A checklist of colonial era musical transcriptions of Australian Indigenous songs

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Abstract

This checklist is intended as a basic resource guide for those who wish to explore the revitalisation of Indigenous song traditions using colonial era documentation of ancestral songs, in the form of written musical transcriptions or mechanical recordings made with early sound-capture technology. It includes a range of pertinent data on 113 songs from the colonial era; that is, notionally from first contact to 1 January 1901, though here actually from c.1789 to 1903. For each song, this checklist provides details of the sources and a link to the musical transcription or sound file. As well, it includes the song text and a gloss (where available), further bibliography, and information on likely regional affiliations, both linguistic and musical.

These resources will be useful to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people undertaking song revitalisation projects and also to researchers interested in reconstructing the musical profiles of those parts of Indigenous Australia where the ancestral performance traditions suffered severe damage in the colonial era. We are not suggesting that the list is complete or exhaustive; indeed, we hope that by printing it here as a work in progress we might encourage others to look for, and in due course, report on yet more relevant musical survivals. This checklist also serves as a bibliographic appendix to the other chapters in the present volume that are concerned specifically with Australian historical ethnomusicology, in particular those by Skinner (chapter 16), McDonald (chapter 7) and Wafer (chapter 9).

Keywords: Indigenous Australian music in the colonial era, documentary history of Australian Indigenous song and dance, revitalisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander song
Introduction

This checklist is a hard-copy report on the first stage of a long-term project to create an open-access web-log of all surviving colonial era documentation of Australian Indigenous song and dance as a specifically musical resource. The first-stage of the project appears fully in webpage format at:


The documentation of ceremonial and recreational song-making, singing and dancing from the period can be sorted into four categories:

[1] pictorial depictions  
[2] written verbal descriptions  
[3] written transcriptions of song texts  
[4] written musical transcriptions and, at the very end of the colonial era, mechanical recordings.

While category [4] data constitute the principal focus of the above webpage, and of this checklist, many of the actual documents also record song texts [3] and give further details of performance, meaning, and context, described verbally [2] and pictorially [1]. Other complementary pages will be created, in due course, to log systematically colonial documents that lack category [4] data, but are sources for categories [1], [2], and [3].

Simply then, this first checklist provides comprehensive coverage of those Australian Indigenous songs documented during the colonial era for which music survives. Until 1898, all the musical records listed here take the form of manual musical transcriptions into Western notation, from live performances or the observer’s memories of live performances. In many cases these are accompanied by transliterated song texts that survive in printed or (occasionally) manuscript forms.

Some of the musical transcriptions listed were published after 1901 (in one instance, as late as 1937); but we can be fairly sure that they were all based on performances that took place before c.1901. Beginning in 1898, we also list three sets of mechanical recordings of songs, the latest of which were taken from live performances in 1901 and 1903, thus extending slightly across the divide (1 January 1901) between the colonial and federated eras.

There are 113 songs in the checklist, and 94 of these include transcriptions of the words. In many cases there is also some kind of gloss.1 These items are divided, in the inventory that follows below, into 35 entries, or groups of songs, presented in chronological order.

Layout

Each entry is indicated by a number, from 1 to 35, preceded by the estimated likely (best-guess) date of the performance/recording of each group of song transcriptions, or, where there is prior documentation, at the date of the very earliest certain record of the song. The content of the entry is built around the source or sources that provide the relevant data (minimally, a form of musical notation or a sound recording). In almost all cases, a persistent live link is given to take the reader directly to the relevant web-page images of the original transcriptions, or the sound-file of the original recording, where available.

The individual songs within each entry are given a sub-number of the entry number (e.g. 35.3 is the third song in entry 35). Where a single melody has a number of variant texts, these are distinguished with a letter that follows the sub-number. So, for example, the three variants of song 27.2 (the ‘Bingo corroborees’) are numbered 27.2a, 27.2b and 27.2c.

1 All items in the checklist are treated as ‘songs’, even when they are not accompanied by words, or are referred to in the sources by other names (‘dance’, ‘call’, etc.); variants (for example, where the same melody is used with different words) are not treated as separate items. Transcriptions of song words have been included in our calculations even when they are indecipherable. Our use of the term ‘gloss’ is very broad, and includes any commentary that provides some clue about the meaning of the song text.
Each song is also identified by a title, either the one provided by the original author or, where none is given, an appropriate word or phrase from the author’s text, sometimes with, for disambiguation, the author’s surname. So, for example, the song identification line for one of the songs from south-western Western Australia published in 1892 reads thus: ‘28.3 Calvert 3 (corroboree)’.

Where text and gloss for a song occur in the source, these are transcribed after the song identification line. So, for example, the first three lines of the entry for the ‘Aboriginal native song’ made famous by Isaac Nathan in the 1840s read as follows:

10.1 ‘An Aboriginal Native Song’

text: Koorinda braia . . . [repeat]
gloss: ‘the red and white chalk with which they paint their faces on days of festivity’ (Nathan 1848:107)

The ‘analytics’ line that follows consists of three components: first, the name of the place or district in which the evidence suggests the song was performed; second the ‘music region’ that the place or district pertains to, based on the Australian Indigenous music regions hypothesised by Alice Moyle (1966:xxv-xvii and map 3; see also Moyle 1967:35-43); third, the language sub-family, language group and language, separated by slashes. In the case of the example just given, the analytics line reads thus:

analytics: Monaro area, southern NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ Ngarigu

To Moyle’s seven music regions (ECA, CA, NWCA, NW, BMI, NE and YCA) we have added two: TAS and TSI (see list of abbreviations, below). Of the nine resulting regions, four (NWCA, NW, NE and BMI), all in the far north of Western Australia and the Northern Territory, are not represented in the data available for this period – at least, not with any certainty. (The song identified as ‘7 Air australien des sauvages de la terre d’Arnhem’ was purportedly collected in Arnhem Land but without any further specification of the locality, so it could conceivably pertain to NW or NE.) For further discussion of Australian music regions, see the Introduction to the present volume.

Our presentation of the linguistic data proceeds from the general to the specific (language sub-family / language group / language) and is hypothetical in most cases, based on the linguistic affiliations of the region in which the recording was made. (We have included these data even when the musical annotation is not accompanied by any text.) Note well that, in some cases, the language of the region is not necessarily the language of the song, which may have originated in a distant location. Where there is an apparent discrepancy, this is noted in the ‘commentary’ section.

Only one Australian language family, Pama-Nyungan, is represented in the data, since there is no relevant material for the regions in the far north where the non-Pama-Nyungan languages are spoken. (There is, however, one entry, ‘30 Torres Strait Island songs’, that includes several song-sets from the Eastern Torres Strait, where the language is said to belong to the Papuan family.) We have adopted the four-fold division of Pama-Nyungan proposed by Bowern and Atkinson (2012): ‘South-eastern’, ‘Northern’, ‘Central’ and ‘Western’, so the language sub-family given for most entries is an abbreviated form of one of these (‘South-eastern PN’ etc.). Our language group names are also based largely on Bowern and Atkinson, and our language names on the most representative current usage. To give an example: the linguistic analytics for the first song read thus: ‘South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug’. The analytics line is followed by a list of sources for the particular song, and this concludes the (indented) basic information for each individual item within the entry.

The indented section(s) may be followed by a listing of ‘(other) documentation’; that is, sources that furnish other versions of the music or texts of the songs in the entry. This is in turn followed by a ‘select bibliography’ of relevant secondary sources. Where a particular resource is accessible via the internet, we provide the relevant hyperlink. Sources that are referred to repeatedly in the text are
followed on their first occurrence by this alert: (henceforth Surname YYYY [year of publication]). In cases where the data require explication or elaboration, there is also a ‘commentary’ section.

Each entry has a brief introduction that begins with the likely language name (in bold italics) associated with the area in which the song was recorded, followed by the name of that area (in italics), then by details of personnel – performer(s) or informant(s) (in bold), recorder(s), transcriber(s), author(s) – and relevant dates (such as likely date of recording and date of first publishing).

Each entry concludes with a ‘checklist web link’ that provides access to the relevant entry in ‘A checklist of colonial era musical transcriptions of Australian Indigenous songs’ on the Australharmony website: http://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/checklist-indigenous-music-1.php. These entries provide fuller versions of the data provided in the present condensed print edition of the checklist.

Conventions and abbreviations
The names of Australian states and territories have been abbreviated in the usual way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>Tasmania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The abbreviated terms used by Moyle for her music regions (1966) can be interpreted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>East Central Arid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Central Arid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWCA</td>
<td>North-west Central Arid</td>
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<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>North-west;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Bathurst and Melville Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>North-east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YCA</td>
<td>Cape York Central Arid</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note that we have added two:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>Tasmania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSI</td>
<td>Torres Strait Islands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIATSIS</td>
<td>Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLA</td>
<td>National Library of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN</td>
<td>Pama-Nyungan [language family]</td>
</tr>
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</table>

References


Moyle, Alice M., 1966, A handlist of field collections of recorded music in Australia and Torres Strait. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.


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<td>35</td>
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The checklist

By 1789

1 1 song-call (Dharug)

*Dharug, Sydney area, NSW;* first reported by John Hunter (1737–1821), central coast NSW, 5 July 1789; first musical notation, made by Charles Alexandre Lesueur (1778–1846) and Pierre François Bernier (1779–1803), from unidentified performers, probably in the Sydney area, sometime between late June and November 1802; first published Paris, 1824

1  ‘3. Cri de ralliement’ (‘rallying cry’)

text: *Cou-hé cou-hé cou-hé*
gloss: ‘Come here’ (and see Commentary below)
analytics: Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug

Commentary: The ‘cooee’ was first documented with musical notation by members of the Baudin expedition in NSW in 1802, and belatedly appeared in print as the third of the three now famous music examples in Lesueur and Petit’s 1824 *Atlas*. The other two songs are dealt with below at 3. There are, however, several prior documentary references to the ‘cooee’, the earliest that by Hunter on 5 July 1789: ‘we called to them in their own manner, by frequently repeating the word Co-wee, which signifies come here.’ James Backhouse Walker (1890, 131) surmised that ‘a sound like to trumpet or small gong’ heard by Abel Tasman’s party in Tasmania in 1642 was also ‘probably a cooey’. Based on a comparison of various historical records, Troy (1994, 79) reconstructs the phonology as /gawι/ and derives the expression from the verb *gama*, ‘to call’, suffixed with (a contraction of) the third person marker -wawi (1994, 29). Dixon, Ramson and Thomas (1990, 208), on the other hand, reconstruct the phonology as /’kuι/ or /ku’ι/ and represent it orthographically as guuu-wi. Both analyses adopt Hunter’s gloss (‘come here’), although a number of the sources suggest that the expression was more a generic signal indicating one’s presence and location and soliciting the same kind of response from others. Freycinet (1839, 744), for example, says that ‘ce signal . . . n’est que d’avertissement’ (‘this signal . . . is only an alert’; see also e.g. Cunningham 1827 v.2, 23).

Charles Griffith, *The present state and prospects of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales* (Dublin: William Curry, 1845), 65: https://archive.org/stream/presentstateand00grifgoog#page/n76/mode/2up;


James Backhouse Walker, ‘The discovery of Van Diemen’s Land in 1642; notes on the localities mentioned in Tasman’s journal of the voyage’, *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania* (1890); reprint (1902), 131: https://archive.org/stream/earlytasmaniapap00walk#page/131/mode/2up


Jakelin Troy, *The Sydney language* (Canberra: the author, with assistance from the Australian Dictionaries Project and AIATSIS, 1994):

http://www.williamdawes.org/docs/troy_sydneys_language_publication.pdf

Pru Neidorf, ‘Coo-ee’, in John Whiteoak and Aline Scott-Maxwell (eds), *Currency companion to music and dance in Australia* (Sydney: Currency House, 2003), 188;


**Checklist web link:**

c.1790

2 1 song (Dharug)

_Dharug_, Sydney area, NSW; known to have been sung by Wangal and perhaps also Cadigal people, the words separately recorded by William Dawes (c.1790/1) and David Collins (before 1796); music and words transcribed by Edward Jones (1752–1824), from two Wangal men, **Woollarawarre Bennelong** (c.1764–1813) and **Yemmerrawanne** (c.1775–94), in London, England, mid 1793; musical transcription first published London, 1811

2  ‘A SONG OF THE NATIVES OF NEW SOUTH WALES; Which was written down from the Singing of BENELONG, and YAM-ROWENY, the two Chiefs, who were brought to England some years ago from Botany Bay, by Governor Phillips [sic].’

text: *Barrabu-la barra ma, manginè wey en-gu-na . . . [repeats]*
gloss: ‘The subject of the Song, is in praise of their Lovers’
analytics: Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug


Commentary: The music and words of this song were taken down by Jones in London in mid 1793 from the singing of Bennelong and Yemmerrawanne, the two Wangal men brought from Sydney to England by retiring governor Arthur Phillip. Keith Vincent Smith reliably fixed the performance at sometime between late May and October 1793, when the singers were lodging in the house of William Waterhouse at 125 Mount Street, Mayfair, near Berkeley Square, London. Smith discovered that Jones, Welsh harpist and bard to the Prince of Wales (later George IV), was then living at 122 Mount Street. Jones (1811:15) noted that, in the 1793 performance he transcribed, ‘when they Sang, it seem’d indispensable to them to have two sticks, one in each hand to beat time with the Tune; one end of the left hand stick rested on the ground, while the other in the right hand was used to beat against it, according to the time of the notes.’


Carl Engel, _An introduction to the study of national music: comprising researches into popular songs, traditions, and customs_ (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866) (henceforth *Engel 1866*), 26–27: [https://archive.org/stream/introductiontost00enge#page/26/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/introductiontost00enge#page/26/mode/2up);

James Bonwick, _Daily life and origins of the Tasmanians_ (London: Samson, Low, Son, and Marston: 1870) (henceforth *Bonwick 1870*), 33: [https://archive.org/stream/dailylifeandori02bonwgoog#page/n51/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/dailylifeandori02bonwgoog#page/n51/mode/2up)

**Sound:** Smith 2011, 7: http://www.bl.uk/eblj/2011articles/pdf/ebljarticle142011.pdf Page 7 of the pdf has an embedded sound file of this song (and also 6) performed in traditional style by Indigenous performers, Clarence Slockee and Matthew Doyle, at the opening of the Mari Wari exhibition, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, 24 September 2010.

**Checklist web link:**

### 1802

2 songs (Dharug)

**Dharug,** *Sydney area, NSW*; transcribed by Charles Alexandre Lesueur (1778–1846) and Pierre François Bernier (1779–1803), members of the Baudin expedition, from unidentified singers, probably in the Sydney area, between late June and November 1802; first published Paris, 1824

1. **‘1. Chant’** (‘song’)
   - **text:** [music only, no words]
   - **analytics:** Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug
   - **source:** Lesueur and Petit 1824, plate 32, page 52, no. 1: https://books.google.com.au/books?id=aXVdAAAAcAAJ&pg=PT76

2. **‘2. Air de danse’** (‘dance song’)
   - **text:** [Women] é é Con gô Lœmba Lœmba é é Con gô Lœmba Con gô . . . [repeats]; [Men] pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé pouhé . . . [repeats] [music in 2 parts, rhythms only notated, no melodies]
   - **analytics:** As for 3.1
   - **source:** As for 3.1, no. 2

**Select bibliography:** Freycinet 1839, volume 2, part 2, 775 (music example no. 3): http://books.google.com.au/books?id=pWNAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA775;


Wallaschek 1893, 36-37 (commentary), [343] (music, example 5c): https://archive.org/stream/primitivemusicin00wall#page/n343/mode/2up;

Saintilan 1993, 11-16;

Skinner 2011, 62;

Smith 2011;

Fornasiero and West-Sooby 2015, especially 24-25

**Checklist web link:**
c.1800-05

4  1 song (Dharug)

? Dharug, ? Sydney area, NSW; transcribed from unidentified performers, probably in the Sydney region, probably c.1800–05, and ‘brought over [to UK] by an officer from NSW’; first published Britain, c.1802–10

4  ‘36. A New-South-Wales song’

text: Wa ha bin deh bang ha nel ha Wa ha bin deh bang ha nel ha Wa ha bin deh bang ha nel ha Hoh hoh hoh hoh hoh hoh (D.C. ad lib.)

analytics: ? Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ ? Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ ? Dharug

source: National Library of Scotland, Inglis Collection of printed music, Ing.72(1-3) [ID: 94733017], a composite music volume in 3 sections; section 3 (unidentified collection of national music of various nations, including airs, glee, catches, etc., titlepage missing, ? published London, Glasgow or Edinburgh, c.1802-1810), no. 36, page [43]: http://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/pageturner.cfm?id=94737053


1819

5  2 songs (Dharug)

Dharug, Sydney area, NSW; transcribed by, or on behalf of, Louis de Freycinet (1779–1842), Sydney area, between 19 November and 25 December 1819; first published Paris, 1839

5.1  ‘No. 1. Danse du Kanguroo’ (‘Kangaroo dance’)

text: [music only, no words]

analytics: Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug


5.2  ‘No. 4. Air de pêche’ (‘Fishing song’)

text: E-ya Wan-djé-oua, Tché-en-go Wan-dé-go [‘Je n’ai pu avoir les dernières paroles de cet air’ (‘I was unable to catch the last words of this song’)]

analytics: As for 5.1


Commentary: Of the 5 music examples in Freycinet’s 1839 account of his 1819 return visit to Australia (19 November to 26 December), only nos. 1 and 4 (above) appeared for the first time. Freycinet’s commentary on Indigenous music making (korroberis) draws partly on sources dating from after his 1819 visit. As evidence of the breadth of his recent reading, Freycinet (830) corrected Lhotsky’s claim that his 1834 transcription (entry 8 below) was the ‘première spécimen de musique australienne’, citing the priority of the 1802 Baudin (Lesueur and Petit 1824, source of his music examples 3 and 5) and Field (Field 1825, source of his example 2). Concerning 5.2, David Collins had also described a women’s fishing song (Collins 1798, 601:...
During the 1830s and later, kangaroo songs and dances were widely documented from Tasmania to Western Australia; however, Bonwick’s 1870 claim that the Sydney Kangaroo dance melody given by Freycinet was ‘a true Tasmanian tune of the oldest date’ is self-evidently preposterous.

Select bibliography:
- Engel 1866, 238: [URL](https://books.google.com.au/books?id=0k4QAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA238)
- Bonwick 1870, 31: [URL](https://archive.org/stream/dailylifeandori02bonwgoog#page/n50/mode/2up)
  - C. Hubert H. Parry, *The art of music* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1893), 54: [URL](https://archive.org/stream/artofmusic00parrrich/page/54/mode/2up)
  - *(4th edition of same work, under title The evolution of the art of music, 1905), 49: [URL](https://archive.org/stream/4thevolutionofar00parruoft#page/48/mode/2up)*

Checklist web link:
[URL](http://sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/checklist-indigenous-music-1.php#005)

c.1820

6 song (Dharug)

**Dharug**, Sydney area, NSW; music and words (no translation) transcribed by Barron Field (1786–1846), from the singing of Harry (c.1787–?), brother-in-law of Bennelong, between c.1820 and early 1823; first published London, November 1823; second edition London, 1825

6  ‘Australian national melody’

**text:** I-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah gumbery jah jingun velah gumbery jah jingun velah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah i-ah &c. [Field 1825 has a-bang . . . instead of i-ah . . .]

**analytics:** Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug

**sources:** B. F. [Barron Field], ‘Journal of an excursion across the Blue Mountains of New South Wales (October 1822)’, *The London Magazine* (November 1823), 465-66: [URL](http://books.google.com.au/books?id=o9gYAAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA465 (Field 1823));


Select bibliography:
- Hannover, Stadtbibliothek, Musikabteilung (D-HVs), MS Kestner No. 140 (Nr. 19) [RISM ID no.: 451010544], ‘Neuholländisches Lied, Jahiah gumbery jah’ [ = Field 1823]; copied by Hermann Kestner (1810–90), 1836; see Theodor Georg Wilhelm Werner, ‘Die Musikhandschriften des Kestnerschen Nachlasses im Stadtarchiv zu Hannover’ (Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter), *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 1/8 (1919), 241-372;

  - Covell 1967, 65-66, 324;
  - Saintilan 1993, 36-39;
  - Skinner 2011, 104

Checklist web link:

By c.1830

7 1 song (Arnhem Land)

?., Arnhem Land, NT; music only, transcribed by, or on behalf of, Grégoire Louis Domeny de Rienzi (1789–1843), c. late 1820s (by 1830); first published Paris, 1836

7 ‘No. 12. Air australien des sauvages de la terre d’Arnhem’
text: [music only, no words]
analytics: Arnhem Land; ? NW ? NE ? BMI; ? Australian
source: Grégoire Louis Domeny de Rienzi, Océanie; ou cinquième partie du monde . . . tome premier (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1836), 78 (commentary), 81 (music):

Commentary: It is unclear when, or indeed whether, Domeny de Rienzi actually set foot in northern Australia; but he had reportedly arrived at Bombay, via the Red Sea, before the end of 1825. Arnhem Land is the most linguistically complex and diverse region in Australia. It is home to numerous non-Pama-Nyungan languages as well as members of the Pama-Nyungan Yolngu group, so it is impossible even to speculate which language or language group the music might be associated with.

Select bibliography: Saintilan 1993, 16-21; Skinner 2015, 296

Checklist web link:

1834

8 1 song (Ngarigu)

Ngarigu, Monaro area, south east NSW; words and music (? translation) transcribed by John Lhotsky (1795-1865), 1834; first published Sydney, November 1834

8 ‘Song of the women of the Menero tribe’
gloss: Unprotected race of people, unprotected all we are; and our children shrink so fastly, unprotected why are we? (Lhotsky)
analytics: Monaro area, south east NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ Ngarigu
source: A song of the women of the Menero Tribe arranged with the assistance of several musical gentlemen for the voice and pianoforte, most humbly inscribed as the first specimen of Australian music, to her most gracious majesty Adelaide, queen of Great Britain &
Hanover, by Dr. J. Lhotsky, colonist N. S. Wales (Sydney: Sold by John Innes, [1834]):

Later edition: The Aboriginal father, a native song of the Maneroo Tribe . . . the melody, as sung by the Aborigines, put into rhythm & harmonized with appropriate symphonies & accompaniments . . . by I. Nathan (Sydney: T. Bluett, [1843]):

Documentation: ‘Domestic Intelligence’, The Australian (7 November 1834), 2:

[Advertisement], The Sydney Gazette (11 November 1834), 3:

‘NEW MUSIC’, The Sydney Morning Herald (19 January 1843), 2:

‘NEW PUBLICATION’, Australasian Chronicle (19 January 1843), 2:

‘THE ABORIGINAL FATHER’, The Australian (27 January 1843), 3:

‘KOON-GI KAWEL GHO’, in Nathan 1848, 104-07:

Select bibliography: Freycinet 1839, 830 footnote:

W. Arundel Orchard, Music in Australia: more than 150 years of development (Melbourne: Georgian House, 1952), 7, 212;

Covell 1967, 67, 325;


Saintilan 1993, 53-58;

Skinner 2011, 105-116, 196-202;

Skinner 2017 (this volume)

Checklist web link:

1831

9 1 song (Tasmanian)

Tasmanian language. ‘Van Diemen’s Land’ (Tasmania), c. early 1830s; earliest words only transcription by George Augustus Robinson, 13 August 1831, several later words only transcriptions; music and words transcribed by Maria Logan, Hobart, 1836 (2 unpublished MS copies, ? c.1840s and ? c.1850s); 3 sound recordings of at least 2 distinct versions of the song by Fanny Cochrane Smith, Hobart, 1899 and 1903 (see 32.1 below); music (facsimile of MS [1]) published Launceston, 1968

9 ‘Song of the Aborigines of Van Diemans Land’

text: Popela ranea gonne ne popela ranea gone ne na lea me gonne a lea me gonne a to kea me gun ne a to kea me gun ne a lea me gun ne a lea me gun ne a ni na te pea ra nea po ne na ni na te pea ra nea po ne na ni na te pea ra nea po ne na ni na re bu wil la pa ne na ra bur wil la bal la hoo! bal la hoo! ni na na ra bu wil la pa na pa ra bu wil la bal la hoo! bal la hoo!
gloss: G. A. Robinson first transcribed a similar version of the words in 1831 (Plomley 1966, 469 note 250) with a translation ‘the evil spirit in the native / the ankle / sole of the foot / to evacuate / to clean the wobbelten’. G. W. Walker, who collected another similar version of the text in 1832, noted that it was ‘a popular song among all the [Tasmanian] aboriginal tribes, of which I have not obtained the meaning, it being involved by them in some mystery’ (Moyle 1968, 2).

analytics: Tasmania; TAS; Tasmanian


Other sources and documentation: George Augustus Robinson, journal, 13 August 1831, transcribed in N. J. Brian Plomley, Friendly mission: the Tasmanian journals and papers of George Augustus Robinson, 1829-1834 (Hobart: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1966), 399, 469-70 note 250 (words and gloss only);

Robinson, journal, 22 October 1836, transcribed in N. J. B. Plomley (ed.), Weep in silence: a history of the Flinders Island Aboriginal settlement with the Flinders Island journal of George Augustus Robinson, 1835-1839 (Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1987), 391: ‘Spent the evening at Logan’s in Macquarie Street. Mr[s] Logan set to music a song of the aborigines, POPELLER etc., the first ever attempted.’


Skinner 2011, 127, 442

Skinner 2017 (this volume)

Checklist web link:

c.1836–38

10 2 songs (Ngarigu)

**Ngarigu, Monaro area, southern NSW**; collected (?) and transcribed by Henry Tingcombe (1810–74), probably during his residence there, c.1836–38; arranged by Isaac Nathan (1792–1864), 10.1 by May 1842, first published Sydney, July 1842; 10.2 by July 1844; first published Sydney, January
10.1 ‘Koorinda braia’

text: *Koorinda braia* . . . [repeat]
gloss: ‘the red and white chalk with which the paint their faces on days of festivity’ (Nathan 1848, 107)

analytics: Monaro area, southern NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ Ngarigu


other documentation: [Advertisement], *The Sydney Gazette* (24 May 1842), 3:

10.2 ‘War-goon-da min-ya-rah’

text: *Wargoonda min-ya-rah / min-ya-kol-ba-wan-de-re?/ Wargoonda min-ya-rah / min-ya kol-ba wan-de-re?/ Wande-re wande-re / min-ya kol-ba wande-re / wande-re wande-re/wande-re wande-re/wande-re wande-re/wande-re/wande-re wande-re/wande-re wande-re / wande-re wan-de-re / min-ya kol-ba wan-de-re/ wande-re wande-re / min-ya kol-ba wan-de-re / wande-re wan-de-re / min-ya kol-ba wan-de-re / wande-re wande-re / wande-re wande-re / wan-de-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re wande-re* (Nathan 1848, 109-13)
gloss: What is the matter? Where were you? (or:) What did you do? How is this? What have you been doing? On the Rocky Mountains. Did white man give bread? (Nathan 1848, 108)

analytics: As for 10.1

source: ‘War-goon-da min-ya-rah, an aboriginal melody, sung by the Maneroo tribes of Australia, put into modern rhythm, harmonized and arranged, with characteristic additions, by I. Nathan, esq.’, in Nathan 1848, 108 (description), 109-13 (music):

other documentation: [Advertisement], *The Australian* (9 July 1844), 1:

Select bibliography: ‘ORANGE’, *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* (1 December 1858), 2:

https://archive.org/stream/contributionsto00ethegoog/page/n83/mode/2up;


Covell 1967, 68;
Saintilan 1993, 68-72;
Skinner 2011, 189-196, 198-200

Skinner 2017 (this volume)

Checklist web link:
1839

11 3 songs (Dharug)

? Dharug, Sydney area, NSW; transcribed by Joseph Drayton (1798–1877), member of the United States Exploring Expedition (1838–42), from unidentified singer or singers, December 1839; first published Philadelphia, USA, 1845

11.1 [No. 1] [music example no. 1 of 4]

text: [music only, no words]: ‘The above [i.e. 11.1] is thought by Mr. Drayton not to be entirely native music, but the following [i.e. 11.2] he has no doubt of; the words are given as he heard them’

analytics: Sydney area; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin-Kuri [Sydney subgroup]/ Dharug

source: Charles Wilkes, Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842 (Philadelphia: Lee and Blanchard, 1845) (Wilkes 1845), volume 2, 199: https://archive.org/stream/narrativeofunite02wilk#page/n245/mode/2up

11.2 [No. 2] [music example no. 2 of 4]

text: Mer-ry dunbar a-roa Merry dunbar a-roa O man gar merry own dunbar run mun gar

analytics: As for 11.1

source: Wilkes 1845, volume 2, 200: https://archive.org/stream/narrativeofunite02wilk#page/200/mode/2up

11.3 [No. 3] [music example no. 3 of 4]

text: [music only, no words]: ‘The above [i.e. 11.2], as well as those which follow [i.e. 11.3 and Drayton’s version of 6], were obtained from a native who was on his way with the new song to his tribe.’

analytics: As for 11.1

source: As for 11.2

Commentary: When the United States Exploring Squadron was anchored in Sydney Harbour in December 1839, one of the expedition’s artists, Joseph Drayton, made and later published several song transcriptions. He claimed that all 4 of his published examples had been taken from live performances, all by the same ‘native’, who was taking a ‘new song’ back to his tribe. Drayton suspected 11.1 ‘not to be entirely native music’. Despite the claim also to have sourced it directly from the ‘native’, a fourth chant, the last given on page 200 [music example no. 4 of 4], to the words ‘Abang abang . . . ’, was clearly sourced from Field’s ‘Australian National Melody’ (Field 1825, 6 above).

Select bibliography: Hagen 1892;
Joseph Lauterer, Australien und Tasmanien: nach eigener Anschauung und Forschung (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1900) (henceforth Lauterer 1900), 293: https://archive.org/stream/australienundta00lautgoog#page/n316/mode/2up;
Saintilan 1993, 22-25, 86, 88;
Skinner 2011, 116, 445

c.1845

12 1 song (Yuin)

Yuin, Ulladulla, South Coast, NSW; transcribed by, or for, Joseph Phipps Townsend (1812–88), mid 1840s, perhaps from the performance of Jimmy Woodbury; first published London, 1849

12 ‘An Aboriginal chant’

text: Ma-la-yah, Ma-la-yah/ In-go-bra-yah, Mah-la-yah,/ Ma-la-yah, Ma-la-yah/ In-go-bra-yah, Ma-la-yah, Ma-la

analytics: Ulladulla, South Coast, NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ ? Dhurga ? Dharumba

source: Joseph Phipps Townsend, Rambles and observations in New South Wales with sketches of men and manners, notices of the Aborigines, glimpses of scenery, and some hints to emigrants (London: Chapman and Hall, 1849), 88-90, 98-100 (commentary), 91 (music):
https://archive.org/stream/ramblesandobser01towngoog#page/n104/mode/2up

Commentary: Townsend arrived in Australia in 1842, and travelled country New South Wales, from Ulladulla to the Illawarra, before returning to Britain in 1846. He explained that one of his most admired native guides, ‘Jimmy Woodbury’, was ‘a great man at corrobories . . . and I know that he has walked fifty miles, in one day, in order to join in a dance at night’ (89, also 97). Townsend gave only vague hints as to where, when and how he collected this song (‘About Ulladulla . . .’?).

Select bibliography: [Review], The Athenaeum (28 April 1849), 433-34:
Etheridge 1891, 45:
https://archive.org/stream/contributionsto00ethegoog#page/n91/mode/2up;
Skinner 2011a, 202, 468

Checklist web link:

Before 1848

13 2 songs (Wiradjuri)

Wiradjuri, Wellington Valley, NSW; unidentified performers and transcribers, ? between c.1835–45; arranged by Isaac Nathan (1792–1864); published Sydney, 1848

13.1 ‘Ah! Wy-a-boo-ka, the turtle song’

text: Ah wyabooka . . . [repeat]
gloss: ‘a species of turtle’ (Nathan 1848, 114)
analytics: Wellington Valley, NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Central NSW/ Wiradjuri
source: ‘Ah! Wy-a-boo-ka, the turtle song, an Aboriginal melody sung by the Wellington valley Tribe of Australia, put into modern rhythm, harmonized and arranged, with a piano forte accompaniment, by I. Nathan’, in Nathan 1848, 114 (commentary), 115-18 (music):

13.2 ‘Dital dital baloonai’ (‘The battle song’)

text: Dital dital baloonai . . . [repeat]
**gloss:** ‘Brothers, brothers, on we go, / to meet the foe’ (etc. Nathan 1848, 113. We have omitted the following five lines of Nathan’s free rendition, since they constitute an unnecessarily fanciful elaboration of the first two lines, as given here.)

**analytics:** As for 13.1

**source:** ‘Dital dital baloonai’, in Nathan 1848, 113 (commentary), 119-26 (music):

**Commentary:** Nathan (1848, 114) also gave the title only (no music) of another song, ‘Ah Warin-ee Ah Warin-e’, ‘a sweetly flowing melancholy strain, supposed to be a song of lamentation’.

Etheridge 1891, 36:
https://archive.org/stream/contributionsto00ethegoog#page/n83/mode/2up;
‘EUMALGA’, *Leader* [Orange, NSW] (2 July 1912), 4:
Skinner 2011, 198, 473
Skinner 2017 (this volume)

**Checklist web link:**

**c.1846–48**

**14 1 song (Nyungar)**

? *Nyungar*, south-west *WA*; from unidentified performers, transcribed and ‘reduced to the piano forte’ by Rosendo Salvado (1814–1900), south-east WA, c.1846–48; first published Barcelona, 1853

**14 ‘Maquielo: cancion de baile de los Australianos occidentales’** (Dance song of the Western Australians)

**text:** [music only, no words]

**analytics:** south-west WA; CA; Western PN/ Nyungar/ ? Nyungar

**source:** Rosendo Salvado, *Memorias históricas sobre la Australia: y particularmente acerca la misión Benedictina de Nueva Nursia y los usos y costumbres de los salvajes* (Barcelona: Impr. de los Herederos de la V. Pla, 1853), page after 314 (music):

**Commentary:** Salvado’s transcription is based on a song he heard during his first Western Australian sojourn, between his arrival at Fremantle in January 1846 and his temporary return to Europe in January 1849. Salvado’s brief commentary on Aboriginal song and dance appears in all three original editions of his book, in Italian (1852), Spanish (1853), and French (1854), however the musical transcription appears only in the Spanish (1853) edition.

**Select bibliography:** Théophile Bérengier, *La Nouvelle-Nursie: histoire d’une colonie bénédictine dans l’Australie occidentale* (1846-1878) (Paris: Lecoffre fils et cie., 1879), 193-194:
https://archive.org/stream/lanouvellenursi00brgoog/page/n226/mode/2up;
Lauterer 1900, 293-94:
https://archive.org/stream/australienundta00lautgoog/page/n316/mode/2up;

Skinner 2011, 347, 475

Skinner 2017 (this volume)

Checklist web link:

c.1840s–80s

15 1 song (Wiradjuri)

**Wiradjuri. Upper Murray, NSW; ? c.1840, unknown provenance, words only first published Albury, NSW, 1904**

15 ‘Aboriginal chant . . . Woradgery Tribe, upper Murray, 1840’


gloss: ? ‘In peaceful happy days’ [2]

analytics: Upper Murray, NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Central NSW/ Wiradjuri


Commentary: The manuscript [1] appears to have been copied at the latest in the very early twentieth century. It bears the name ‘N. L. Rolfe’, perhaps the compiler and composer of the framing song ‘Australian song’, entitled *Little boy lost*. Apparently about a lost settler child found by the Wiradjuri around 1840s, the framing song, and the ‘Aboriginal chant’, would seem to connect the song personally with John Francis Huon Mitchell (1831–1923) ([http://nla.gov.au/nla.party-550361](http://nla.gov.au/nla.party-550361)).

Select bibliography: Saintilan 1993, 46-50


Checklist web link:
A checklist of colonial era musical transcriptions

c.1840-1850

16  2 songs (Yagara)

? Yagara, Brisbane district, southern QLD; words and melody transcribed by W. A. Ogg, c.1900, from the singing of Tom Petrie (1831–1910), songs he had learned as a child, c.1840–50, with commentary by Petrie; first published Brisbane, 1904

16.1 ‘Bobbiwinta’s mysterious disappearance’


gloss: ‘The words had this meaning: “My oar is bad, my oar is bad; send me my boat, I’m sitting here waiting,” and so on, sung slowly. Then quickly, “dulpai-i-la ngari kimmo-man” (jump over for me friends), and so to the finish. The following [musical transcription with words] is the first portion of the song’ (Petrie 1904, 25)

analytics: Brisbane district, Southern QLD; ? YCA ? ECA; South-eastern PN/ Durubulic/ ? Yagara

source: Constance Campbell Petrie, Tom Petrie’s reminiscences of early Queensland (dating from 1837) recorded by his daughter (Brisbane: Watson, Ferguson & Co., 1904) (Petrie 1904), 25: https://archive.org/stream/cu31924063745495#page/n49/mode/2up

16.2 ‘Mina’


16.2 gloss: Petrie, who was himself taught it as a child, indicated that this is a lullaby, but could give no gloss of words or phrases.

analytics: As for 16.1


c.1850

17  1 song (Nyungar)

? Nyungar, south-west WA; music only, collected by Philip Chauncy (1816-1880) from unidentified performers, Swan River, WA, probably between 1841 and 1853; published Melbourne, 1878

17  ‘A line of one of their chants’

text: [music only, no words]

analytics: south-west WA; CA; Western PN/ Nyungar/ ? Nyungar

Commentary: Chauncy served as a government assistant surveyor in the colony of Western Australia from 1841 to 1853. The notes he published in 1878 also reproduced 10 portrait sketches of King George’s Sound people that he had made in 1846.

Select bibliography: Hagen 1892; Lauterer 1900, 297; https://archive.org/stream/australienundta00lautgoog#page/n320/mode/2up; Saintilan 1993, 85-86, 89


1858-1867

18 7 songs (various language groups of QLD and NSW)

? Barunggam, Darling Downs, QLD; no. 1 (18.1), music only collected by Hermann Beckler (1828–1914), Darling Downs, 25 March 1858; no. 2 (18.2), music only collected Darling Downs, 9 April 1858; published Germany, 1868

Paakantyi, Menindee (‘Meninder’), NSW; no. 3 (18.3), music and words, collected by Beckler ‘some years later’ (1861); published Germany, 1868

? Barunggam, Gayndah, QLD; no. 4 (18.4), ‘Corroberri 3’, music only collected by ‘a German friend [of Beckler’s], who was superintendent of a sheep station . . . vicinity of Gayndah’; published Germany, 1868

? Geynyan, Warwick, QLD; manuscript items, 2 further songs (18.5 and 18.6), music and words, collected near Warwick, 28 November 1857, 25 March and 9 April 1858; sent by Beckler in letter(s) to his brother in Germany; first published (facsimile of MS) Germany 1991

18.1 ‘Corroberri I. Darling Downs’

text: [music only, no words]

analytics: Darling Downs, QLD; YCA; South-eastern PN/ Waka-Kabi/ ? Barunggam


J. H. Voigt, ‘Die Musik der Aborigines im südlichen Queensland: eine frühe Quelle’, in Martin Kintzinger, Wolfgang Sturner, and Johannes Zahlten (eds), Das andere Wahrnehmen; Beiträge zur europäischen Geschichte; August Nitschke zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet (Cologne: Bohlau Verlag, 1991) (Voigt 1991), 547-552 (reproduces Beckler’s MS transcriptions);

18.2  ‘Klage oder Todtenlied’ [lament or death song], *Darling Downs*
  
  **text:** [music only, no words]
  
  **analytics:** As for 18.1
  
  **sources:** As for 18.1 (MS = Parsons 2003, 77, bottom of page)

18.3  ‘Corroberri II. Upper Darling River. Meninder’ [i.e. Menindee]
  
  **text:** Bai indi bai indi balema balega onbai indi bai indi gan on bale
  
  **gloss:** Hier möge nur noch der den Anfang machende Gesang, eine Hymne, wenn man will, Musik und Text treu wiedergegeben, Platz finden. Ich ließ mir nachher sagen, es sei ein Gebet, eine Bitte an ihren Gott, um ein großes Uebel, vielleicht eine Krankheit, von ihnen abzuwenden (Beckler 1868, 84), ‘Here there is only space for the opening song, a hymn, if you like, with music and text faithfully represented. I heard from later enquiries that it was a prayer, a request to their god, to avert a great evil, perhaps an illness.’
  
  **analytics:** Menindee (‘Meninder’), Darling River, NSW; CA; South-eastern PN/ Darling Group/ Paakanntyi
  
  **sources:** As for 18.1

18.4  ‘Corrobberri III. Gayndah’
  
  **text:** [music only, no words]
  
  **analytics:** Gayndah, QLD; YCA; South-eastern PN/ Waka-Kabi/ ? Waga-Waga
  
  **sources:** As for 18.1 (MS = Parsons 2003, 79 [example 1 of 4])

18.5  [Beckler MS]
  
  **text:** [indecipherable]
  
  **analytics:** ? Warwick, QLD; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Bandjalangic/ Geynyan
  
  **source:** MS = Voigt 1991, Parsons 2003, 79 [example 1 of 4]

18.6  ‘I’ [Beckler MS]
  
  **text:** [indecipherable]
  
  **analytics:** As for 18.5
  
  **source:** MS = Voigt 1991, Parsons 2003, 79 [example 2 of 4]

18.7  ‘IV’ [Beckler MS]
  
  **text:** (music only, no words)
  
  **analytics:** As for 18.5
  
  **source:** MS = Voigt 1991, Parsons 2003, 79 [example 4 of 4]

**Select bibliography:** Hagen 1892;
Wallaschek 1893, [343]: [https://archive.org/stream/primitivemusicin00wall#page/n343/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/primitivemusicin00wall#page/n343/mode/2up) (18.2 from Beckler 1868);

1860

19  1 song (Paakantyi)

Paakantyi, far west NSW; music and words sung and translated by Walwallim, transcribed by Ludwig Becker (1808–61), Menindee NSW, November 1860; MS; music first published 1979

19  ‘Anaruka-song (Creek-song)’ (Song of Walwallim)

text: Anaruka wal-li walli madin haa na-ruk car rol-gun na ge all san-u-ri wai ki-wai ki yen dai lom hnai geng na da mi

gloss: ‘Anaruka! you must be quick, come down, I can not wait for you long; No man can wait for you long I am going to sleep (to die)’ (Becker 27 Nov. 1860). Becker precedes this gloss with a note: ‘Anaruka is the word for creek but often given as a name to girls. There is a truly poetical conception in the double meaning of this word. Wallwallim (name of a Blackfellow) sings: . . .’.

analytics: Menindee, Darling River, far west NSW; ? CA; South-eastern PN/ Darling Group/ Paakantyi

sources and documentation: Ludwig Becker, despatch to the Royal Society of Victoria, from Menindee NSW, 27 November 1860, State Library of Victoria, MS13071, Box 2082/4:
http://www.burkeandwills.net.au/Despatches/Becker/Beckers_Letter_11.htm (omits music);
ROYAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA’, The Argus (11 December 1860), 5:
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5694801 (printed from Becker’s MS, omits music);

Select bibliography: Tipping 1979 (as above)

Other resources: Ludwig Becker, [watercolour sketch] Depot Junction: The Bamamoro Cr. with the Darling, 7 miles from Minindie [sic], up the Darling, Nov. 1. 60; State Library of Victoria:

Checklist web link:

c.1861

20  1 song (Narrinyeri)

Narrinyeri (Ngarrindjeri), south-east SA; collected by George Taplin (1831–79), ‘written down as it sung by the aborigines about eighteen years ago’ (so about 1861), probably near Lake Alexandrina (Raukkan); published 1879

20  ‘Narrinyeri corrobbery’

text: Puntin Narrinyerar Puntin Narrinyerar O, O, O/ Puntin Narrinyerar O, O, O, O/ Yun terpulani ar/ Tippin an wangamar/ Tyiwwear ngoppun ar O, O, O, O/ Puntin Narrinyerar, &c./ (Taplin 1879b, 39)
gloss: The Narrinyeri are coming, soon they will appear, carrying kangaroos, quickly they are walking (Taplin 1879b, 39)
analytics: Lake Alexandrina, south-east SA; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Lower Murray/ Ngarrindjeri


Other documentation: George Taplin, diary 1859–79, State Library of South Australia, PRG 186-1/3;


Commentary: In [2], Taplin also gave words and translation of another song (without music), ‘A native song or corrobory, on The railway train.’ In his journal (30 June 1859), Taplin made reference to similar chants: ‘Two of their songs in particular attracted my attention. One was called “The Nurundere”, and is about God, and the other is about “Shall I ever see my country again”, a sort of native “Ranz des vaches”. The former began with a low chant as if they were chanting Latin. However, all through the piece they say the same words over and over again, then the chant rose higher and higher with beat of the Tartengk and native drum, then it sank again and the men’s voices broke in shouting in time to the chant and brandishing the weapons with tartengk. Then the shrill treble of the women broke in like an imploring vociferation in answer to the shouts of the men. These ceased, and the whole concluded with a loud chant to the beat of the tartengk and drum. The latter piece was to slower time, and was very plaintive and wild. One of the men asked while I listened if I could write what they sang in a letter.’


James Duff Brown, *Characteristic songs and dances of all nations* (London: Bayley and Ferguson, 1901), 258: https://archive.org/stream/characteristicso00brow2#page/258/mode/2up;

Tate 1923: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2002080;

W. W. T., ‘Music, Aboriginal’, in Arthur Wilberforce Jose and James Carter (eds), *Australian encyclopaedia, volume 2 (Mab-Z)* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1926), 169 (music and words from [1])

c.1863–65

21 4 songs (Gureng-Gureng)

Gureng-Gureng, Three Moon Creek, Upper Burnett River, QLD; spelt phonetically in the ‘Goorang-Goorang’ dialect, obtained by Reginald Byard Buchanan Clayton (1845–1927), Moon Creek, Upper Burnett River, Queensland, about the years 1863-5; the musical notation is by Isabel S. Clayton (1873–1925); published London, 1910

21.1 ‘No. I’ (Queensland corroboree song 1)


analytics (21.1-4): Three Moon Creek, Upper Burnett River, QLD; YCA; South-eastern PN/Waka-Kabic/ Gureng-Gureng

source: R. R. Marett, ‘Queensland corroboree songs’, Folklore 21/1 (March 1910) (Marett 1910), 86-87:

21.2 ‘No. II’ (Queensland corroboree song 2)

text: A milearah vun-gah tooey bithera beera too varina bithera beera anama-danava ar-ar merah anadadanava ava our our merah anamadanava our anama-danava our iddlely way

source: As for 21.1

21.3 ‘No. III’ (Queensland corroboree song 3)

text: Animularine mong aliong animularine mong aliong amarabula la la clang amarabula
la la clang animularine mong aliong amarabula la la clang animularine mong aliong

source: Marett 1910, 87-88

21.4 ‘No. IV’ (Queensland corroboree song 4)

text: Cuniem cuniem ia cawar barney vous bundah boomerah lar bundah boomerah lar ar bundah boomerah lar

source: Marett 1910, 88:

Select bibliography: R. C. Riley and M. Curr, ‘No. 165 - Upper Burnett River, Mount Debateable, and Gayndah’, in Edward Micklethwaite Curr (ed.), The Australian race: its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia and the routes by which it spread itself over the continent . . . volume 3 (Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer, 1887), 150-51:
https://archive.org/stream/cu31924026093835/page/n163/mode/2up;

‘TO AUSTRALIA IN 61. PIONEERING IN THE BURNETT. MR. R. B. B. CLAYTON’S REMINISCENCES’, The Queenslander (31 October 1925), 11:

Lisa Marcussen, Selected bibliography of the Gooreng Gooreng / Gureng Gureng / Gurang Gurang language and people held in the AIATSIS Library (Canberra: AIATSIS, April 2015):

Checklist web link:
c.1858–75

22 4 songs (Uutaalnganu)

Uutaalnganu, Cape York Peninsula, north QLD; words and music transcribed by Edouard Garnier, France, 1876, from the singing of adoptive Uutaalnganu man, Narcisse Pelletier (1844–94), or ‘Anco’, who learned them there between 1858 and 1875; published Paris, 1876

22.1 ‘No. 1’ (‘Air de danse’ ['dance tune'])

text: Pakiêro aré pakiêro aré ia méouais kia pour naré ia méouais kia pour naré ia men kaaié ia men kaaié

analytics (22.1–4): Cape York; YCA; Northern PN/ Northern Paman/ Uutaalnganu


22.2 ‘No. 2’ (‘Le Hiento – se chante la nuit’ ['sung at night'])

text: Hiento gallinand galliand hienlo gallinand gallinand para gallinand gallinand

gloss: Waterlily root carry-we, carry-we. Waterlily root carry-we, carry-we. White man carry-we, carry we. White man carry-we, carry we (see Commentary below)

22.3 ‘No. 3’ (‘Air de danse’ ['dance tune'])

text: Boba ia bobia bobia ia bobia turba turba turba vouloi turba turba turba vouloi boba ia boba

22.4 ‘No. 4’ (‘La ponghé lapon – une invocation à la lune’ ['an invocation of the moon'])

text: La ponghé lapon la ponghé lapon lamnéné lamnéné cout chiava tcher poulai cout chiava tcher poulai la ponghé lapon

Commentary: According to Pelletier, the first and third songs were dance tunes, the second sung at night, and the fourth was an invocation of the moon. However, the words of songs 1, 3, and 4 meant nothing to Pelletier, who understood they belonged to ‘another tribe’. The second song, however, he was able to explain, and based on Garnier’s account and transcription, anthropologist David Thompson (Anderson, 357 note 2) reconstructed the second song as: Yunthu kalinan kalinan yunthu kalinan kalinan para kalinan kalinan para kalinan kalinan para kalinan kalinan (Waterlily root carry-we, carry-we, carry-we. White man carry-we, carry we. White man carry-we, carry we).

Select bibliography: Stephanie Anderson (trans.), Pelletier: the forgotten castaway of Cape York, introductory essay and translation by Stephanie Anderson; from the original book Dix-sept ans chez les sauvages: les aventure de Narcisse Pelletier by Constant Merland; ethnographic commentary by Athol Chase (Melbourne: Melbourne Books, 2009);

Graeme Skinner, ‘Narcisse Pelletier’, Australharmony (an online resource toward the history of music and musicians in colonial and early Federation Australia):


Checklist web link:

23 2 songs (Gabi Gabi)

_Gabi Gabi_ , _Mary River, Burnett River district, central QLD_; collected and transcribed by John Mathew (1849–1929); published Melbourne, 1887

**23.1 ‘Corroboree I’** [Mary River]

text: _Milo longo wombo laLLilaiya . . . guvai alinge, guvai alingo . . . ye lingo_

analytics: Mary River, Burnett River district, central QLD; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Waka-Kabic/ Gabi Gabi


**23.2 ‘Corroboree II’** [Mary River]

text: _Weño karinga dha kalana nuyum nuyuma . . . tuanboroma buburindika wone dhomkiya worethe . . ._

analytics: As for 23.1

source: Mathew 1887, 172-23:

https://archive.org/stream/cu31924026093835#page/n185/mode/2up

Commentary: Of the first song, Mathew (1887, 169) said, ‘The words are not Kabi’, but ‘the second example . . . is written in Kabi’.

Select bibliography: John Mathew, _Eaglehawk and crow; a study of the Australian Aborigines, including an inquiry into their origin and a survey of Australian languages_ (London: David Nutt; Melbourne: Mullen and Slade, 1899), 140-41:

https://archive.org/stream/eaglehawkcrowstu00math#page/140/mode/2up;

Tate 1923: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2002080;

Saintilan 1993, 83-85;

Malcolm D. Prentis, ‘Research and friendship: John Mathew and his Aboriginal informants’, _Aboriginal History_ 22 (1998), 62-93:


Checklist web link:


24 3 songs (Queensland language groups)

? _Pirriya_ , _Thomson River, western QLD_ [1] (24.1);

? _Wargamay_ , _Herbert River, north QLD_ [2] and [3] (24.2 and 24.3);

all three collected by Carl Lumholtz (1851-1922) between August 1882 and July 1883; published London, 1889

**24.1 ‘Korroboree . . . the melody sung to this dance’**

text: _La la la la la . . . altogether yarn away . . . Bahl bood’gry borando . . ._

analytics: Thomson River, western QLD; YCA; Northern PN/ Maric/ ? Pirriya

sources: Carl Lumholtz, _Among cannibals: an account of four years’ travels in Australia_
and of camp life with the aborigines of Queensland (London: J. Murray, 1889) (Lumholtz 1889), 41-42: https://archive.org/stream/amongcannibalsac1889lumh#page/41/mode/2up

24.2 ‘The song in vogue at this time, and which was sung repeatedly’
text: Molemombâ (à) mombâ varinâ katsuburâ indangô gângorî-la . . .
analytics: Herbert River, north QLD; YCA; Northern PN/ Dyirbalic/ ? Wargamay
source: Lumholtz 1889, 156-57: https://archive.org/stream/amongcannibalsac1889lumh#page/156/mode/2up

24.3 ‘War-song’
text: Wombon maraery! wombon maraery! moridan koby beebon bindalgoh!
gloss: ‘war-song, which celebrates the knob on the throwing stick’ (Lumholtz 1889, 158)
analytics: As for 24.2
source: Lumholtz 1889, 158:
https://archive.org/stream/amongcannibalsac1889lumh#page/158/mode/2up

Commentary: Of the first of these songs, Lumholtz (1889, 41) says, ‘melody sung to this dance was genuine Australian, but the text was mixed with English words’; of the second, ‘Doubtless it originated in the vicinity of Rockhampton . . . [but] on the Herbert River . . . it was sung without being understood’ (Lumholtz 1889, 157).

Select bibliography: Covell 1967, 67, 325;
Saintilan 1993, 39-43

Checklist web link:

c.1840–c.1885
25 3 songs (Kulin)
Kulin, Yarra region, VIC; song [1] (25.1) (in ‘Woiwurrung’) composed by or about Kurburu (c.1798–1849), c.1840s; song [2] (25.2) composed by or about Wenberi/Winberri (c.1817–40), c.1840s; song 3 (25.3) (in ‘Wurunjerri’); all sung by William Barak (1824–1903), music and words transcribed by George W. Torrance (1835–1907), Melbourne, VIC, c.1885, published 1887; words transcribed and translated separately by A. W. Howitt (1830–1908), published 1887

25.1 ‘Kurburu’s song’
text: Enagûrêa nûng ngalourma barein gûrûkba mûrûnei hûrûnhai nganûngba lilira mûringe [Howitt’s transcription]
gloss: ‘You cut across my track, you spilled my blood, and broke your tomahawk on me’ (translated by Barak; Howitt 1887, 333)
analytics: Yarra River, VIC; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Kulin/ Woiwurung
source: G. W. Torrance, ‘Music of the Australian Aboriginals’, The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 16 (1887) (Torrance 1887), 337:
https://archive.org/stream/journalofroyalan16royauoft/page/337/mode/2up

25.2 ‘Wenberi’s song’
text: Nge tuîgûr ngalû ngînba ngalûgû diudirûnding nga Dûlûr wîlût wa weindûng bûnjil mameng-ngûta yenin thûlûrmêik nga wûrûngalû–eik [Howitt’s transcription]
gloss: ‘We go all (the) bones to all of them/ shining white (in) this Dulur country./ The noise rushing (of) Bunjil father ours singing / (in) breast mine this inside-mine’ (Howitt 1887, 331). Howitt notes that the song is ‘a good example of the belief held by these “sacred singers” that they were inspired by something more than mortal when composing them. In this case it is “Bunjil” himself who “rushes down” into the heart of the singer.’

analytics: Mount Macedon; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Kulin/ Woiworung (Mount Macedon dialect)

source: Torrance 1887, 338: https://archive.org/stream/journalofroyalan16royauoft#page/338/mode/2up

25.3 ‘Corroboree song’ (Barak)
text: ēngā wājēläïya bun-dēa gënuñ-nil/ ngā burdâŋgalâ yēlēŋęa gōnowâra/ ngā wāgelâïya bun-dēa, &c. [Torrances’s transcription]
gloss: This ‘corroboree song . . . is one used by the Wurunjerri, but of which I have no translation’ (Howitt 1904, 422).

analytics: Yarra region; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Kulin/ Wurunjeri

source: Torrance 1887, 339: https://archive.org/stream/journalofroyalan16royauoft#page/339/mode/2up

Additional sources and documentation: A. W. Howitt, ‘Notes on songs and songmakers of some Australian tribes’, Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 16 (1887), 327-35: https://archive.org/stream/journalofroyalan16royauoft#page/326/mode/2up (words and translations of 1 and 2 only);

A. W. Howitt, The native tribes of south-east Australia (London: Macmillan and Co., 1904), 418-425: https://archive.org/stream/nativetribesofso00howiuoft#page/420/mode/2up (Torrance’s 3 music examples reproduced, 420-421)

Commentary: Wurunjeri ngurungaeta (elder) William Barak was one of the leading Aboriginal public figures in colonial era Victoria (http://nla.gov.au/nla.party-1308870). Torrance’s transcription session with Barak probably took place at Coranderrk, and appears to have been arranged not only by Howitt, but also by their mutual friend, anthropologist Lorimer Fison (1832–1907). Kurburu’s and Wenberi’s songs almost certainly date back to the 1840s. According to William Thomas (1791–1867), ‘Kur-bo-roo, a well-known Western Port black, and held in high esteem as a sorcerer, a dreamer, and diviner, was named “The Bear” … [the native bear]’ (Brough Smyth 1878, volume 1, 447-448 footnote).

Select bibliography: Etheridge 1891, 45: https://archive.org/stream/contributionsto00ethegoog#page/n91/mode/2up;
Tate 1923: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2002080;
Saintilan 1993, 80-82;

Skinner 2017, this volume

Other references: R. Brough Smyth (ed.), The Aborigines of Victoria: with notes relating to the habits of the natives of other parts of Australia and Tasmania (Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer, 1878), volume 1, 447-48 footnote: https://archive.org/stream/aboriginesofvict01smyt/#page/447/mode/2up
1888

26  1 song (Western Torres Strait)

**Western Torres Strait dialect (‘Mabuiagic’), Western Torres Strait Islands, QLD;** music and words transcribed by Alfred Haddon, November 1888, from performance by Mabuiag and Naghir Islanders (Kudumu of Nagirm and Marudēn and Zagāra of Muralug) on Thursday Island, QLD; first published Britain, 1890

26  ‘Waiitut kap kudu’ (Saw-fish dance song)

**text:** Ngai natan he! Danabi he! Mari naidēm he! he, he, wa! / Ngita kai he! Ngai keka he! - he! - Tiwa patan he! He - he! / Yawa bōi he! Wa pōnīpan he! Yawa bōi he! he, he, wa! / Wapi sēnu ngapa! Iaubu ulaipa he! Pula sena ngapa. Iabu mulsipa! Sandēral he!

**gloss:** Now I can see myself reflected in the pools on the reef as in a mirror / You cut the shoot of the coco palm for me / Farewell dead coco palm leaves. Ho! there’s the lightning / Fish now approach the shore, and we must build fish-weirs in their route.

**analytics:** Western Torres Strait; TSI; Northern PN/ Western Torres Strait/ Kala Lagaw Ya

**source:** A. C. Haddon, ‘Ethnography of the western tribes of Torres Straits’, *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 19 (1890), 376-80:
https://archive.org/stream/journalanthropo08irelgoog#page/n411/mode/2up

**Additional documentation:** A. C. Haddon, ‘The secular and ceremonial dances of Torres Straits’, *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* 6 (1893), 131-62:
https://archive.org/stream/reportsofcambrid05hadd#page/342/mode/2up

**Select bibliography:** Alice Bertha Gomme, *The traditional games of England, Scotland and Ireland: with tunes, singing rhymes and methods of playing according to the variants extant and recorded in different parts of the kingdom . . . volume 2, Oats and beans – Would you know* (London: David Nutt, 1898), 519-20:
https://archive.org/stream/traditionalgames02gommuoft#page/519/mode/2up

**Checklist web link:**

c.1890–1900

27  5 songs (Maric)

**Maric, Maranoa and Warrego districts, NSW/QLD border;** transcribed and translated by Harold Octavius Lethbridge (1880-1944) and his sister Flora Josepha Lethbridge (1873/4–1956; ‘Mrs. Murphy’ – see 27.5), from various performers including **Boss Davey (Mundálo)** (d.1916), Forest Vale Station, near Mitchell, c.1890–1900; published 1937
27.1 ‘I. Maranoa lullaby’

text: *Mumma warrunno murra wathunno* [repeat]
gloss: ‘To this song the mother rocked her baby to sleep in the bark cradle, using her foot to avoid stooping.’
analytics: Maranoa district, NSW/QLD border; YCA; Northern PN/ Maric/ ? Gunngari

27.2a ‘II. Bingo corroborees: (a) Bingo bingo’
text: *Bingo bingo Carmoo curree . . . Cowal cowal cowal cowal . . .*
gloss: ‘This is a warning to a youth against bathing in a water-hole at the junction of Bailey’s Creek with the Maranoa River. This water-hole was inhabited by a Bunyip.’
analytics: As for 27.1
source: Lethbridge and Loam 1937, 6-7: http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-172234124/view#page/n6/mode/1up

27.2b ‘II. Bingo corroborees: (b) The porcupine song’
text: *Wangur dthunnee dthunnee dthunnee . . . Goolgoo boora goolgoo boora goolgoo boora*
gloss: ‘The droll behaviour of the *ECHIDNA* never failed to fill these simple-minded and altogether delightful children of nature with uncontrollable laughter. Wai! and Yakai! are words of exclamation.’
analytics: As for 27.1

27.2c ‘II. Bingo corroborees: (c) The blind blackfellow’
text: *Ngunee ngunee dthara goon doo . . . Ngia ngia ngian ngia . . .*
gloss: ‘A blind blackfellow finding his way back to camp’ (‘The performers in this Corroboree, coming forward to the cleared ground (stage) lit by a semicircle of fires, would imitate the movements of a blind man endeavouring to cross a gully. The orchestra – gins, piccaninnies and non-performers would sing the melody whilst the performers would maintain perfect rhythm and graceful poise.’)
analytics: As for 27.1

27.3 ‘III. A Warrego lament’
text: *Meen gutte meen galina yarin ja ya reen yer mo dtharrbinga buthee marber go thun bin a yun ga ween jin ah! ween jin ah! been a guttee booki yaka!*
gloss: ‘It is the anguished cry of a doomed race – stricken by disease brought by the invading white man.’ (‘Introduced from the Warrego Tribe.’)
analytics: Warrego district, south central QLD; YCA; Northern PN/ Maric/ ? Pirriya

27.4 ‘IV. Bangee rang ananah’
text: *Bangee rang anan-ah dthiblurrah bangee rang anan-ah dthiblurrah bangee rang anan-ah willy nurr y no urmunday wowowo injiaco mooooloo dooorroo wookoonin*
gloss: ‘A Hunting Song’
analytics: As for 27.1
source: Lethbridge and Loam 1937, 12-13:
http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-172234124/view#page/n12/mode/1up

27.5 ‘V. Jabbin jabbin’
text: Jabbin jabbin kirroo kagla kurra kurra kirroo ka jabbin jabbin kirroo ka
gloss: ‘This is not a corroboree. It is a song sung round the camp fire.’
analytics: As for 27.1
source: Lethbridge and Loam 1937, 14-15:
http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-172234124/view#page/n14/mode/1up

Other documentation: Lethbridge and Loam 1937, 2:
http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-172234124/view#page/n2/mode/1up [commentary];
‘ABORIGINAL SONGS’, The Independent (9 April 1937), 3:
‘ABORIGINAL SONGS. A Valuable Collection’ and ‘Aboriginal songs explained (By H.
O. Lethbridge)’, The Australian Musical News (1 July 1937), 22

Other media resources: Harold Blair singing Maranoa Lullaby on an unreleased recording from
Ethel Munn, Maranoa Lullaby, First Languages Australia, posted 29 June 2014:

Checklist web link:

c.1893

28 4 songs (Nyungar)

Nyungar, Gingin and South-west region, WA; music and words transcribed and sent to A. F.
Calvert (1872–1946) by an unidentified reporter, by c.1893; published London, 1894

28.1 ‘During the ceremony of presentation … song’ [Calvert 1]
text: Wilbeniah yandiwirrie . . . [words repeated and alternated]
gloss: ‘Some time ago . . . one of the white colonists, held in high esteem by one of the native
tribes near Guigin, was presented by them with what may be best described as “tribal rights”
(corresponding to citizenship) over certain lands. During the ceremony of presentation was
sung the following song, and it may be explained that “Wilbeniah” was the name of the land,
and “Yandiwirrie” the name by which the natives knew their friend. When they sang the first
word they pointed to the land, and when they sang the second they pointed to the adopted
tribesman, indicating by this probably that the land was his, and that he belonged to the land’
(Calvert 1892, 34-35).
analytics (28.1-4): South-west region, WA; CA; Western PN/ Nyungar/ Nyungar
source (28.1-4): Albert F. Calvert, The Aborigines of Western Australia (London: W.
Milligan and Co., 1894), 34-38;
https://archive.org/stream/aboriginesofwest00calv#page/35/mode/2up

28.2 ‘After the marriage … [song]’ [Calvert 2]
text: Harinan oh! harinan oh! . . . woorinan oh! woorinan oh! . . .
gloss: ‘Two natives were married . . . After the marriage, a party of natives, male and female,
belonging to their tribe gathered round the fire in front of their hut and sang the following
measure, scores of times: “Harinan” was the name of the Benedict, and “Woorinan” that of
his Beatrice’ (Calvert 1892, 35-36).
28.3 ‘Corroborie’ [Calvert 3]

text: Ah barrabahndidurrah birrin goorah ah [repeated six times] barrabahndidurrah birringoorah ah, barrabahndidurrah! ah barrabahndidurrah! birringoorah ah! [Da capo]
gloss: ‘sung at a corroborie, or native dance . . . What the words mean I was never able to learn’ (Calvert 1892, 36)

28.4 ‘Recitative’ [Calvert 4]

text: What for you white fellow wongy you gib’em chickpence and you nothing giberem poor old debbil me poor granny me me nothing nalgo and want’em bread and you big fellow lie tell’em

gloss: ‘Wongy means say or promise, and that I had promised her something was one of her pleasant little fictions’ (Calvert 1892, 38)

Select bibliography: Calvert 1892: https://archive.org/details/aboriginesofwest00calvuoft [earlier version of Calvert 1894, without reference to the songs];

Checklist web link:

c.1895 (possibly much earlier)

29 1 song (Waka-Kabic)

Waka-Kabic, Burnett River, QLD; music transcription only, probably collected and transcribed by Charles Handley, possibly much earlier than the publication date of 1897

29  ‘Burnett River corroboree’

text: music transcription only

analytics: Burnett River, QLD; YCA; South-eastern PN/ Waka-Kabic/ ? Gureng Gureng


Commentary: ‘Burnett River corroboree: MR. JAMES EDGE-PARTINGTON sends the following corroboree music from the Burnett River, Queensland, forwarded to him by Mr. Charles Handley: [music transcription] * Signifies the beat of boomerangs, nullah nullahs, etc., while the gins pad the opossum skins.’

Select bibliography: Saintilan 1993, 78-79

Checklist web link:
1898

30 28 songs (Eastern and Western Torres Strait)

Meriam Mir (and possibly Torres Strait Creole), Murray Island (Eastern Torres Strait); sound recordings by Charles Samuel Myers (1873–1946), collected 1898; text transcriptions by Alfred Cort Haddon (1855–1940) and Sidney Herbert Ray (1858–1939); musical transcriptions by Charles Myers; first published Cambridge, 1908 and 1912 (30.1-18)

Western Torres Strait dialects (‘Mabuiagic’), such as Kala Lagaw Ya, Western Torres Strait Islands (Mabuiag, Yam, and Saibai); sound recordings, text transcriptions and gosses by Sidney Ray, 1898; musical transcriptions by Charles Myers, first published Cambridge, 1912 (30.19-28)

A note on the sources: As of 2017, the original 1898 recordings of some 30 of the songs listed are being streamed live by the British Library:
http://sounds.bl.uk/World-and-traditional-music/Ethnographic-wax-cylinders; see pull-down list by clicking on ‘Australia’). The source reference given with each song below is to the musical transcription in Charles M. Myers, ‘Music’, in Alfred C. Haddon et al., Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits (1898), volume 4, Arts and Crafts (Cambridge: The University Press, 1912) (Myers 1912), 244-47 (Eastern Islands songs):
https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/244/mode/2up; and 262-63 (Western Islands songs):
https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/262/mode/2up;

As reported below in the gloss for each song, Myers also gave an appendix ‘Words of the songs’, transcribed and translated or glossed by Sidney Ray, at pages 266-69:
https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/266/mode/2up.


20 Eastern Islands songs

30.1-4A 4 Malu songs

30.1 ‘Malu songs I’ (Funeral song 1)
text: Wau aka o adeet Maluet e padet emarar
gloss: Yea why O holy one Malu at the creek sways
analytics (30.1-4A): Murray Island, Eastern Torres Strait; TSI; Papuan/ Miriamic/ Meriam Mir
source (30.1-4A): Myers 1912, 244-45:
https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/244/mode/2up

30.2 ‘Malu songs II’ (Funeral song 2)
text: Wau o weluba o lewerlewer o meriba tamera
gloss: Yea O pigeon’s feather O food our Malu’s club

30.3 ‘Malu songs III’ (Funeral song 3)
text: Wau Izib eiriam, wau Izibe dirker ewatur
gloss: Yea Izib ye two drink, Yea Izib he sinks it pulls him down

30.4 ‘Malu songs IV’ (Funeral song 4)
text: Ib’ abara lewer kerim abara lewer (see source for additional words, not sung)
gloss: Jaw his food head his food
30.4A ‘Malu songs IVA’ (Funeral song 4A)
text: Wau aka Maluet au adud leluti adud tereget (see source for alternative texts to same music)
gloss: Yea why Malu very bad man bad teeth

30.5-13A 9 Keber songs

30.5 ‘Keber songs V’ (Funeral song 5)
text: Kodiaba kodiaba moiaba dagaba lagiaba sigapa
gloss: To the ring to the ring to fire to place to there
analytics (30.5-9A): Murray Island, Eastern Torres Strait; TSI; Papuan/ Miriamic/ Meriam Mir and ? Torres Strait Creole
source (30.5-9A): Myers 1912, 245-46: https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/245/mode/2up

30.6 ‘Keber songs VI’ (Funeral song 6)
text: (music only)

30.7 ‘Keber songs VII’ (Funeral song 7)
text: Wau kubi uti sa baibai ita. . . (see source for additional words sung in monotone)
gloss: Yea dark sleep now eyebrows cover

30.8 ‘Keber songs VIII’ (Funeral song 8)
text: O meluba Dudiie
gloss: ? along Daudai

30.9 ‘Keber songs IX’ (Funeral song 9)
text: (music only)

30.10 ‘Keber songs X’ (Funeral song 10)
text: (music only)

30.11 ‘Keber songs XI’ (Funeral song 11)
text: O obarasa gainau teir dimer
gloss: recognize pigeon ornament sew/tie on

30.12 ‘Keber songs XII’ (Funeral song 12)
text: O Dudiaba. . .Gebariaba Mukeriaba tatarmauke Amiaba
gloss: to Daudai to Gebar to Mukwa comes between to Yam

30.13 ‘Keber songs XIII’ (Funeral song 13)
text: Pua pua. . .er pua. . .er etc., tokaiba namiedra (? namiadaba) wer a wer
gloss: (no gloss)

30.13A ‘Keber song XIII A’ (Funeral song 13A)
text: O dia. . .ina wara si kalapudema wa waia tanu abu wali guba gol mina
gloss: this other there put on back along coconut they ? fishing line club canoe mark

30.14-18 5 secular songs

30.14 ‘Secular songs XIV’
text: Isia ba ba walsika O. . .umuru (see source for other versions)
gloss: name of plant for a basket plait
analytics (30.14-18): Murray Island, Eastern Torres Strait; TSI; Papuan/ Miriamic/ Meriam Mir and ? Torres Strait Creole

30.15 ‘Secular songs XV’
text: Kolap nab ulai kolap pogaipa kolap nino wagel (? walgen) pogaipa
gloss: Spinning top this go along top fails top yours after fails

30.16 ‘Secular songs XVI’
text: Babim mena taiseda
gloss: to father always brought back

30.17 ‘Secular songs XVII’
text: Saiba ala mitge we mitge
gloss: on lip on lip

30.18 ‘Secular song XVIII’
text: Iriboa kukia iriboa
gloss: along N.W.

11 Western Islands songs

30.19-24 6 Mabuiag songs

30.19 ‘Mabuiag III’
text: Ngata kaba nau puidaik
gloss: I dance song sing
analytics (30.19-24): Mabuiag Island, Western Torres Strait; TSI; Northern PN/ Western Torres Strait/ Kala Lagaw Ya

30.20 ‘Mabuiag IV’
text: Gana sagulau nau
gloss: Ga’s play’s song

30.21 Mabuiag IX
text: Korara kwiku puidaik
gloss: ? crocodile head sing

30.22 Mabuiag XI
text: Waiatana na puidaik
gloss: Waiat’s song

30.23 Mabuiag XIII
text: Ur kawa
gloss: Sea [and] island
**30.24 Mabuiag XIV**

**text:** Ngato madubau nau puidaik  
**gloss:** I madub’s (= charm’s) song sing

**30.25-26 2 Yam songs**

**30.25 ‘Yam I’**

**text:** Awaia gulabwi kabutan  
**gloss:** pelican in canoe put  
**analytics (30.25-26):** Yam Island, Western Torres Strait; TSI; Northern PN/ Western Torres Strait/ Kulkalgaw Ya  
**source (30.25-26):** Myers 1912, 263:  
[https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/263/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/263/mode/2up)

**30.26 ‘Yam II’** (sung by Maino of Yam, see Audio example 16.1 in Chapter 16)  
**text:** Yamazi barid  
**gloss:** along Yam Id. cuscus

**30.27-28 2 Saibai songs**

**30.27A ‘Saibai IA’**

**text:** Mawa na puidam  
**gloss:** Mawa [ceremony] song sung  
**analytics (30.27-28):** Saibai Island, Western Torres Strait; TSI; Northern PN/ Western Torres Strait/ Kalaw Kawaw Ya  
**source (30.27-28):** Myers 1912, 263:  
[https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/263/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/reports191204cambuoft#page/263/mode/2up)

**30.27B ‘Saibai IB’**

**text:** Unclear if the text for Saibai I (Haddon 1912:269) applies to the music for Saibai IA or Saibai IB (Haddon 1912:263)

**30.28 ‘Saibai II’**

**text:** Madub na puidam  
**gloss:** Charm song sung

**Commentary:** Haddon’s anthropological work was ‘confined to Murray Island’ (Haddon 1912:261) – that is, to the main island of the Eastern Torres Strait, where the language is Meriam Mir – as so too were Charles Myers’s recordings and musical observations. For the western islands (Mabuiag, Yam and Saibai), where there are various dialects of the of the Western Torres Strait language, the song data were collected by Sidney Ray (Haddon 1912:261), the expedition’s linguist, who provided phonographic records and glosses of the texts. Haddon says of the language of the Keber songs (30.5-30.13A) of the eastern islands that it is a ‘debased form of the language of the western islands of the Torres Strait’, so we have tentatively added ‘Torres Strait Creole’ as a plausible component of the linguistic mix of these songs. As of 2017, links to original recordings of those songs streamed by the British Library can be found on the webpage version of the checklist (see web link below).

**Select bibliography:** Sidney H. Ray, *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits (1898)*, volume 3: *Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1907);  

Helen Reeves Lawrence, “‘The great traffic in tunes’: agents of religious and musical change in eastern Torres Strait’, in Richard Davis (ed.), *Woven histories, dancing lives: Torres Strait Islander identity, culture and history* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2004), 46-72;


Fairweather, Matthias and Whaleboat 2017 (this volume);

Skinner 2017 (this volume)

Checklist web link:

c.1899 (possibly much earlier)

31 1 song (Yuin)

*Yuin, ‘Yatte Yattah’, Milton, South Coast, NSW,* transcribed by Percy Hale Sheaffe (1832–1913); published 1900, but probably learnt by Sheaffe much earlier

31 ‘All about whale ship’

*text:* Tshemer burra buna ny toonaoo na [repeat ad lib.] parn wate

*gloss:* ‘all about whale ship’

*analytics:* Milton, South Coast, NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ ? Dharumba


*Commentary:* Sheaffe gave only the text for a second song, which was ‘all about two gallons’. He explained, ‘I began to work on this land, more than 42 years since’, and it is likely that he remembered the songs from a much earlier period in his life.

*Select bibliography:* Saintilan 1993, 78

Checklist web link:

1899 & 1903

32 3 songs (Tasmanian)

*Tasmanian language, Hobart, TAS;* sung by Fanny Cochrane Smith (1834–1905) in 1899 and 1903, sound recording by Horace Watson (1862-1930); words of song 31.1 published 1908, musical published 1968; words of songs 32.2-3 published 1960, music 1968 (see entry 9, above, for further details)
32.1 ‘Popela’ (‘popeller’) (‘Corroboree song’)
text: Poppyla (wala wala pawalawa) / Poppyla (wala wala pawalawa) / Nyna tepe rene pogana / Nyna tepe rene pogana / Nyna tepe re’ pogana / Tepe nara pewilly / Para nara pewilly / Pallawoo / a Nyna nara pewilly / Para nara pewilly / Pallawoo pallawoo (version A, from Moyle 1968, 3)
gloss: As for entry 9 (above).
analytics: Tasmania; TAS; Tasmanian
source: One of 3 original sound recordings of this song, streamed as ‘Fanny Cochrane Smith’s Tasmanian Aboriginal Songs (‘1903’) [this recording recte 1899], National Film and Sound Archive: http://aso.gov.au/titles/music/fanny-cochrane-smith-songs/clip1; transcriptions into musical notation from original recordings in Moyle 1960, 76; Moyle 1968, 11, 12,

32.2 ‘Spring song’
gloss: Spoken by Mrs. Fanny Cochrane Smith (from Moyle 1968:8)
It’s Spring time, / The birds is whistling, / The spring is come, / The flowers are all budding, / The (red) fuschia is on the top, / Birds are whistling, / Everything is pretty / ’cause it’s spring, (The birds are still dancing) For the springtime
analytics: As for 32.1
source: Recordings (see 32.1); transcriptions into musical notation in Moyle 1960, 78; Moyle 1968, 14

32.3 ‘Hymn Praise the Lord’
text: Praise the Lord, / Hail the Lord, / Abide in Heaven above.
analytics: Tasmania; TAS; Tasmanian and English
source: Recording (see 32.1); transcription into musical notation in Moyle 1960, 78

Commentary: Mrs Smith recorded song 32.1 at least three times, in different versions (9 above is another version of the same song). Only the first of the original cylinders (Tasmanian Museum 15685/M 3317), recorded by Horace Watson in the rooms of the Royal Society of Tasmania on 5 August 1899, is currently (2017) freely streamed in its entirety (approx. 2 minutes 23 seconds) in a sound clip on the National Film and Sound Archive’s website (see source above). The first minute and a half is an introduction in English, declaimed into the recording horn by Mrs Smith:
I’m Fanny Smith. I was born on Flinders Island. I’m the last of the Tasmanians. I’ll (put this morning) a very long story about it. I’ll tell you the truth, to let you know a little about us. My mother’s name was Tanganitara. I – we are some true born sisters from Flinders Island, where we were for seven years. And I’m here speaking to-day. [? in answer to a question] have we got for mother and my father? My father [? family] Noona. Noona (nitara-noota). (Sing a song. Noota, mother and me). My father Noona. My father was a (whaler). Lose-a my mother, all gone. [? in answer to a question] . . . My family? I’m married. Goodbye. My father [? family] no more.
At 1 minute 49 seconds, Mrs Smith begins the first and shortest of her three recorded renditions of ‘Popela’ (32.1), 33 seconds in length.

Moyle 1968 [includes transcriptions of all 3 songs];
Skinner 2017, this volume
Checklist web link:

1901

33  7 songs (various language groups of Central Australia)

Lower Arrernte (‘Arunta’) country: Stevenson’s Creek, SA, and Charlotte Waters, NT; sound recording by Baldwin Spencer, 1901; 3 music transcriptions by Percy Grainger (1909), versions of 2 of these published by Spencer and F. J. Gillen (1912)

33.1 ‘Song of the Erkita corroboree’

text: Tangaramba/ Ibitalbita (T. G. H. Strehlow transcription, published in Gibson 2015, 171)
gloss: ‘Bob Rubuntja confidently explained to Strehlow that the verse was part of the altharte Aremarye, a type of large sand goanna song series from a place in Warlpiri territory known as Puturlu (Mt. Theo) and although not being able to provide a meaning, claimed the verse was: angaramba/Ibitalbita’ (Gibson 2015, 171).

analytics: Stevenson River, northern SA; CA; Central PN/ Arandic/ Anmatyerr

commentary: There is a manuscript (1909) musical transcription of this song by Percy Grainger, the first of two under the title ‘Native Australian tunes’. Spencer and Gillen (1912 v.2, 502) subsequently published a version of Grainger’s transcription (the second of two in their appendix to volume 2). Gibson (2015, 171) has traced the language of this song (and the next one) to Anmatyerr (an Arandic language that lies to the north-west of Central Arrernte).

sources: As for 33.1

33.2 ‘Song of the Ilyarnpa corroboree’

gloss: ‘Upon first hearing the recording Bob Rubuntja confidently attributed the verse to an Altharte Atnymayte (witchetty grub dance) from the Anmatyerr estate of Arlekwarr (“Lukara” in Strehlow’s spelling)’ (Gibson 2015, 171).

commentary: There is a manuscript (1909) musical transcription of this song by Percy Grainger, the second of two under the title ‘Native Australian tunes’. Gibson (2015, 171) has traced the language of this song (and the previous one) to Anmatyerr.

sources: As for 33.1

33.3 ‘Song of the Chitchingalla corroboree’ (‘Tjitjingalla’)

text: Tjantjirtjirtjirla/ walamburbmarei (T. G. H. Strehlow transcription, published in Gibson 2015, 170-171)
gloss: ‘The text of the recorded verse was, according to Strehlow antjirtjirtjirla/walamburbmarei; however, none of his informants knew the meaning of the verse words as it originated from far to the north and was sung in a foreign language . . . All three of his main informants did however know this song and dance as the altharte “molunga”’ (Gibson 2015, 171) – that is, the ‘Molonga Set of Corroborees’, so named by Roth (1897, 120), who notes: ‘The meaning of the word Molonga (cf. Pitta-Pitta mo-ma) is difficult to interpret in European fashion. It hardly corresponds with our conception of the ‘devil,’ and yet at the same time it does signify an evil-doer from whom mischief may be expected’ (Roth 1897, 121). (See also Hercus 1980.)
analytics: Stevenson River, northern SA; CA; Central PN/ Wakayic or Wambayan/ Wakaya or Wambaya

commentary: Percy Grainger gave his 1909 manuscript musical transcription of this song the title ‘Dadjji dadji’ (possibly his version of the opening words). Spencer and Gillen (1912 v.2, 502) published a version of Grainger’s transcription as the first of their music examples. Gibson (2015, 170) has traced the language of this song to Wakaya or Wambaya.

sources: Recording by Baldwin Spencer, Arunta singer, Stevenson’s Creek, SA, 22 March 1901. Royal Geographical Society of South Australia; streamed by Museum Victoria: http://spencerandgillen.net/objects/4fac699d023fd704f475b641 [sound file]; music only transcription (MS) by Percy Grainger, Melbourne 1909 (Museum Victoria): http://spencerandgillen.net/objects/50ce72f5023fd7358c8a957d [image 1]

33.4 ‘2 songs sung by women [1]’
text: Maljatatjere/ tambirrkula (T. G. H. Strehlow transcription, published in Gibson 2015, 174; unclear which of the two women’s songs this text relates to)
analytics: Charlotte Waters, southern NT; CA; Central PN/ Warumungic/ Warumungu
commentary: Gibson (2015, 174) has traced the language of this song (and the following) to Warumungu.
source: Recording by Baldwin Spencer, Charlotte Waters, NT, 29 March 1901, Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, RGSSA07; streamed by Museum Victoria: http://spencerandgillen.net/objects/4fac699f023fd704f475b64d

33.5 ‘2 songs sung by women [2]’
analytics: As for 33.4
commentary: Gibson (2015, 174) has traced the language of this song (and the previous) to Warumungu.
source: As for 33.4

33.6 ‘Another song sung by the same women on the same occasion’
analytics: As for 33.4
source: Recording by Baldwin Spencer, Charlotte Waters, NT, 29 March 1901, Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, RGSSA28; streamed by Museum Victoria: http://spencerandgillen.net/objects/4fac6984023fd704f475b5ec

33.7 ‘Corroboree song’
analytics: Charlotte Waters, southern NT; CA; Central PN/ ? Arandic / ? Lower Arrernte
commentary: Unclear which corroboree this song comes from. If it is one of the two ‘totemic’ verses (Gibson 2015, 174) recorded at Charlotte Waters on this date (3 April 1901), then the identities of the singers are available from Spencer’s journal (Gibson 2015, 175-176).
source: Recording by Baldwin Spencer, Charlotte Waters, 3 April 1901, Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, RGSSA46; streamed by Museum Victoria: http://spencerandgillen.net/objects/4fac69a6023fd704f475b655

Select bibliography: Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, Tape copies of recordings of the 1901 expedition to Central Australia and accompanying correspondence, notes, etc. 1901–80; University of Adelaide, Rare books and special collections, MSS 305.89915 S745A: https://www.adelaide.edu.au/library/special/mss/spencer_b/?m=tms [finding guide];
A checklist of colonial era musical transcriptions


Jason Gibson, ‘Central Australian songs: a history and reinterpretation of their distribution through the earliest recordings’, *Oceania* 85/2 (2015), 165-82: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ocea.5084

Checklist web link:

c.1900–02

34 6 songs (Dhurga)

**Dhurga (‘Thoorga’), Ulladulla area, south coast NSW**; music and words transcribed by R. H. Mathews c.1900–02, first published 1902 (republished 1907)

34.1 ‘Dhurramooloon’ (‘Dharramooloon’) [Bunân 1]

**text:** Dhurramooloon dhurramooloon binggilbee moondamuna gunmerarawawa

**gloss:** ‘one of the songs chanted by the old men in the presence of the boys’ at the *Bunân* initiation ceremony’ (Mathews 1902, 61)

**analytics (34.1-6):** Ulladulla area, south coast NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ Dhurga


R. H. Mathews, *Notes on the Aborigines of New South Wales* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1907), 33-35: https://archive.org/stream/stream/notesonaborigine00math#page/33/mode/2up

34.2 ‘Dhurramooloonga’ (‘Dharramooloonga’) [Bunân 2]

**text:** Dharramooloon gałe wirrabroo gango ngoorungga wirraleema

**gloss:** As for 34.1

34.3 ‘Ngalalbā’ [Bunân 3]

**text:** Ngalalbā walloolbā jilleejilleen

**gloss:** As for 34.1

34.4 ‘Jilbarara’ [Bunân 4]

**text:** Jil’barara mur’ragadyah’ yam’ungad’yeenah

**gloss:** ‘One of the songs used by the women in the morning during the time their sons are away with the chief men undergoing initiation’ (Mathews 1902, 62)

34.5 ‘Ngulleejee’ [Bunân 5]

**text:** Ngul’leejee gawinjee mullinda gunalyee niong’gaje

**gloss:** ‘During the same period the mothers of the boys chant songs in the evening, of which the following is a specimen’ (Mathews 1902, 62)
34.6 ‘Millingalee’ [Bunân 6]

**Text:** Millingalee kuberinya millingalee kuberinya bingandabee pambeeloonya mirreewala pambeeloonya

**Gloss:** ‘Another song sung by the boys’ mothers’ (Mathews 1902, 62)

**Other documentation:** R. H. Mathews and Mary M. Everitt, ‘The organisation, language and initiation ceremonies of the Aborigines of the south-east coast of N. S. Wales’, *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales* 34 (1900), 279-280:

[https://archive.org/stream/journalproceedi341900roya#page/279/mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/journalproceedi341900roya#page/279/mode/2up)

[words only 34.2, 34.1 (? variant), 34.3; also words only of two customary songs sung by the old women]

**Commentary:** Mathews had previously described ‘the Bunân ceremony of initiation in force among the native tribes occupying the south-east coast of New South Wales from the Victorian boundary to Bulli, and extending inland from eighty to a hundred miles.’ Mathews describes nos. 1-3 as ‘Dharamoolan’s songs’ (Mathews 1900, 279). His ‘Thurga and Jirringany notebook’ (Canberra, NLA, MS 8006/3/5) lists the names of his Dhurga informants as Harry Walker, Annie Wood (Benson), Bill Chapman, James Walker, and Huggany (a Wandandian man); on page 153 Mathews also transcribed three short lyrics headed ‘Annie’s Songs’ (Besold 2013, 19, 20).


[http://hdl.handle.net/1885/10133](http://hdl.handle.net/1885/10133)

**Checklist web link:**


c.1900–04

### 35 3 songs (Dhurga)

*Dhurga (‘Thoorga’), Ulladulla area, south coast NSW*, music and words transcribed by R. H. Mathews c. 1900–04, published 1904

#### 35.1 ‘Chant No. 1’ (‘dirge’) [Pirrimbir 1]

**Text:** Agh kunumbu kunumbu dyirri wanangumna Manganyingal wallagin ginahiya

**Gloss:** The first of three songs that Mathews gave as examples in his discussion of the ‘Pirrimbir, or avenging expedition’ in ‘Thoorga territory’ (Mathews 1904, 240); this one is a ‘tribal dirge’ sung by ‘two of the eldest men’ (Mathews 1904, 239)

**Analytics (35.1-3):** Ulladulla area, south coast NSW; ECA; South-eastern PN/ Yuin/ Dhurga


#### 35.2 ‘Chant No. 2’ (‘weeping song’) [Pirrimbir 2]

**Text:** Yanawa berriga malah . . .

**Gloss:** The second ‘Pirrimbir’ song (see 35.1); ‘At the same time the women are also mustered in the camp . . . singing a ‘nyînggoan’ or weeping song, of which ‘Chant No. 2’ . . . is an example’ (Mathews 1904, 240)
35.3 ‘Chant No. 3’ (‘departure of the warriors’) [Pirrimbir 3]

**text:** Kunumbu kunumbu ngodyiramba urarumba ngurgambawi

**gloss:** The third ‘Pirrimbir’ song (see 35.1); this one sung during the ‘departure of the warriors,’ who, while singing, ‘gesticulate with their weapons as if assaulting an enemy’ (Mathews 1904, 241)

**Commentary:** On Mathews and his south coast informants, see 34 commentary.

**Select bibliography:** Thomas 2007; Besold 2013

**Checklist web link:**