morangarell (approximately 90km south of Forbes) in 1881, the dancers built a fence of boughs and blankets so that outsiders could not see in. Only upon payment of a “coin” were people allowed in to see. A correspondent of the \textit{Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser} described the performance:

\begin{quote}
The exhibition commenced with the gins seating themselves on the ground in a circle, with their ‘possum rugs, rolled tightly round in the form of a drum, in the right hand, while with the left they struck them to slow measure, repeating at the same time in monotonous tone some aboriginal chant. While this was going on, the men, all painted, stood with spear in one hand and boomerang in the other, and, striking the two together, kept time to the chanting of the women. This was continued for a short time, and then on a sudden the men stood out in a row, and went through the aboriginal corroboree dance.
\end{quote}

Other dances mimicked the “cutting down of a tree with a crosscut saw”, the sharpening of an axe and digging for gold. Some of the dances were probably selected to appeal to the white audience although they can also be seen as Aboriginal people interpreting elements of their

\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Australian Town and Country Journal} 27 April 1872: 4-5.
\textsuperscript{136} See Mathews 1894 and Greenway 1901.
\textsuperscript{137} A. Hopkins, who witnessed a Gamilaroi initiation ceremony at Garah (north of Moree) in 1880, commented later that “although I have lived in the country almost all my life and taken a great interest in the Aborigines I never could find out, either by questioning the old men or those who had just passed through the ceremony” many of the details. He was inevitably told “it was the blackfellow’s secret” (Hopkins 1901: 62).
new world through traditional dance. It is possible that other secret dances and ceremonies were held later as the group at Morangarell were expecting 100 or so people from the Lachlan and Bogan Rivers to turn up in a couple of days.\textsuperscript{138}

\textbf{Kinship Ties}

Aside from continuity in ceremonial matters, Wiradjuri families from the Orange district maintained strong kinship links with nearby groups in the second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Alexander Stewart, for example, was born at Orange in the 1830s. Unusually, he married a non-Indigenous woman, Agnes Dray, at Mudgee on 3 July 1871.\textsuperscript{139} Their first child, Walter John Stewart, was born at Rylstone in 1872.\textsuperscript{140} By the mid-1870s, the family was living at Cassilis when Arthur Alexander Stewart was born. They then moved to the Dubbo and Wellington district around 1880 where their remaining children were born. Alexander Stewart, who worked as a drover and station labourer, died at the old Apsley mission near Wellington on 8 December 1919.\textsuperscript{141} His descendants have retained strong links to Wellington marrying into well-established Wiradjuri families including the Mickeys, Peckhams and Hills. The family also maintained a link with Orange. Alexander’s son Gerald Stewart was living in Orange when he passed away on 30 August 1957. He was buried on 2 September 1957 in Orange Cemetery.\textsuperscript{142}

Eliza Riley, an Aboriginal woman born at Balderodgery in the 1830s, married Edmund Taylor at Rocky Ponds near Molong on 11 December 1860.\textsuperscript{143} She died at Rocky Ponds near Molong on 23 July 1900.\textsuperscript{144} Eliza and Edmund (sometimes Edward) had at least six children together including Jane Taylor who was born at Goorabunderie near Molong on 11 April 1857.\textsuperscript{145} Jane had five children with David Kerdavid, a Frenchman, including Emma Kerdavid who was born at Middle Arm Creek near Molong on 29 November 1879.\textsuperscript{146} She in

\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser} 5 May 1881: 6. May was the month when blankets were often distributed. It is possible that some of the blankets used to build the fence had been given to the dancers by the police.

\textsuperscript{139} MC of Alexander Stewart and Agnes Dray, 1871/002817.

\textsuperscript{140} BC of Walter John Stewart, 1872/017238.

\textsuperscript{141} DC of Alexander Stewart, 1919/025808.

\textsuperscript{142} DC of Gerald Stewart, 1957/024343.

\textsuperscript{143} MC of Edmund Taylor and Eliza Reiley, 1860/002046.

\textsuperscript{144} DC of Eliza Taylor, 1900/009589.

\textsuperscript{145} BC of Jane Taylor, 1857/008715.

\textsuperscript{146} BC of Emily Kerdavid, 1879/017556.
turn married Daniel Gray at Parkes in 1898 and one of their four children, Henrietta Gray, married Colin Herbert Stewart, the grandson of Alexander Stuart of Orange.

Strong kinship networks were maintained despite intermarriage with non-Indigenous individuals. The descendants of mixed unions continued to marry into established Aboriginal families (although there were exceptions). Knowledge of the specific rules which once governed marriage was not required; it is probable that genealogical knowledge held by the community was drawn upon when prospective marriages were discussed.

**Trackers**

Another means by which Aboriginal men (and sometimes women) could preserve traditional knowledge and skills was by working for the police as trackers. There are numerous stories in the archives of trackers using their bush skills and extensive knowledge of the landscape to apprehend escaped convicts and find settlers lost in the bush. As settlement spread over the mountains after 1813, each district was responsible for organising its own local police force and many employed trackers on a permanent basis. It is likely that the local Orange police employed trackers in the mid-1800s but records have not survived.

In the year after the 1861 gold field riots at Lambing Flat, the Cowper government reformed the police into a centralised force administered by an Inspector General in Sydney. The employment of trackers continued throughout NSW and in the 1860s many were involved in the pursuit and capture of notorious bushrangers. John Watkins (also known as Sir Watkin Wynne), an Aboriginal man with strong links to Bathurst – he was arrested there in the 1850s and later collected blankets from the police in the 1870s – played an integral part in the pursuit and capture of the Clarke brothers at the Jingera Range near Braidwood in 1867. At the final gunfight, Watkins was shot in the arm, which was later amputated.

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147 MC of Daniel Gray and Emma Kerdavid, 1898/006171.  
148 MC of Colin Herbert Stewart and Etta Gray, 1930/010270.  
149 This is a common feature of contemporary NSW Aboriginal communities.  
150 Bennett 2009.  
151 West 2009: 226.  
152 Golder 2005: 171.  
154 Number of Blankets served out to Aborigines at Bathurst, 1867-1888 ML A3016.  
155 Haydon 1911: 176, 387
Billy Dargin of the Bogan River was closely involved in the pursuit of the gang of bushrangers (possibly including Frank Gardiner and Ben Hall) following the dramatic robbery of the Forbes-Orange gold escort at Eugowra in June 1862. The robbery took place only four months after the new police force was established and represented a challenge to its authority. Sub-Inspector Sir Frederick Pottinger, criticized for his approach to guarding the gold shipments, was vigorous in his quest to apprehend the suspects and relied heavily on Dargin’s and other trackers comprehensive knowledge of the country around the Wheogo and Weddin Mountains were the gang often hid. Trackers were particularly indispensable during the early years of the new force as many of the officers had not been born in Australia and were unfamiliar with local conditions. Billy Dargin was part of the team which shot Ben Hall dead near Goobang Creek on the Lachlan River Plain in May 1865. He received a £50 reward for his efforts, the same as the constables, but less than the officers with whom he mostly worked. He passed away suddenly at Forbes in November 1865 aged only 22 years. Shiel said that remorse from killing Hall may have prompted Dargin to drink himself to death. Inspector Davidson, who took over the investigation after Pottinger was recalled to Sydney, described the tracker’s conduct as “admirable”. He was buried in the Presbyterian portion of Forbes cemetery; his funeral was unattended.

Police salary records after 1882 show the place where the tracker was employed, and between 1883 and 1892, there were 10 different trackers at Orange (each was employed for approximately one year) and one at Molong. In the press and government publications such as the *New South Wales Police Gazette*, trackers were lucky to have their name mentioned at all; most were simply referred to as “the Tracker”. It was slightly better in the Police Salary Register where at least a first name was recorded. Few were given the recognition of having their full name written down. For example, John Phillips was the tracker at Orange in 1891 and 1892. Little about John Phillips is known, although it is possible that he was related to James Phillips, an Aboriginal man from the Shoalhaven River

156 According to his obituary, Billy Dargin worked for “Mr Dargan” of Bathurst before joining the police as a tracker (*Sydney Morning Herald* 6 November 1865: 5).
157 Shiel 1983: 100, 102-103 and 179.
158 West 2009: 25-30, 42, 226-227; see also *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* (19 June 1862: 2) which mentions that two trackers were initially involved in the pursuit of the gang.
161 *Sydney Morning Herald* 6 November 1865: 5.
162 See Appendix 2 for a table containing the names of trackers who worked in the Orange district between 1883 and 1949.
who married Cecilia Walker in Brungle in 1891 and whose association to the Orange district was through his son Alexander Walker, who married Madge Glass at Cowra in 1907.

An important task for trackers was to pursue criminal suspects. In March 1882, the Orange tracker (unnamed), accompanied by three constables, successfully pursued and apprehended two men suspected of “willfully and maliciously burning a stack of wheat containing about 600 bushels” at Coffee Hill, a property on the Cargo Road east of Mount Canobolas. The suspects were committed for trial at Bathurst Circuit Court.163

Many trackers were also skilled stockmen and horse riders. Most were given a horse when they joined the police and they were often required to look after all the horses attached to the station. Some were required to sleep in the stables. The job of transferring horses from one station to another often fell to the tracker. On 14 October 1884, Tracker Billy of Mount McDonald164 Police Station stopped briefly at Carcoar with a cart horse before proceeding to Orange. Tracker Billy also worked on the gold escort between Mount McDonald and Bathurst, which we have seen, was a potentially dangerous job. He did not stay in the job for long as by July the following year he had been replaced by Tracker Dick. One of his first jobs was to bring a stolen horse back to Mount McDonald from Orange via Carcoar.165

There was a strong tendency in NSW for the police to hire Aboriginal men from nearby camps who had good knowledge of the local landscape and its distinctiveness.166 This was not always possible, however, and sometimes the police had to look further afield for suitable candidates. George Mogul of Warren worked at Orange from 1905 to 1912.167 No stories about his tracking exploits at Orange have been found, but it is likely that he experienced a degree of success as he was presented with “a handsome gold medal” upon his departure.168 A sculpture by G.W. Hadfield entitled “Mogul, a Black Tracker” was exhibited at an art show in Grafton in March 1909.169 Sometime after leaving the police, George Mogul moved to the Brewarrina Aboriginal Station where he passed away on 10 November 1928.170

164 Mount McDonald is near present-day Wyangala Dam.
165 Carcoar Police Diary of Duty and Occurrences SR 7/6178.
166 Haydon 1911:
169 Clarence and Richmond Examiner 23 March 1909: 3.
170 DC George Mogul, 1928/022748.
Not all trackers remained on the right side of the law. The most obvious example was Jimmy Governor whose story we will look at below. An earlier example was Sambo, an Aboriginal man from Queensland who worked as a tracker before being convicted at Orange Quarter Sessions in January 1883 of common assault and serving three months in the local gaol.\textsuperscript{171} Similarly, a tracker named Ginger was convicted of burglary at Orange Quarter Sessions in May 1885 and sentenced to 18 months detention in Bathurst Gaol.\textsuperscript{172}

**Aboriginal People and the Law**

The application of the British legal system to the Aboriginal people of NSW in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century was inconsistent and sometimes discriminatory. From the beginning the colony, Aboriginal people could be brought before the courts for offences committed against white people. Technically, white people could be prosecuted for offences against Aboriginal people, but this was rarely the case. It was not until the 1830s that Aboriginal people were consistently arrested and prosecuted for offences against members of their own group. It was thought until then that such offences could be dealt with by Aboriginal peoples’ own system of justice.

There are several cases from the Orange district after 1850 which indicate the continuation of an Aboriginal system of justice, including examples of payback. The most obvious case, mentioned above, was the death of three Aboriginal men at Molong in 1850 by a raiding party from Goulburn, although no effort seems to have been made to arrest the perpetrators and bring them before the court.

The opposite situation unfolded following the murder of Port Phillip Charlie on the Wellington Road near Orange in March 1853. Charlie was a horse-breaker working for Mr Joseph Moulder. Previously, he had worked for Benjamin Boyd and several times driven stock to Port Phillip.\textsuperscript{173} The suspect in the case was an Aboriginal man named Jemmy

\textsuperscript{171} *New South Wales Police Gazette* 5 May 1883: 1889.
\textsuperscript{172} *New South Wales Police Gazette* 11 Aug 1886: 243.
\textsuperscript{173} Benjamin Boyd was a Scottish entrepreneur who owned numerous pastoral stations on the Monaro plains south of Cooma and in the Port Phillip district. He also operated a whaling station at Twofold Bay. In 1847, he imported 200 men and women from New Hebrides the Loyalty Islands in the South Pacific to work as labourers and shepherds.
D’Arcy (sometimes known as Count D’Arcy) who was “well known about Carcoar” where he had worked for Thomas Icely. According to several accounts, D’Arcy came to Orange accompanied by another Aboriginal man. They met Charlie on the Wellington Road at a camp near Denis Hanrahan’s public house and after a disagreement, D’Arcy stuck Charlie on the head with a “waddie” and killed him. The dispute stemmed from a previous meeting between the two at the Turon to the north of Orange when Charlie had struck D’Arcy on the head. It is likely they had other encounters as well. D’Arcy’s wife was a “South Sea Island woman” brought to the colony by Benjamin Boyd: it is probable that D’Arcy worked for Boyd at some stage, too.

D’Arcy was arrested while working as a shepherd at a sheep station near Mount Canobolas in April 1853 and taken to Orange for a bench hearing. He escaped custody in May while being transferred to Bathurst by audaciously leaping off a precipice at Lucky Point and dropping 50 to 60 feet into the river below. He recaptured at the Turon in December. The trial took place at Bathurst in March 1854. The first witness was John Kelly who was working as a barman at Hanrahan’s public house on the day of the incident. He said that D’Arcy and Charlie (who was also known as Jackey) drank some rum in Hanrahan’s before he “turned them out” for “rowdy” behaviour. Sometime later he heard a commotion and upon investigating found Charlie lying in a camp “nearly dead” and surrounded by “broken spears and womras (sic)”. D’Arcy, adopting an aggressive tone, then told Kelly and others in the camp that what had just happened was not a matter of “English law” but should be left to the “blackfellows” to sort out. He then disappeared into the bush. Some members of the

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174 According to information provided by Orange City Council and Orange Historical Society, Denis Hanrahan, born 1816, operated a public house called the Limerick Castle at Campdale on the Cargo Road where the boarding houses of Kinross Wolaroi School are now located. It is likely that the camp referred to in several of the articles about the killing was located in this vicinity. In the late 1850s, Hanrahan built the Wellington Inn, which is now known as the Royal Hotel. He died in Orange in 1868.  
Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser 23 April 1853; Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 23 April 1853: 2.  
175 Benjamin Boyd was a Scottish entrepreneur who owned numerous pastoral stations on the Monaro plains south of Cooma and in the Port Phillip district. He also operated a whaling station at Twofold Bay. In 1847, he imported 200 men and women from New Hebrides the Loyalty Islands in the South Pacific to work as labourers and shepherds (Australian Dictionary of Biography Online: www.adb.anu.edu.au/biography/boyd-benjamin-1815).  
176 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser 23 April 1853; Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 23 April 1853: 2.  
177 Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal 23 April 1853: 2.  
178 Taking into account the location of the initial incident, the fact that D’Arcy headed to the Turon after escaping indicates that he had good knowledge of the area which was possibly based on a traditional connection.  
179 Sydney Morning Herald 22 March 1854: 2.
press also held the view that the dispute was a matter for Aboriginal law. One commentator said that “it is to be hoped his tribe will make him suffer for the deed”.  

A discriminatory feature of colonial law at this time was that Aboriginal people were not permitted to give evidence in court, largely because they were thought incapable of understanding an oath. It was not until 1876 that the law was changed. In 1853, defendants such as D’Arcy had to rely on counsel to mount a defence. D’Arcy’s lawyer, Mr Holroyd, argued before the jury that the scattering of weapons around the deceased indicated that the two were engaged in “mutual conflict”. D’Arcy had asserted that Charlie had struck him first and his retaliation was in self defence. This created enough doubt in the juries’ mind and they returned a verdict of not guilty.

Following his acquittal, Jemmy D’Arcy seems to have remained in the area and kept out of trouble with the law. He was found dead near the Esrom Hotel in the Bathurst district in July 1860. His obituary described him as a local “celebrity”, perhaps an ironic reference to his encounters with the judiciary. The cause of death could not be determined and there were no external marks on his body. He had been seen several days before his death collecting a blanket for his child from the police.

The case demonstrates that debate about the application of English law to Aboriginal people was not restricted to the colonial judiciary; D’Arcy’s assertion after the death of Port Phillip Charlie that it was an Aboriginal matter indicates that the issue was thought about and discussed at length within Aboriginal communities as well. It also indicates that the Aboriginal system of law was operating in Orange in the early 1850s and the population was large enough to sustain it.

Two cases in the 1870s indicate the continued operation of Aboriginal law in the Orange district, although the precise contexts of each incident are unknown. In the middle months of 1874, Harry Campbell, also known as Harry Flanagan, an Aboriginal man from the Lachlan River, tied an Aboriginal girl to a tree near Orange and left her to die. Fleeing the district, Harry was pursued by the police along the Bogan and Darling Rivers. A constable and

180 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser 23 April 1853.
182 Sydney Morning Herald 22 March 1854: 2.
183 Empire 28 July 1860: 3.
tracker accosted him at Binalong (approximately 30km north-west of Yass) where Harry intended to participate in a corroborree. He hid among a group of Aboriginal people before making a run for it. The constable took aim and shot Harry in the back. Harry collapsed and said “I’m cooked”. He died a short time later.  

In September 1877, Hippi was charged with the knife stabbing of Billy Cook, another Aboriginal man. Convicted at Orange Quarter Sessions on 28 November, he was sentenced to two months hard labour in Orange Gaol. In both cases from the 1870s, the colonial authorities were successful in exacting punishment, although the shooting of Harry Campbell cannot be considered an act of justice. The growing stature of colonial law, however, meant that it was increasingly difficult for Aboriginal people to operate their own legal system, particularly when it involved the use of physical punishment. After 1875, there are no known cases of Aboriginal people using physical means to exact justice against each other in the Orange district.

Aboriginal people were also brought before the court in Orange charged with offences against the non-Indigenous population. Described as an Aboriginal woman, Georgiana Suttor, in the company of Kate Barry (non-Indigenous), was charged with stealing “sundry articles of wearing apparel” from William Brydon of Orange. Both were convicted and sentenced to one month’s imprisonment in Bathurst Gaol. The *New South Wales Police Gazette* described Suttor and Barry as prostitutes. Outside of domestic and station work, employment opportunities for Aboriginal women were few and Suttor may have turned to prostitution to survive.

Given her surname, it is likely that Georgiana had an association with the Suttor family of Brucedale, who also protected Windradyne during the declaration of martial law at Bathurst during the mid-1820s. According to the Bathurst blanket returns for 1867 to 1869, she was living at Saltrem to the north of Bathurst. The return recorded her Indigenous name as “Gurkell” the meaning of which is unknown. George and Bridget Suttor (also known as

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184 *Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser* 2 March 1875.
185 “Hippi” is a Wiradjuri section name and it is probable that the accused belonged to this section.
187 She was also known as Georgina Suttor (see Number of blankets served out to Aborigines at Bathurst 1867-1888, ML A3016).
188 *New South Wales Police Gazette* 20 September 1865: 338.
189 Number of blankets served out to Aborigines at Bathurst 1867-1888, ML A3016.
the King and Queen of Bathurst) were also living at Saltrem during this period and it is probable they were Georgiana’s parents. Their daughter, Elizabeth Bridget Jane Susan Suttor, died at Bathurst on 19 April 1856 as an infant. Georgiana Suttor was born at Bathurst in 1843 and died there on 16 September 1878.

Less is known about the life of Jackey Wentworth who was arrested by Molong Police in April 1881 and “charged with stealing one purse, five £1 notes, and two pipes (purse and pipes recovered), from the person of Patrick James Moloney”. He was taken to Orange to stand trial at the next Quarter Sessions. Wentworth had also spent time in the Wellington district where he collected a blanket in the mid-1850s. He may have been related to Billy Wentworth of Boree who collected a blanket at Bathurst in 1836 or he may have had an association with W.C. Wentworth who owned land at Frederick’s Valley.

As noted above, a Queensland tracker named Sambo was convicted of assault on 31 January 1883 at Orange Quarter Sessions and sentenced to three month’s imprisonment in Orange Gaol. Born in 1866, his prison record described him as 5ft 2in in height and as having a “black” complexion. He was released in late April and nothing is known of his subsequent life. He does not appear to have worked as a tracker in Orange. His namesake had been convicted of horse stealing at Orange Quarter Sessions in October 1862 and sentenced to six months in Bathurst Gaol. The racist appellation is indicative of wider attitudes prevalent throughout the colony in the second half of the 19th century.

**Continuity and Change: 1830-1880**

As the 1870s drew to a close, Aboriginal people retained a strong presence in the Orange district. The community supported itself by working on local properties as shepherds and sometimes travelling vast distances as drovers. Gold mining attracted some Aboriginal people, but few seem to have benefited. Others worked as trackers for the police, adapting
traditional knowledge of the landscape to a new end. Further elements of traditional cultural survived, including language, the payback system of justice and ceremony. Particularly important was the continuation of the wider Wiradjuri kinship network. Aboriginal men and women from the Orange area married into Wiradjuri families from nearby places such as Wellington.

No evidence for hunting, gathering and fishing was found in the middle decades of the 19th century. It is likely that such activities were curtailed as pastoralism, agriculture and mining expanded. Given the survival of knowledge into the 20th century, however, it is likely that Aboriginal people were partially supporting themselves off the land. For the most part, Aboriginal people at Orange were not dependent on the government or private interests for survival. Many came forward to collect a blanket at the beginning of winter, but little other assistance was available. The situation was to change with the establishment of a protection policy in the early 1880s.

**The Aborigines Protection Board**

After 30 years of indifference towards Aboriginal affairs, the NSW government appointed a Protector of Aborigines (George Thornton) in 1881. The immediate trigger seems to have been the alarm raised by a camp of Aboriginal people at the Government Boat Shed near Circular Quay. It also became clear that Aboriginal people were not “dying out” as quickly as first thought. Thornton’s first census showed 7,817 living in NSW (a likely underestimate). The job was thought to be beyond the efforts of one man so the Aborigines Protection Board, chaired by Edmund Fosberry (Inspector General of Police) was established in 1883.\(^{198}\)

The annual reports of the Protector and APB provide general details about Aboriginal life in Orange from 1882 onwards. The policy of the APB at this time was to create reserves “to enable (Aboriginal people) to form homesteads, to cultivate grain, vegetables, fruit, &c. &c., for their own support and comfort”.\(^{199}\) Except for the old, the infirm and children, the Board encouraged Aboriginal people to be self-sufficient. An Aboriginal reserve was not established in the Orange district, although the APB provided rations and blankets to support

\(^{198}\) Doukakis 2006: 8-9.
\(^{199}\) Report of the Protector of Aborigines, 1882.
the population. The nearest Aboriginal reserves were established at Cowra in 1890 and Wellington in 1895.

![Graph showing the Aboriginal Population of Orange from 1889 to 1914.](image)

**Figure 11:** Graph showing the Aboriginal Population of Orange from 1889 to 1914.

The annual report for 1891 indicates that Aboriginal people in Orange and Molong (a combined population of 28) did not require rations. The report noted that:

> None are in need of aid from government; they are generally employed on stations and farms, a few also earn a living fencing. They are not addicted to habits of intemperance. One child attends the public school at Molong. Blankets are supplied annually. They are in no way misappropriated. When ill, they are either treated by the government medical officer or sent to the local hospital.”

From this point onwards, working for Europeans became an important source of independence and status for Aboriginal people. Wiradjuri men mostly worked as labourers but some gained higher-standing jobs such as shearsers. Some women worked as domestic servants. Employment meant that some families, at least for part of the year, could live outside the restrictive reserves and stations. But none of the families or workers seemed to have camped together in larger groups by 1900. Most of the larger pastoral and agricultural stations had been broken up by this time, forcing the former Aboriginal residents either onto reserves and stations or into town fringes. Many found work on the smaller properties, but they could not live there.

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201 See Read 1980.
The statistics collected by the APB show a fluctuating population at Orange between 1889 and 1914 (see Figure 2). The minimum figure was 2 people in 1893 with a maximum of 26 in 1914. The statistics were generally collected by the police and they represent only a baseline population: there may have been other Aboriginal people in the district who the police were unaware of. This would have been particularly the case after the introduction of the Aborigines Protection Act in 1909 (and subsequent amendments) which formalized the powers of the APB to remove children to institutions such as Cootamundra Girls Home and Kinchela Boys Home, and also to apprentice Aboriginal boys and girls aged between 14 and 18 to white families and employers. It also enabled station managers and police to expel residents who were in breach of the Act. The impact of Wiradjuri families was severe. Peter Read’s analysis of the Register of Wards indicates that “ten per cent of the first 800 children separated from their communities after 1915 were Wiradjuri”. The fluctuations in the Orange population, particularly after 1909, may have been caused by the movement of families seeking to avoid having their children removed. Expulsions from stations such as Brungle, Yass, Condobolin, Forbes and Cowra may have increased the population at Orange. What is clear is that people moved to places with which they were familiar and where other family members were staying.

Colonial census data and births, deaths and marriage records from the turn of the century identify the names of Aboriginal people in the Orange district. For example, Edward Clements and an unnamed Aboriginal woman were living at Ophir in 1891. Interestingly, an unnamed Aboriginal man was recorded as living in an area to the south of Orange, suggesting a presence at The Springs as early as the late 19th century. In 1901, Alfred Lock and three other Aboriginal people were living at the junction of Ophir and Dry Creeks. Alfred Lock, a descendent of Maria Lock from western Sydney, was born at Windsor in the 1870s. He married Mary Booth of Forbes at Katoomba in 1893 and the couple spent time at Parkes and Wellington before moving to Emu Swamp where, between 1901 and 1909, four of their children were born. Alfred Lock later moved to Sydney where he passed away in 1944.

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203 Read 1988: 57-60.
204 Genealogical research suggests that the Clements family have strong ties to southern Wiradjuri country including Condobolin, Eugowra and Forbes.
205 NSW Unified Genealogy.
Alfred Lock was not the only member of his wider family to travel west of the mountains. Alfred’s aunt, Jenny Swift (nee Lock) died of consumption at Warangesda Mission Station on 6 October 1894. Previously she had lived on Maloga Mission run by Daniel Matthews who sometimes travelled to Sydney to bring back Aboriginal families. Matthews had also taken Jenny and her husband Paddy Swift (a Pangerang man from the Wangaratta district of Victoria) to England in 1889 on a promotional tour. Residents of both Maloga and Warangesda included Wiradjuri families from Peak Hill and Dubbo. Members of the Clements family also spent time at Warangesda in the late 1880s. Warangesda in particular seems to have been a place which Wiradjuri people regularly visited. As was the case with Wellington in the 1830s, missionaries actively sought to bring Aboriginal people under their influence, but others were attracted by rations and a relatively safe place to stay. Some resisted though. In 1880, John Gribble sought to bring Yarry, an Aboriginal man in declining health, from Gundagai to Warangesda. Yarry declined the offer saying that he “b’long Gundagai” and would not leave.

**The Governor Brothers**

The attitude of the non-Indigenous community in NSW to Aboriginal people was shaped by a horrific event which occurred at Breelong (approximately 55km north-north-west of Dubbo) on 20 July 1900. That evening, Jimmy and Joe Governor, brothers, and Jackey Underwood, murdered five members of the Mawbey household at the main Breelong house. The motivations of the perpetrators are subject to ongoing debate, but the immediate cause of the event seems to have been a dispute over payment for a fencing contract which Jimmy Governor had with John Mawbey, owner of Breelong. Jimmy was married to a white woman, Ethel Page, and the insults which he and his wife received for breaking a strict social code multiplied the tension.

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206 Maloga Mission was established by Daniel Matthews near the Murray River in 1874. He later assisted John Gribble to select land for Warangesda Mission in 1879. Gribble also travelled widely in Wiradjuri country to encourage Aboriginal people to go to Warangesda. It is not clear whether he visited Orange. Both Warangesda and Maloga (residents eventually moved to nearby Cumeragunga) were eventually taken over by the APB (see Read 1988: 30-40; Cato 1976).


208 AIATSIS MS 1786.

209 *Sydney Morning Herald* 5 April 1880: 5.

Jimmy, Joe and Jackey went on the run after committing the murders. Jackey was soon captured and taken to Dubbo where he was convicted and executed. Jimmy and Joe were pursued by the police and trackers for over 3,000km. The closest they came to Orange was Goolma, which is about 110km to the north. They travelled north as far as Narrabri before heading east. Jimmy was captured on 27 October 1900 at Bobin Creek in the Taree district. Joe was shot and killed four days later at Glen Rock north of Singleton. After his capture, Jimmy was taken by steamer to Sydney where he was convicted and hanged at Darlinghurst Gaol on 18 January 1901.

The story received extensive coverage in the colonial press and many of the stories emphasised the supposed “savage” and “cunning” nature of Aboriginal people in general. The local *Orange Leader and Millthorpe Messenger* published numerous stories including a piece about the shooting of Joe Governor which “gladdened… the hearts of our local residents”. An editorial published four days later, while still supposing an inherent savagery, lamented the treatment which Joe was subjected to following his death which included the severing of his head. The editor wrote:

Even if the man was a savage murderer it seems horrible after he has paid the penalty to hack his body to pieces, throw the trunk into unhallowed ground without any ceremony whatever, and chop his head off to put it in a bottle. If Joe Governor had been caught alive he would have been hanged, but how different would have been the treatment! Not that it makes any real difference to the miserable wretch, but it is repugnant to a person’s sensibility; it savours too much of South Sea Island savagery.

There is no direct evidence about how Aboriginal people in Orange were treated in the aftermath of the Breelong murders. Some of the Aboriginal men at Wollar who were known to the Governors’ were initially locked up in Mudgee Gaol before being taken with their families to Brewarrina Aboriginal Station. It is likely that the Orange Aboriginal population

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*Orange Leader and Millthorpe Messenger* 3 November 1900.
*Orange Leader and Millthorpe Messenger* 7 November 1900.
in 1900 was low (available statistics show a population of two in 1898 and nine in 1901), so those present may have been able to continue their lives substantially uninterrupted.

**Jack Marsh**

Orange could be a dangerous place at times. Jack Marsh, a first-class cricketer and professional runner, was killed outside an Orange hotel in May 1916. Born on the Clarence River, Marsh spent over two decades pursuing an elite sporting career in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. One of his athletic highlights was running what was possibly a world record for the 100 yards at Melbourne in June 1894 (his time was 9.8 seconds). He played 56 games of first grade cricket in Sydney between 1897 and 1905, taking 280 wickets. In his debut first class match for NSW in December 1900 at the Adelaide Oval, Marsh took five wickets. In total, he played six matches for NSW between 1900 and 1903, taking 34 wickets. Dispute over his bowling action – some accused him of chucking – forced Marsh out of the game.

In January 1902, Marsh was invited to Bathurst to play for a local team against the touring English. It was thought his presence would attract more spectators through the gate. Some Orange cricketers were also in the side. However, Marsh was prevented from playing when the dispute over his action flared again. He returned to Bathurst in the 1903-1904 season, representing a Combined Western Districts team against another English touring side. Marsh had only been living in Orange for a couple of weeks before being killed. He had spent most of the previous decade on the road as an itinerant labourer following the end of his sporting career. On 26 May 1916, Marsh had been drinking for most of the day with an acquaintance. Upon arriving at the Billiards Room near the Royal Hotel, Marsh pestered a couple of men for some coins. They refused and in his biographer’s words, “(a)ll the resentment he had suppressed for years boiled into anger”. He stepped outside, picked up some stones and waited for his re-buffers to come out onto the street. He pelted stones at them, hitting one in the chest. A fight ensued and Marsh was knocked down, kicked and killed outside the Royal Hotel. He was taken over to the entrance to Robertson Park and an ambulance was called, but he was dead by the time they got him to the hospital.

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218 Bonnell 2003: 117.
attackers, John Hewitt (whose father owned the Billiards Room) and Walter Stone, were arrested and put on trial in Orange. The evidence, however, was not effectively presented and both were acquitted. Marsh’s story is an extreme example of the difficulties faced by Aboriginal people in gaining acceptance within wider society.  

Traditional Life in the 20th Century

The APB intensified its control over the lives of Aboriginal people in NSW as the 20th century progressed, securing amendments to the Aborigines Protection Act in 1915 to make the process of child removal easier. Wiradjuri children removed from their parents had little opportunity to learn the language or other cultural practices. Even those who were not removed still found it difficult. Valerie Williams, who was born at Orange in 1926, told Peter Read that you “… weren’t allowed to sit down and listen” to the elders talk. When asked why, she replied:

“That’s the thing that’s got us puzzled. I mean, that’s why none of us know the language. They were old when I was young, that’s in the thirties, before ’37. They were old women, so they’d be born… two generations back. See they wouldn’t even talk it in front of my mother, and that, very rarely. They were very funny people, the older ones. They had to get in that little group, then they’d talk among themselves. But if you walked up, say you were an Aborigine and you walked up, they’d just close up like a clam.

Read conjectured that older speakers may have not used the language because they were discussing local politics or confidential cultural matters. He also reasoned the “… most likely explanation is that the old people did not intend to destroy their language: they simply did not speak it frequently enough, never dreaming that to neglect it was to kill it.”

Despite this tendency, some elements of the old ways survived beyond the early decades of the 20th century. In the late 1970s, Peter Read spoke with several elderly people who had been taught part of the Wiradjuri language. Many of the words are still used today and Stan

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219 Bonnell 2003: 114–121; see also The Leader 29 May 1916: 2.
220 Read 1988: 50.
Grant Snr, Wiradjuri elder, and John Rudder recently published a comprehensive Wiradjuri dictionary.221

Read was told in the late 1970s that an initiation ceremony was held at Goolagong, possibly around 1920. Read’s informant, Frank Simpson (born Narrandera 1903), said that he knew a ceremony was underway because the box trees around the ground were freshly “marked” with symbols he did not understand. He and a mate also saw fires in the middle of the night, but did not stay around. Another informant of Read, Locky Ingram (born Narrandera 1903) knew details of the initiation ceremony, including the removal of a front tooth and the practice of taking initiates and showing them “country”.222 There is no evidence that ceremonies have been held since the early part of the 20th century.

**Erambie**

It was particularly difficult to pass on traditional culture on an Aboriginal station where the supervision of a white manager discouraged it. For 33 years, the residents of Erambie near Cowra had lived without a manager. The population of Erambie swelled after the closure of Warangesda in 1923.223 Complaints by white families in Cowra prompted the APB to appoint a manager at Erambie the following year. The residents became subject to weekly housing inspections, fines and expulsions. Outsiders, including family members, could not enter the station without reporting to the manager first. Some managers took a humane approach, but others behaved in a tyrannical manner at times.224

Managers encouraged residents to go out and look for work; the limited supply of rations at Erambie encouraged it. Some men travelled as far as the Paroo River in north-western NSW to go shearing, but many others travelled locally to places such as Young and Orange to go fruit picking.225 Many of the Aboriginal fruit-pickers stayed during late winter and early spring in a camp on the southern outskirts of Orange called The Springs.

221 Grant and Rudder 2005.
222 Read 1980: 104-105.
223 It was a time when many reserves were being closed throughout NSW as the APB sought to concentrate Aboriginal people in a limited number of settlements (see Read 1988 and Goodall 1996 for discussions relating to the contradictory motives of the APB at this time which veered between protection, isolation and assimilation).
224 See Read 1984a.
225 Read 1984a.
As noted by Kabaila, The Springs was a mixed Aboriginal/European camp located approximately 800m west of Bloomfield Hospital. It was occupied during the 1930s and early 1940s. The origins of the camp are unknown, but it is likely that some of the non-Indigenous residents were itinerant workers forced onto the road by the Great Depression.

The camp is situated on an old travelling stock reserve. Stock reserves often followed ancient Aboriginal walking tracks and there are numerous other unofficial camps along reserves throughout NSW. The discovery of flaked stone artefacts in 2010 indicates that the site was used as a camp in pre-contact times.

Aboriginal residents of The Springs, who mostly lived in tin shacks and tents, included members of the Monaghan and Carberry families who came from Erambie, Yass, Gundagai and the Lachlan River. Others, such as members of the Grace and Bell families, had strong links to Yass and Wellington. They were all part of extensive Wiradjuri kinship networks.

The Springs was a good place to live as it had a permanent water supply. Residents supported themselves by picking cherries and blackberries for local farmers and the population of the camp swelled during the picking season in August and September.

Eva Coe recalls that her grandmother, Eva Carberry, was the first to camp at The Springs. The state electoral roll for Orange shows Aboriginal families living at The Springs in 1930. Residents at that time included Alex Grace and his parents, Edward Grace and Eva Grace (nee Carroll). Two years previously, the Grace family had been living with Sidney Glass at 9 Kite Street in town, suggesting that occupation of The Springs began between 1928 and 1930.

Other Aboriginal families were still living in town in 1930, including Reginald and Amelia Glass on the town common (they were living at 5 Warrendine Street in 1928) and Robert Whitton in a residence on Woodward Street. Archie Murphy, tracker, was living at the police station in Anson Street. By 1936, at least two families were living on The Springs, namely

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227 OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management 2010: 3.
228 Interview with Josephine Monaghan at Cowra, 3 August 2011.
230 Phone interview with Eva Coe, 4 June 2012.
Henry John Bell and Mary Selina Bell (nee Grace), and also Cecil Coe. Others, including members of the Alexander, Grace and Simpson families, were recorded as living on Woodward Road, which runs in close proximity to The Springs. They may have been living at The Springs or possibly on nearby land, indicating that the camp was spread over a larger area than previously thought.

A similar situation is evident from 1937 electoral roll. Henry John Bell and family were living at The Springs with his brother Roy William Bell and his wife Gladys Bell (nee Towney). Henry and Roy’s parents, Harry Roy Bell and Matilda Bell (nee Stanley) were also present. Again, members of the Alexander, Grace and Simpson families were occupying land on Woodward Road.

Many of the residents of The Springs were from well-established Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal families. Frances and Josephine Monaghan were sisters who were born at The Springs between 1936 and 1938. Their mother, Eva Carberry, was born at Young in the mid-1890s. Eva’s father, Frederick Carberry, was born at Gundagai in the early 1860s. He married Frances Lane (who is descended from Yass and Lachlan River families) at Yass in 1890. In adulthood, Eva travelled between Yass, Cowra and Wellington before moving to Orange, most probably in the early 1930s. She was joined after that by her father who lived at The Springs before moving into a March Street residence in town. It was at this place that he passed away in May 1943. Frances and Josephine lived at The Springs until about 1943. The family later moved to Erambie at Cowra where members (including Josephine, her daughter Rebecca, and Frances’ daughter Eva) still live today. They retain strong traditional ties to both Orange and The Springs.

A comparable web of kinship, connection and movement is evident from the family history of Harry Roy Bell who was born in Yass in the late 1880s. He had strong ties to the Ngunnawal country at Yass through his mother Lester Lane and maternal grandmother Caroline Chisholm. By 1909 he had moved to the Wellington Aboriginal reserve where he married Matilda Stanley. It is possible that he may have travelled through Orange on his way

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234 Eva’s grandfather was King Andy Lane who avenged the death of his wife Charlotte at Boree Nyrang in 1850 (see above).
235 Interview with Josephine Monaghan, Cowra, 3 August 2011; phone interview with Eva Coe, 4 June 2012.
to Wellington, working as a labourer or drover to support himself and stopping at The Springs to camp, rest and water a mob of cattle. We already know that Aboriginal men in the 1850s knew their way to Orange from country to the south. Harry Bell may have been following a path well-trodden by his ancestors when travelling to Wellington.

Harry Bell’s wife was from an old Wellington Wiradjuri family. Born at Molong in the early 1890s, Matilda Stanley had spent most of her life in the Wellington district. After marriage, she and her husband divided their time between Wellington and Yass, and some of their children were born in each place. Henry John Bell, for example, was born at Wellington in about 1909. Ties between Wellington and Yass were further cemented when he married Mary Selina Grace (who was born at Yass in about 1909) at Wellington in 1933. Henry and Mary’s eldest child, John ‘Ted’ Bell was born at Wellington the following year before the family moved to Orange and set up at The Springs. John remembers that several of his siblings were born at The Springs and that his mother worked as a maid at the Duntryleague club. The family stayed at The Springs until John was approximately four years old before returning to Wellington. He did not forget his connection to The Springs and has since returned to Orange with his wife where he has been joined by a son.

A number of factors influenced the patterns of movement which the history of The Springs brings to light. Much of the movement had to do with maintaining and strengthening long-standing kinship ties. Aboriginal men and women travelled to adjacent communities looking for marriage partners and to see family members. But other, more contemporary factors were also at work. Some Aboriginal people came to The Springs looking for work and found seasonal jobs picking fruit and sometimes more permanent employment in town. Others were seeking to evade the AWB and their power to remove and apprentice children. But these factors did not operate in isolation to kinship and family: when people moved to either look for work or escape the AWB, they generally travelled to familiar places where family was living.

The process of removing Aboriginal families from The Springs began in November 1941 when a nearby white couple complained to the police about the condition of the camp and the

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236 See above for the story about the raiding party from Goulburn which killed several Aboriginal men at Molong.
237 Interviews with John “Ted” Bell and Ian Bell, Orange, August 2011.
behaviour of some of the residents. After several police inspections and instructions to the residents to improve and expand their tin dwellings, the AWB were informed of the situation. They sent a delegation in August 1942, including Professor A.P. Elkin, anthropologist and Chairman of the AWB, to investigate and make recommendations. Elkin and the others found that five Aboriginal families (including members of the Monaghan, Ingram and Bamblett families) and one white family were living at The Springs. On the whole, the delegation considered that the living conditions of the Aboriginal families were “deplorable” and that action should be taken to move them into town or nearby Aboriginal reserves and stations. They met with an officer of Canobolas Shire Council (CSC) and recommended that a Health Officer “inspect and condemn” one house in particular which was occupied by a mother and her children. The inspection was made and the order to demolish issued, but the family resisted, obtaining legal representation and writing to Mr J. Breen, Federal Member for Orange, protesting against the treatment of the CSC and AWB. The AWB made arrangements for the family to move to the Aboriginal reserve at Yass where they had relatives, but they refused to go. In the meantime, some of the other families began moving into Orange. By November 1943, only two Aboriginal families were still living at The Springs. One family was living in a tent and the father worked in the local munitions factory. The other was the family whose house had been condemned and they left for Cowra and “other places” soon after. By the time they returned to the Orange district in February 1944 – they settled in either Spring Hill or Spring Terrace – their house at The Springs had been demolished.

The Springs ceased to be a living place for Aboriginal people soon after the AWB adopted assimilation as its guiding policy. Numerous other reserves and “unofficial” camps in NSW were closed about the same time and residents moved into urban areas, although the residents of other camps were centralised onto existing reserves and stations. Unlike other places, there does not appear to have been non-Indigenous resistance to Aboriginal families moving into town, perhaps because the numbers involved were fairly small. The story of the closure of The Springs exemplifies the power of the AWB to intervene in the lives of Aboriginal people, but also the ability, although constrained, for Aboriginal people to exert some control.

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238 Chief Secretary letters received [Files relating to Aboriginal Affairs, 1938-1949, SR 12/7686.1 File A44/1866]. The account presented here is drawn largely from this correspondence.

239 The closure of The Springs can be seen as part of a pattern of APB intervention in Wiradjuri country going back to the early 1920s (see Read 1984b).
over their lives by defying official demands and seeking political and legal assistance in doing so.

By the early 21st century, there were few visible signs that The Springs had once been an important Aboriginal living place. An archaeological survey of the site in 2010 identified a variety of material including domestic artifacts, the foundations of three buildings, the remains of fences and worked stone blocks, but not much else. Nevertheless, The Springs retains a prominent place in the memories of many Aboriginal families with links to Orange. In May 2008, a reunion was held at The Springs of families who had lived at The Springs in the 1930s and 1940s. Two years previously, the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council expressed concern that the construction of a walking trail along the nearby travelling stock route may have damaged the site. The significance of The Springs has since been recognised through listing on the State Heritage Inventory.

**Life in Town**

Aboriginal families in Orange faced fluctuating social and economic conditions after the closure of The Springs. During WWII some families in town found employment at the small arms factory. Val Simpson recalled to Peter Read that:

I worked in a small arms factory at Orange during the War, and I lived there for about six or seven years. Over there you sort of got in with the white community. We used to make them .303s, it was real good, and the people were lovely. There was three of us working the factory, dad, my brother and I. As the War was getting nearer the end, they had that much stock there, they started to retrench them. There was about 1,500 men there and 1,100 women, and dad was one of them that got put off. Not because he was an Aboriginal. You should have seen his body, he was whiter than a lot of white fellers. Ivan, my brother, he was put off. I wasn’t, but I had to give my notice and leave too. I was only sixteen, and mum and dad wouldn’t dream of leaving me in a big place like that.

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Valerie’s father, Alec Williams, was born at Warangesda in 1901. He moved to Cowra in the mid-1920s after Warangesda closed. Valerie was born at Orange in 1926. The family then moved back to Erambie, but life under the managers prompted them to return to Orange around the beginning of WWII where the money they earned allowed them to live in town.

The close links between Erambie and Orange were maintained through sport. As a student of Cowra High School in the 1960s, Neville Williams played rugby league at Orange (and other places such as Forbes, Bathurst and Parkes). Getting to the game could be an ordeal. His white team mates could not come to Erambie to pick him up; they had to wait for him on the station’s edge.

Residents of Erambie also came to Orange for social visits. It gave them the chance to escape from strict managers. In town, they might visit family and or go out to a pub (Hotel Canobolas was popular in the 1970s and later). Movement, thought, could still be restricted. From 1943 until 1964, only Aboriginal people who had been granted an Exemption Certificate (known as the “dog tag”) could move as they wish and live outside the rules laid down in the *Aboriginal Protection Act*. Otherwise, they could not send their children to a non-Aboriginal school, apply for the pension or drink in a pub.

**Freedom Ride**

Growing political awareness about Indigenous issues was a driving force in the Freedom Ride which left Sydney in February 1965. The riders, who were seeking to emulate Martin Luther King’s earlier expedition in the American south, consisted of 29 students from the University of Sydney, including Charles Perkins, one of only two Aboriginal people to participate in the event. The aim of the students was to highlight the poverty and discrimination faced by Aboriginal people in everyday life (including the restrictions

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243 Birth Certificate of Alec Williams 1901/033993.
244 See Read 1984a: 67, 70.
245 MacDonald identifies Orange as an “escape route” for Cowra people wanting to move out from time to time. Similar places included Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Blayney and Young. The movement continued into the 1980s (MacDonald 1986: 247).
246 Read 1984a: 75.
247 Community Interview, Cowra, 3 August 2011.
imposed by the *Aborigines Protection Act*). They stayed overnight in Orange on 13 February at the end of their first day on the road. Their stay was short, however, and they left early the next morning after breakfasting at the Presbyterian Church of St John’s to go to Wellington where they visited the Nanima reserve. Other stops on the ride included Moree, Walgett and Kempsey. One memorable protest took place at the Moree pool which did not allow Aboriginal kids to swim. The bus was also run off the road departing Walgett by irate locals.  

Aside from protesting, the students also collected social and economic statistics about the Aboriginal communities they visited. At Wellington, many were shocked by the conditions in which the residents of Nanima lived. Ann Curthoys noted that the houses, which were made of tin with mud floors, were “very over-crowded”. Many of the children had eye diseases. The only water had to be carted from the river and its quality was poor. The conditions were similar to what was found at The Springs 20 years before. The short stay in Orange indicates that there was no visible Aboriginal community there at the time. As we have seen, some of the former residents of The Springs had scattered into town and elsewhere. It is possible that some of them or their families were living at Nanima when the Freedom Riders passed through.

**Aboriginal Family Resettlement Scheme**

A significant event which greatly influenced the composition of the current Aboriginal population in Orange was the Aboriginal Family Resettlement Scheme which was run by the NSW Government from 1972 to 1986. The scheme, which grew out of a 1967 NSW Joint Parliamentary Committee on Aboriginal Welfare, was established to assist Aboriginal families from western NSW to voluntarily move to larger regional centres such as Newcastle, Tamworth, Orange and Dubbo where housing conditions and economic opportunities were thought to be superior. Read and MacDonald, however, note a more sinister motive: that of breaking up Aboriginal communities and promoting assimilation.

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249 Curthoys 2002.
250 Curthoys 2002: 72.
252 Read 1988: 122-123; MacDonald 1986: 120.
The scheme resulted in a dramatic expansion in the Orange Aboriginal population as can be seen in Figure 12. During the main years when the scheme was in operation, the population rose from 278 to 659. Resettlement families came from many western communities. A survey of 205 Aboriginal residents of Orange in 1988 revealed 43 different places of birth, although three towns (Condobolin, Walgett and Brewarrina) contributed 35.2%.

Interestingly, the population continued to expand after the scheme had formally ended: by 1996, 980 Aboriginal people were living in Orange, a figure which grew to 1707 by 2006. The Aboriginal population as a percentage of the overall population grew as well, increasing from 0.9% in 1976 to 4.6% in 2006. The 1988 survey indicated that the main reason why people were moving to Orange was to be with family. It is likely that the same reason played an important role in the population growth between 1988 and 2006.

![Figure 12: Aboriginal Population of Orange, 1976-2006](image)

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253 ABS 1976 Census of Population and Housing, Local Government Area Summary Data, Orange; ABS 1981 Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Summary Data – Full Format, Orange; see also MacDonald 1986: 120.
254 Orange City Council 1988: 2.
255 ABS 1986 Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Data, Orange; ABS 1996 Census of Population and Housing, Basic Community Profile, Orange; ABS 2006 National Regional Profile: Orange.
The new arrivals found only a few Aboriginal families living in Orange at the time. An Aboriginal officer was employed to assist with the move and the process of settling in. He helped the families find employment, accommodation and schools. Goodall has noted that in other parts of NSW some people moved under duress\(^{257}\), but this does not seem to have been the case for Orange where the prospect of a better economic life and joining family attracted many. Some men found jobs at Email manufacturing white goods and the local County Council maintaining electrical lines. For the most part, however, jobs were hard to find.\(^{258}\)

In 1988, soon after the scheme ended, approximately 80% of Aboriginal people aged 17 years and over who were interviewed the Community Profile and Research Report were unemployed.\(^{259}\)

Many families found housing in the Glenroi estate in East Orange.\(^{260}\) Social tensions sometimes emerged as families found themselves living next door to people from different language groups. Isolation was also a problem, but many families found it easier once their children started school. Robinson Park, because of its central location, became an important meeting place for resettlement families, particularly on Thursdays after the shopping had been done. Some also gathered there to drink and socialize which drew criticism from the non-Indigenous community. Sport also played an important role for the newly-arrived. Some young men joined rugby league teams and their families came to watch them play on the weekend.\(^{261}\)

Morgan argues that the resettlement scheme “clearly served further to weaken attachment to traditional land” but this is not necessarily the case.\(^{262}\) Members of the Daroo Elders Group, many of whom moved to Orange in the early 1980s as part of the scheme, expressed the importance of their former homes in traditional terms. They were places one visited to see family and do some hunting or gathering.\(^{263}\) Most members travelled back home at least once a year. Funerals drew many back. One Elder expressed his desire to be buried at his home in

\(^{257}\) Goodall 1996: 334.
\(^{258}\) Interview with the Daroo Elders Group, 2 August 2011.
\(^{259}\) Orange City Council 1988: Synopsis.
\(^{260}\) The 1988 survey found 32.2% of those interviewed lived in Glenroi; other areas of concentration were Orange with 21%, Bletchington with 15.1% and North Bowen with 13.2%.
\(^{261}\) Interviews 1-5 August 2011.
\(^{262}\) Morgan 2006: 75.
\(^{263}\) Hunting and gathering was difficult for resettlement families who did not know the landscape. Intense non-Indigenous occupation and land-use makes hunting and gathering difficult for all Aboriginal people in Orange.
Walgett when the time came.\textsuperscript{264} Resettlement families in Orange have not forgotten about where they came from.

**Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council**

At the same time as the resettlement scheme, Aboriginal communities in NSW pushed for self-determination and recognition of their enduring attachment to land. They were part of a nation-wide movement for land rights and self-determination spurred by the claims of the Yirrkala people of the Northern Territory for Gove Peninsula in the mid-1960s.

Following the abolition of the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1969, the NSW Aboriginal Lands Trust was formed in 1973 to take control of the remaining Aboriginal reserves and stations, including Erambie at Cowra. The title of the reserves and station was converted to freehold. The Trust was managed by the Aborigines Advisory Council, an all-Indigenous body mandated by legislation to provide advice to the State Government. They were criticized for not passing control to the residents themselves.

In 1977, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council was formed to lobby for land rights. Claims were soon lodged for the former reserve at Terry Hie Hie (near Moree) and stations at Roseby Park (near Nowra) and Wallaga Lake (near Bega). The government agreed the following year that land rights should be recognised and formed a Select Committee to investigate the most appropriate means. The parliamentary members of the committee were assisted by an Aboriginal taskforce whose members included Marcia Langton and Kevin Gilbert. Submissions were invited and meetings held throughout the state (including Erambie) to enable community members to express their views. The committee’s Land Rights Report, which emphasised the importance of self-determination in land management, was tabled in parliament on 13 August 1980. A Green Paper was completed by December 1982 and the Aboriginal Land Rights Bill tabled and passed by the parliament in March 1983.\textsuperscript{265}

The legislation created numerous local Aboriginal Land Councils throughout NSW overseen by larger regional councils and the state-wide NSW Aboriginal Land Council. It enabled each Local Aboriginal Land Council to claim crown land deemed not to have an essential

\textsuperscript{264} Interview with the Daroo Elders Group 2 August 2011.
\textsuperscript{265} For a detailed history of NSW Land Rights, see Wilkie 1985: 8-55; see also NSW Aboriginal Land Council 2010.
public purpose. Proof of traditional connection is not required. The aim was for each council to obtain land and establish an economic base for all Aboriginal people living within its boundary. A central fund based on a percentage of state land tax revenue was also established to promote economic well-being and development for all Aboriginal people in NSW; managed by the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, it is now worth over $500,000,000.

The Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) was given responsibility for an area including Molong, Manildra, Cudal, Blayney, Carcoar and Orange itself. Managed by a CEO in conjunction of an elected Board of Directors, all Aboriginal people living within the boundary can join as members. The Orange LALC faced early problems finding accommodation. They paid a deposit on the Assemblies of God Hall in July 1984 but could not complete the purchase as the Wiradjuri Regional Aboriginal Land Council was unwilling to assist. An office was found the following year. The Orange LALC faced early problems finding accommodation. They paid a deposit on the Assemblies of God Hall in July 1984 but could not complete the purchase as the Wiradjuri Regional Aboriginal Land Council was unwilling to assist. An office was found the following year. Since the mid-1990s they have occupied a building in Dalton Street as their headquarters. It has made several successful claims for land at places such as Shadforth and south Orange. They are currently pursuing several economic development projects including the construction of a motel in partnership with a mining company.

It is important to distinguish between NSW Land Rights legislation and the Native Title Act, 1993. The latter requires traditional owners to prove an ongoing connection to the crown land being claimed. The study area has been subject to several native title claims, including a current application filed on behalf of the Wellington Wiradjuri. This has caused a discernible amount of distress among traditional Orange families who argue that the claim was made without adequate consultation.

**Contemporary Developments**

The 2011 census is likely to reveal that the number of Aboriginal people in Orange has grown to in excess of 2,000. The community interviews undertaken for this project reveal a diverse Aboriginal community active in education, health, political advocacy, sport and social activities. Nevertheless, there are ongoing social and economic problems which need to be addressed.

266 MacDonald 2004: 55-56.
Education continues to be an important priority for many Aboriginal families living in Orange. Glenroi Heights Public School has numerous Aboriginal students.\textsuperscript{267} The school employs an Aboriginal Education Officer who works with teachers to design culturally appropriate educational programs. He also acts as a mentor for the students and keeps parents informed of their children’s progress.\textsuperscript{268} Calare Public School, which has a smaller number of Aboriginal children, also employs an Indigenous teacher.\textsuperscript{269} Several Aboriginal children also attend Orange Anglican Grammar School.\textsuperscript{270}

There are also opportunities within the tertiary sector for the Orange Community. Orange College of TAFE NSW currently offers a Certificate III course in Primary Health Care for those students wishing to work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. A course in Aboriginal site identification and recording is also available.\textsuperscript{271} An Aboriginal woman is also employed within the Industry Skills Unit of TAFE Training and Education Support.\textsuperscript{272}

Not all developments in tertiary education have been sustained. Nursing students at the Orange campus of Sydney University were able to complete a unit titled “Indigenous Australia: History and Health”. The lectures were partly delivered by video link from the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney who were closely involved in the design of the program. Shortly after the course commenced, however, the university announced that undergraduate nursing was to be phased out.\textsuperscript{273}

An earlier, more ambitious plan for Indigenous teacher training also failed to be realised. In 1999, the University of Sydney held discussions with the NSW Department of Education and Training about establishing a post-graduate course at the Orange campus for teachers working with Aboriginal students at primary and secondary levels. Staff of the Koori Centre

\textsuperscript{267} According to statistics from Jobs Australia, 46–48\% of students at Glenroi Heights Public School are Indigenous (see www.strongersmartersummit.qut.edu.au/attach/27\%20Jobs\%20Australia\%20Workshop.pdf).

\textsuperscript{268} Community Interview, 2 August 2011; see also www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/a-z/is_ps_staff.php.

\textsuperscript{269} www.strongersmartersummit.qut.edu.au/attach/27\%20Jobs\%20Australia\%20Workshop.pdf

\textsuperscript{270} Community Interview, 4 August 2011.

\textsuperscript{271} www.tafensw.edu.au/howex/servlet/Course?Command=GetCollegeCourses&VLOCATION=55+Orange+College&VINSTITUTE=166

\textsuperscript{272} Community Interview, 4 August 2011.

\textsuperscript{273} Cleverley and Mooney 2010: 237; the course available for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
held meetings in Orange with TAFE, Orange LALC and community representatives. Lack of funding meant that the course could not go ahead.\textsuperscript{274}

The medical needs of many Aboriginal people of Orange are attended to by the staff of the local Aboriginal Medical Service (OAMS).\textsuperscript{275} Established in February 2005, the Service recently moved to new premises in east Orange. It employs general practitioners and specialists in Aboriginal health, dentistry, drugs and alcohol counseling, and mental health. A separate birth centre called “Murundhu Dharaa” (which means “I live, I breathe” in Wiradjuri) operates at a separate premises. It is the first of its kind in NSW and offers ante- and post-natal care to Aboriginal mothers. The Service is a not-for-profit organisation governed by a seven-member Board of Directors, five of whom are Aboriginal people. Approximately 35\% of employees are Indigenous.\textsuperscript{276}

Finding employment continues to be a problem for many Aboriginal people in Orange. According to 2001 statistics, the unemployment rate within the community was 32\%, well above the national average. It seems that few of the large employers in Orange have an extensive Aboriginal workforce. Many of the community members we interviewed mentioned that Cadia Valley mines (operated by Newcrest), for example, did not employ any Aboriginal people as far as they were aware. Some had found short-term employment conducting site surveys before the mine commenced, but that was all.

Government programs continue to offer employment for Aboriginal people. Based in Orange, Birrang Enterprise Development Company was formed in 2003 as a regional Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) provider.\textsuperscript{277} IEP is administered by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The main focus of Birrang is providing training and employment in western NSW at Bourke, Enngonia, Brewarrina and Weilmoringle, creating a link back to communities where many resettlement families came

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{274} Cleverley and Mooney 2010: 236.
\textsuperscript{275} Many of the services are also available non-Indigenous residents of Orange.
\textsuperscript{276} Interview with Jamie Newman, CEO of Orange Aboriginal Medical Service, 5 August 2011; \url{www.oams.com.au}.
\textsuperscript{277} A similar role was previously played by Boree Aboriginal Corporation which operated from 1989 to 2010 (see \url{http://www.orac.gov.au/document.aspx?concernID=100893}).
\end{footnotesize}
Nevertheless, Birrang provides employment in administration and management for Aboriginal people in Orange where the head office is located.278

The Aboriginal community in Orange is represented at a local government level by the Orange Aboriginal Community Working Party (OACWP).279 The OACWP consists of representatives of community organisations such as the Orange LALC, OAMS, Coonabahloo Gibir (Orange Aboriginal Men’s Group) and Orange Aboriginal Women’s group. They meet monthly to discuss issues such as employment, health, safety and cultural heritage, and provide recommendations to OCC and to organisation such as NSW Police. The OACWP were instrumental in organising a community survey in December 2006 which led to the development of the Orange Aboriginal Community Development Plan 2007-2011. A problem faced by the OACWP is community recognition. The 2006 survey revealed that about 50% of those surveyed had not heard of the Working Party and 70% said that it did not represent them.280

![School children participating in the 2011 Orange NAIDOC march](image)

Figure 13: School children participating in the 2011 Orange NAIDOC march281

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279 Sometimes referred to as the Orange Community Working Party.


281 Photograph courtesy of Anupam Sharma, NTSCORP Research and Notifications Consultant.
NAIDOC celebrations offer an opportunity for organisation such the OACWP and Orange LALC (which both have a role in planning) to increase their profile and participate in a series of events which brings many elements of the local community together. Now held during the first week of October, NAIDOC celebrations include a range of activities and events including a march along Summer Street, a community services day in the library forecourt, a golf competition, junior eisteddfod, elder’s lunch and a culminating awards dinner on Friday night (which in 2011 was attended by over 350 people). The celebrations also receive media coverage which paints the community in a positive light.

Despite positive signs, the Orange Aboriginal community is still facing severe social and economic problems. The 2006 survey revealed concerns about safety, employment, community cohesion, education, discrimination, domestic violence and drugs and alcohol. Similar currents were evident from the community interviews for heritage project. Concern was expressed to us by traditional owners, for example, who said they had little voice in the community because they were outnumbered by resettlement families. As already noted, lack of employment opportunities continue to be a major concern for many families. It is beyond the scope of the present project to explore solutions, but it is important to note them.

Conclusions – Thematic History

An important theme of this report has been the patterns of migration of Aboriginal people in the Orange district and beyond. In traditional times, local Wiradjuri were tied spiritually, socially and economically to specific ranges of country. Although mobile, people did not wander aimlessly across the landscape; their environmental knowledge drew them to specific seasonal resources. Ceremonies (at places such as Mount Canobolas) drew wider groups together and exogamous marriage established extensive kinship networks. Colonisation brought about dramatic change. Frontier violence and disease shrank the population, but many elements of traditional society survived, including the kinship networks. Throughout the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the Wiradjuri in Orange were part of a large network which included people from places such as Mudgee, Bathurst, Yass, Cowra and Wellington. Government intervention from the early 1880s (including the creation of reserves and the removal of children) influenced patterns of movement but did not destroy marriage networks and social relationships. Economic conditions also impacted on migration patterns: the Great
Depression of the 1930s saw the creation of a camp at The Springs to the south of Orange (although some residents were probably seeking refuge from the harsh conditions at Erambie Aboriginal Station). Wiradjuri people continued to dominate the Orange Aboriginal population until the 1970s when the government introduced the resettlement scheme. The population tripled between 1976 and 1986, rising from approximately 200 to over 600. Families moved from western places such as Bourke, Goodooga and Walgett, settling in Orange to seek better economic opportunities. The composition of the Aboriginal population changed and local Wiradjuri were no longer dominant. Nevertheless, they have maintained to the present kinship connections with other Wiradjuri towns such as Cowra and Wellington.

An important and related theme has been the means by which Aboriginal people have balanced resistance and adaptation when responding to colonisation. After a period of violent resistance at Bathurst in the 1820s, Aboriginal people showed ingenuity in the ways in which they blended traditional knowledge with new skills in order to survive. Some used their extensive knowledge of the landscape to work as trackers, while others learned to ride horses and manage large mobs of sheep and herds of cattle. Demand for Aboriginal labour increased dramatically after the beginning of the gold rush and both Aboriginal men and woman became shepherds. Some women took roles as domestic servants. As already noted, kinship networks were also maintained, as were mechanisms of dispute resolution such as payback. Despite ingenuity, Aboriginal people in Orange have tended to remain on the margins of wider society with a low socio-economic status.

Both themes of migration and adaptation have strong connections to place. Kinship networks manifested and were strengthened at particular locations. Camps such as The Springs were important places where Wiradjuri families lived and survived. But some of their significance is drawn from the wider network of places they were connected to. The families on The Springs had kinship connections to many other families and places in Wiradjuri country. Whether voluntary or forced, many Wiradjuri families have travelled throughout Wiradjuri country and Orange has been on the track.

In more recent times, Robertson Park has been a place where Aboriginal people from outside Wiradjuri country have met to establish social relationships in Orange. As part of adapting to life in a new town, they met regularly in a central place to exchange information and cement
new social bonds. New kinship networks are emerging as Aboriginal people from western NSW meet in Orange, marry and have children.
Sites of Significance

The following sites and descriptions of significance will be entered into State Heritage Inventory database for Orange. Please note that only The Springs, Orange Cemetery and Robertson Park are technically within the study area. The bases for the assessment are cultural and social criteria (related to the historical themes of resistance, accommodation and migration) rather than physical heritage.

The Springs

The Springs was a fringe camp to the south of Orange which operated from approximately 1930 to 1943. The population consisted of some non-Indigenous residents, but mainly Wiradjuri families with strong ties to Yass, Cowra and Wellington. Some of the residents from Cowra were seeking refuge from harsh conditions on Erambie Aboriginal Station. The residents of The Springs lived in tin shacks and found employment in local orchards. From the early 1940s, the Cabonne Shire Council and AWB engineered the removal of the Aboriginal families living at The Springs. The Springs is within the living memory of several Wiradjuri families and it is of particular significance to them. But it gains wider significance because of the documentary evidence showing the extent of the efforts made by the AWB to liaise with local authorities such as the police and council to manage the lives of Aboriginal people on land which they did not directly control.

Mount Canobolas

Mount Canobolas, consisting of two main peaks (Old Man Canobolas and Young Man Canobolas) is a major Wiradjuri ceremonial site. Dreaming stories are known by some people with a strong traditional connection to Orange, but they are not in the public domain. Nevertheless, it is because of this on-going traditional knowledge that the site retains its significance to contemporary Wiradjuri people. In pre-contact times, Mount Canobolas was also an important occupation site. It is likely that people camped on the mountain when majoring ceremonies such as initiations were taking place. It is not known when the last
ceremony took place on the mountain, although initiations in other parts of Wiradjuri country seem to have continued into the early 20th century.

**Emu Swamp**

Emu Swamp is a significant area for several reasons. In 1831, two Aboriginal people living at Emu Swamp died of smallpox. The disease was sweeping through NSW Aboriginal communities at the time and had a devastating impact. Emu Swamp continued to have an Indigenous association into the late 19th century. Betsy Bullock died there in the mid-1870s. In the early 1890s, the family of Alfred Locke camped at Emu Swamp. Locke was from Blacktown in western Sydney and it is likely that he and his family were forced on to the road to look for work (the economy was in recession at the time). Although not well-known within the contemporary community, Emu Swamp is significant because it demonstrates the ability of Aboriginal people to survive traumatic events. Also, there are few specific sites outside of Sydney where smallpox has been documented.

**Robertson Park**

Robertson Park is located on reclaimed land on what was originally Blackman’s Swamp. Although it is likely that the swamp (a resource-rich location) was an important camping place in traditional times, it was not named after Aboriginal people but James Blackman, an assistant surveyor who accompanied John Oxley on his 1818 expedition. Robertson Park was proclaimed in 1882. In 1915, Jack Marsh, the noted Aboriginal cricketer and athlete, was assaulted outside the Royal Hotel opposite Robertson Park. His body was taken across the road to the park’s main gate where he died. In contemporary times, Robertson Park has been a meeting place for many families who moved to Orange as part of the resettlement scheme. They met up in Robertson Park to socialize and strengthen social bonds in a new town, and it is from these social reasons that the park is particularly significant to many Aboriginal people in Orange.
Orange General Cemetery

To date, genealogical research has identified the names of 32 Aboriginal people buried in Orange General Cemetery between 1883 and 1998 (see Appendix 3).²⁸² In reality, the number is likely to be much greater. As noted by Byrne, Aboriginal people “… have strong emotional attachment to the graves of their relatives” and this is clearly the case for the Orange cemetery.²⁸³ The location of many of the older graves is unknown. More recent graves are cared for by relatives and they are regarded as of vital cultural significance. Unlike Aboriginal cemeteries such as Collarenebri, graves of Aboriginal people at Orange do not appear to have been decorated in a unique manner, but this does not undermine their cultural significance.²⁸⁴

²⁸² Orange General Cemetery opened in 1853 and was extended in 1870. A second public cemetery was opened in Spring Hill in 1887 but there is no evidence that the Aboriginal people listed in Appendix 3 were buried there (Scobie and Russell 2011: 190-191).
²⁸³ Byrne 1998: 8; Community interviews, August and October 2011.
²⁸⁴ Gravestones in the Collarenebri Aboriginal Cemetery are decorated with shards of coloured glass (Byrne 1998).
Management Recommendations

Management recommendations have been categorized as follows.

Sites and Consultation

Sites recorded on AHIMS database are managed by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. Most are pre-contact sites, although sites from the historic period (such as reserves and fringe camps) are listed. Sites from the historic period are more likely to be recorded on the State Heritage Inventory managed by NSW Heritage. Please note that the management of Aboriginal sites (both pre-contact and historic) is likely to change given investigations currently underway into the development of stand-alone Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation.

Our general recommendation for sites and consultation is that OCC maintain a strong relationship with and seek the advice of OACWP in all instances with the following qualifications.

- It is recommended that for planning decisions relating to pre-contact sites, OCC also consult with relevant traditional owners. NTSCORP will provide a separate list of traditional owners for the Orange district who have indicated a willingness to be contacted over the management of pre-contact sites.

- Although occupied during the historic period, The Springs is an important Wiradjuri camping site. NTSCORP recommends that OCC consult and seek the advice of traditional owners about planning decisions concerning The Springs. The list of traditional owners provided to OCC will include several people who lived on The Springs as children.

Listing

It is recommended that the following sites be recorded on the LEP (or their descriptions be amended to include information about Aboriginal significance):
Orange Aboriginal Heritage Report

- The Springs
- Mount Canobolas
- Robertson Park
- Emu Swamp
- Orange Cemetery

The Springs is a site of state significance. It is recommended that OCC follow the procedure to confirm that the site is listed on the State Heritage Register.

**Interpretation and Acknowledgement**

The present study has collated numerous stories about the Aboriginal history of Orange previously unknown to the general public. Knowledge of these stories may promote greater understanding and further the cause of reconciliation. There is also a strong aspiration within the Orange Aboriginal community for more information regarding their history. Following appropriate consultation with OACWP, it is recommended that OCC give consideration to the following:

- Publication of a brochure, booklet or website containing information about Orange Aboriginal History and sites of significance.
- Publication of the narrative history after a further period of community consultation.
- Placement of interpretative signs at The Springs, Emu Swamp, Mount Canobolas and Robertson Park
- Placement of a plaque at Orange Cemetery acknowledging it as an Aboriginal burying place.

**Repatriation**

As is already known by OCC, the Orange Historical Society has a carved tree from the local area in its collection. Carved trees are of exceptional cultural significance to the Orange Aboriginal community and traditional owners in particular. Some members of the
community wish to see the carved tree returned to Aboriginal care, possibly through a locally managed keeping place. As yet, such an institution has not been established. Other members of the community support the development of an integrated museum where Indigenous cultural material (including the tree) can be placed. OCC will need to consult with OACWP and traditional owners about the ongoing management of the carved tree and other artefacts with local significance.

**Confidential Information**

Information provided on a confidential basis by informants has not been included in this report. Key individuals hold stories relating to Mount Canobolas, for example, which are currently withheld from the public record. The remaining information, drawn from documentary and oral sources, is on the public record, but NTSCORP recommends that OCC further consult with OACWP and relevant traditional owners before publishing it or using it to make management decisions about known Aboriginal sites.

**Ongoing Research**

An attempt has been made in this report to place the Aboriginal history of Orange in a wider context. Traditionally, Wiradjuri speakers in the Orange district had kinship and cultural ties over a wide area in the central-west of NSW. The arrival of resettlement families from western NSW since the late 1970s has broadened these ties. NTSCORP recommends that OCC liaise with other nearby local government authorities (such as Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Forbes, Wellington, etc) to pursue a broad Aboriginal heritage project aimed at gaining a greater understanding of Aboriginal history throughout the region and to encourage a coordinated approach to consultation and the identification and management of significant sites.

Also, the digitization of historical records means that more material is becoming available. It is likely that more information relevant to the Aboriginal history of Orange will be uncovered in the next five years. We recommend that OCC review the current report in five years and engage a professional research team to update the study.
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  File A44/1866.
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Yass Courier

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www.tafensw.edu.au/howex/servlet/Course?Command=GetCollegeCourses&VLOCATION=55+Orange+College&VINSTITUTE=166

Trove
trove.nla.gov.au

Photographs and Images

The Grave of a Native of Australia: nla.pic-an8955101

Photograph of Edmund Milne standing next to Aboriginal ArboglYPH [carved tree], Gamboola near Molong, 1912; SLNSW SPF/1150
Baptism, Birth, Death and Marriage Certificates

Baptism Certificates

John Rowland Harpur, 1854/2513 Vol 56

Birth Certificates

Emily Kerdavid, 1879/017556
Walter John Stewart, 1872/017238
Jane Taylor, 1857/008715
Alec Williams, 1901/033993

Death Certificates

William Ashmore, 1887/012258
Betsy Bullock, 1875/008831
Polly Bullock, 1883/011197
Betsy Field, 1912/005538
Tommy Gone, 1880/008984
William Harpur, 1866/005697
Jacey, 1874/004674
Sally Medley, 1892/01050
Nemo, 1879/006995
Alexander Stewart, 1919/025808
Gerald Stewart, 1957/024343
Elizabeth Bridget Jane Susan Suttor, 1856/001676
Georgina Sutter, 1878/004493
Eliza Taylor, 1900/009589

Supplied by the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriage.
Marriage Certificates

Daniel Gray and Emma Kerdavid, 1898/006171
John Marichi and Mary Weeks, 1885/004005
Alexander Stewart and Agnes Dray, 1871/002817
Colin Herbert Stewart and Etta Gray, 1930/010270
Edmund Taylor and Eliza Reiley, 1860/002046
## Appendix 1 – Results of AHIMS search, July 2011

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Appendix 2 – Names of Trackers Employed in the Orange District between 1883 and 1949.

The names of trackers employed between 1883 and 1912 are from the Police Salary Registers. The Registers are not on the public record after 1916 and tracker names after that date are from other documentary sources such as newspaper articles and electoral rolls. The surnames of Aboriginal people were infrequently recorded in the late 19th century. Consequently, little is known about the lives of many trackers employed at this time.

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<td>Ned</td>
<td>1884-1887</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
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<td>1887-1888</td>
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<td>Bob</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Orange</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>1889</td>
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<td>Jack Williams</td>
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<td>C Governor</td>
<td>1912-1914</td>
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<td>Monty Tickle</td>
<td>1921-1928</td>
<td>Orange²⁸⁶</td>
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<td>Archie Murphy</td>
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<td>Alec Riley</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Orange, Dubbo</td>
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</table>

²⁸⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald* 5 July 1928: 12.
Appendix 3 – Aboriginal People Buried in Orange Cemetery

The following list of Aboriginal people buried in Orange Cemetery between 1880 and 1998 is drawn from genealogical records compiled by NTSCORP and stored in the Unified Aboriginal Genealogy of NSW. The majority have strong Wiradjuri kinship connections. It is likely that more Aboriginal people are buried in Orange Cemetery but are yet to be identified.

<table>
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<td>Polly Bullock</td>
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<td>William Ashmore</td>
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<td>John Malachi</td>
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<td>Maria Maybury</td>
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<td>Jack Wallace</td>
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<td>Jack Marsh</td>
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<td>Samuel Murray</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Ada Grant</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Louisa Simpson</td>
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<td>Maud Richards</td>
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<td>James Blackhall</td>
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<td>Ted Edward Burns</td>
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<td>George Weldon</td>
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<td>Roy West</td>
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<td>Florence Youk-Gong</td>
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<td>Jack Peeler</td>
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<td>Frederick Johnson</td>
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</table>
Appendix 4 – Blanket Returns

Listed below are the names of Aboriginal people recorded in the blanket returns between 1830 and 1841. The tables include information about each recipient such as Aboriginal name, English name, age, children, tribe and place of usual residence. The original records are held by SRNSW. The returns cannot be relied up to provide the exact number of Aboriginal people living in an area. It is likely that the further a group had to travel, the fewer would have made the trip to receive blankets – the return will underestimate the population for more distant places as a result. For both local and distant places, the returns show few Aboriginal children. It is possible that the parents may have wished to hide their children from the authorities. Alternatively, reduced access to resources may have led to fewer births.

As well as providing valuable demographic information, the lists demonstrate the variable recording of Aboriginal and English names by European settlers and officials. Spelling differences are particularly apparent in the recording of Aboriginal names. Careful observation is required to match apparently dissimilar names to the same person.

On the NSW coast, the name Coborn (variously spelt Cobbon, Cabon, etc) means big and Narang (variously spelt Nerang and Nurang) means little. In relation to people, the terms often refer to father and son, so that in the blanket returns for Wellington 1830, Narang Bobby may be the son of the Coborn Bobby.

It is important to remember that Aboriginal people were generally mobile. The locations listed in the column titled “Usual Place of Resort” may refer to the area which the blanket recipients had just come from rather than the place they spent most of the year. Also, the locations listed in the returns may not match exactly the place names listed on today’s maps.

Blanket Returns, Wellington 29th August 1830

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narang Bobby</td>
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<td>Waddey Charley</td>
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SRNSW 4/6666B.3
<table>
<thead>
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<th>English name</th>
<th>Native name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No. of wives</th>
<th>Male children</th>
<th>Female children</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Place of usual resort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jemmy Rodd</td>
<td>Mooungilli</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Mandurama</td>
<td>Mandurama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mandurama</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mandurama</td>
<td>Mandurama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy West</td>
<td>Groomahunell</td>
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<td>Mandurama</td>
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Blanket Returns, Bathurst 29th May & 3rd July 1833\(^{288}\)

\(^{288}\) SRNSW 4/6666B.3
### Blanket Returns, Wellington Valley 1834\(^{289}\)

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<th>No. of wives</th>
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<td>Molong</td>
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<td>Jemmy Danbu</td>
<td>Narbamly</td>
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### Blanket Returns, Bathurst 6\(^{th}\) August 1834\(^{290}\)

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### Blanket Returns, Carcoar 10\(^{th}\) July 1841\(^{292}\)

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\(^{289}\) SRNSW 4/6666B.3  
\(^{290}\) SRNSW 4/6666B.3  
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\(^{292}\) SRNSW 4/1133.3
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