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'DOCTOR DO-GOOD'?

CHARLES DUGUID AND ABORIGINAL POLITICS, 1930s-1970s

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
History Program, Research School of Social Sciences
Australian National University
This thesis contains no material which has previously been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution and, to the best of my knowledge, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made.

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ABSTRACT

Charles Duguid helped to establish Emabella mission in 1937, widely regarded as one of the least oppressive and most culturally sensitive missions ever established in Australia. Following his death in 1986, aged 102, Duguid was buried there at the request of the Pitjantjatjara people. By them he is remembered as 'the man who came in the very beginning', and 'the greatest fighter for Aboriginal welfare Australia has ever known—even the world', yet surprisingly little is known of his activism.

This thesis examines Duguid's involvement in Aboriginal politics from the 1930s-1970s in South Australia and the Northern Territory. It is a social, political and intellectual history that offers local, regional and national perspectives on the administration of Aborigines over four decades. Using Duguid's ideas and activism as a lens, it explores the changing role of white people in Aboriginal politics: from missions to self-administering Aboriginal communities, from inviolable reserves to detribalisation, from segregation to assimilation, from white advocacy to 'black-power'. It pays attention to Duguid's relationships with Aboriginal people—the men, women and children whom Duguid considered his 'friends' as well as those who were critical of him—and documents his disagreements with high profile white Australians such as John Flynn and A.P. Elkin and his support for others including Mary Bennett and Paul Hasluck.

In examining the personal, professional and organisational relationships that made Duguid's public advocacy possible, this thesis demonstrates the existence of a strong, if disorganised, network of committed activists, missionaries, anthropologists, public servants and others working to 'save' and/or 'uplift' the Aborigines during the middle third of the twentieth century. As well as locating Duguid's activism within a broader context of humanitarian activity, this study's biographical approach provides new insights into matters of continuing importance to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians today: Aborigines' rights to land, the removal of Aboriginal children, the impact of assimilation policies, and the shifting meanings and significance of Aboriginal culture and identity in Australia.
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<tr>
<td>AAL</td>
<td>Australian Aborigines' League</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAUN</td>
<td>Australian Association for the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABM</td>
<td>Australian Board of Missions</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFA</td>
<td>Aborigines' Friends' Association</td>
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<td>AGPC</td>
<td>Australian Guided Projectiles Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Australian Inland Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Anangu Pitjantjatjara</td>
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<tr>
<td>APB</td>
<td>Aborigines Protection Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>APL</td>
<td>Aborigines Protection League</td>
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<tr>
<td>APNR</td>
<td>Association for the Protection of Native Races</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASS</td>
<td>Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>Council for Aboriginal Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCAA</td>
<td>Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCAATSI</td>
<td>Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAANR</td>
<td>National Association for the Advancement of the Native Races</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAWU</td>
<td>North Australian Workers Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMC</td>
<td>National Missionary Council of Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA AAL</td>
<td>Aborigines Advancement League of South Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAM</td>
<td>United Aborigines Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAAL</td>
<td>Victorian Aborigines Advancement League</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCTU</td>
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I extend sincere and lasting thanks to everyone who helped me in various ways over the course of this project. Unfortunately I cannot name you all, but I am very grateful. For their generous intellectual, practical and emotional support, my first thanks go to my supervisors, Ann Curthoys and Tom Griffiths, and my adviser Tim Rowse. The other members of my advisory panel, Peter Read and Fiona Paisley, also deserve recognition. I thank all five members of my panel for their encouragement, guidance and, most of all, their patience. Other academics whose interest in my work, and generous sharing of sources, helped to shape its final product include Bain Attwood, Russell McGregor, Geoffrey Gray, Christine Winter, Chris Lloyd and Gordon Briscoe.

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PREFACE

Set into the pavement on North Terrace, Adelaide, are more than a hundred plaques commemorating important South Australians; Dr Charles Duguid is one of these. The eldest of seven children, Duguid was born in the small fishing town of Saltcoats, Ayrshire, Scotland on 6 April 1884. Inspired by his maternal grandfather, Dr Robert Snodgrass Kinnier, Duguid decided on a career in medicine at an early age. He graduated from the University of Glasgow with a degree in Arts (his father's idea) and Medicine in 1909. The recipient of several University medals and awards, Duguid began his professional life at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, where he worked as a lecturer and assistant to the distinguished pioneer surgeon Sir William Macewen. Exhausted from his years of study, and anxious for adventure, Duguid signed on as ship's surgeon aboard the Orient liner Omrah for a return voyage to Australia in 1911. On the outward leg he met and became engaged to an Australian woman, Irene Isabella Young. Duguid returned to Australia in 1912, married Irene and worked in country Victoria for two years before settling in Adelaide. During the first world war, he served in Egypt as a medical officer in the Australian Army, and afterwards bought a property at Magill on the outskirts of Adelaide. He established a successful surgical practice and lived happily with his wife and their son Charlie until 1927 when Irene died suddenly and unexpectedly from a ruptured artery in the brain. The tragedy of Irene's death prompted Duguid to consider leaving Australia. But for his thirteen year old son's reluctance, he may have gone, never to have become involved in the struggle for justice for Aborigines, or lead the life recorded in this thesis.¹

This thesis is not a biography. It is concerned with Dr Charles Duguid's involvement in Aboriginal politics—broadly defined as campaigns on behalf of Aboriginal people—a cause he took up at the age of fifty. The first half of Duguid's life necessarily informed and shaped the remainder—for example, Duguid attributed his involvement in Aboriginal causes to his upbringing: 'I was reared in a radical home and I have fought for the underdog all my life'.² However, this study commences in the years following Irene's death. In those years—the second half of his long life—Duguid married his second wife, Phyllis Evelyn Lade, and together they fought to secure an honourable place for Aborigines within the Australian nation.

² Duguid to J.S. Collings, Minister for the Interior, 1 December 1942, Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068, Series I.
Way back in 1884,
The angels up in Heaven
(Scotch, so they don't have to rhyme)
Said, 'This couple need a son
We'll send a red-haired one along'
Saw little of its famous child
Where need is greatest help is sent
To Australia's waiting shores he went
Long years he strived to make men see
The way to help the Aborigine
With Open House and friend to all
He never fails who on him call
The years have blessed him many joys
Wife, children's children, even red haired boys
No Dying Race in any way
Is Doctor's cause and clan today

[Phyllis Duguid, 6 April 1964]

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3 This poem was probably written by Phyllis Duguid on the occasion of Charles Duguid's eightieth birthday. Although it is unsigned, it is in her style and it was her habit to write poems for special occasions. Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068, Series 1.
PLATE 2. This is Charles Duguid’s Australia. The top map shows the routes he took on his journeys through Central and North Australia, and the places that were important to him. The bottom map (insert area) shows the location of Ernabella mission and surrounding mountain ranges.

Introduction

DOCTOR DO-GOOD?

'I feel that your name should be spelt "Doo good" for it is so much loved by the Aboriginal people of Australia', wrote Joan Strack to Dr Charles Duguid in 1940. An activist on behalf of Aborigines in New South Wales, Strack longed to see more people like Duguid, an Adelaide based campaigner, involved in the struggle for justice for Aborigines: 'Honest and understanding people who have only the welfare of the Aborigines at heart—and no personal axe to grind, no religious [quirk] or mania, as so many unfortunately do appear to have'.

Charles Duguid (1884-1986) 'lived up perfectly to his name'; much of his century-long life revolved around 'doing-good' for others, especially Australia's Aborigines. From the 1930s onwards, Duguid was a constant and untiring advocate on their behalf, initiating countless campaigns 'to bring them into equal enjoyment of Australian life'. Was he, therefore, a 'do-gooder'? The Macquarie Dictionary defines 'do-gooder' as 'a well-intentioned, but often clumsy social reformer'. It is a colloquialism laden with negative connotations as the following 'do-gooder' definitions reveal:

- a person who actively tries to help other people, esp. one regarded as unrealistic or officious; a naive idealist who supports philanthropic or humanitarian causes or reforms; a well-meaning, active, but unrealistic philanthropist or reformer; one who tries to do good.

The 'do-gooder' label has always been pejorative. It is generally used to dismiss, and sometimes to ridicule, the social reformer whose efforts are not appreciated by the objects of their attention, and/or by the wider society. In an article entitled 'Beyond the do-gooder' (1982), Pat O'Shane, then head of the New South Wales Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs,
declared that '[m]isguided white support'—or 'do-gooders'—had set the Aboriginal cause 'back generations'.\(^8\) In this context, 'do-gooder' literally means 'do-badder'; it describes the person who 'sees Aborigines as materially and culturally deprived, hence imperfect, human beings who need to be pulled up and out of their misery and shown the right path'.\(^9\) The person who sets out to 'do-good' in the hope of gaining in personal prestige—wealth, fame, status—is also described as a 'do-gooder'; another label would be 'hypocrite' or 'pretend humanitarian'.\(^10\)

In the early 1960s, Diane Barwick, a doctoral student from the Department of Anthropology at the Australian National University, found that Aborigines in Victoria were deeply suspicious of any white person who claimed to want to help them:

The [Aboriginal] adults in Melbourne have met do-gooders of every shade of political and religious belief, and in a few unjust but telling phrases they can describe among themselves the various types of sympathisers: 'she is the social workers type. You know—'very interested in all coloured people''; 'the church people think it is their duty to be kind to Aborigines'; 'she's got no children, so she goes out to help people'; 'all the white people who want to meet kuris are mad!' Some feel justified in exploiting the sympathy of white acquaintances because 'so many come round us; they are religious or queer or University people. Nobody ever comes round just to be friends, to talk to us as if we were people instead of Aborigines'.\(^11\)

Whether Charles Duguid was a 'do-gooder' depends on who you ask. In 1988, Jean Blackburn, a former member of the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL), told Peter Read that the Aboriginal community in Adelaide 'was really oppressed and very patronised by do-gooding whites' like Duguid who was president of the SA AAL from 1951-1961.\(^12\) However, James Pierson, a doctoral student from the Department of Anthropology at Washington University, found in the late 1960s that '[o]lder Aborigines in the Adelaide area who knew Duguid admire[d] him for "standing up

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\(^9\) *Victims of Victors? The Story of the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League*, Hyland House, South Yarra, 1985, pp. xiv-xv. In this work, it is further stated that: 'When guilt and good intentions become obtrusive paternalism or a desperate, almost cringing bonhomie, then the more cynical Aborigines are apt to label their bearers 'do-gooders' or 'groupies', and to reject their advances in ways which often create anger, frustration and resentment'.
\(^12\) Peter Read, Interview with Jean Blackburn, Peter Read Collection, National Library of Australia, Oral History Collection, 21 July 1988, TRC 2303/17.
for them when no one else would".13 One of Pierson's younger Aboriginal informants, John Moriarty, has recently stated that he 'had a ton of respect for ... Dr Duguid and a few others' who saw 'the value of Aboriginal culture and were giving it support in Adelaide'.14

In making the distinction between Duguid's 'honest' intentions and the less honourable motivations of others, Joan Strack implied that one could do good (or try to do good) without being a 'do-gooder'. And yet, as Henry Reynolds has observed, such "friends of the blacks" were seen to gratuitously assume an air of moral superiority, to consider themselves as more virtuous than the rest' and were called 'do-gooders, bleeding hearts, nigger lovers and may other more abusive epithets' by their white contemporaries.15

It seems that almost anyone concerned with the 'plight of the Aborigines' could be called a 'do-gooder'. At its most indiscriminate and ungenerous, it is label that probably accounts for the reluctance of some white people to become involved in Aboriginal causes today. Moriarty, for one, sees it as ironic that 'more white people were involved [in the past] than are now. Whites are not generally accepted, or invited to participate in Aboriginal affairs, and I think that's a real shame, because I think such complex issues need talented and qualified people, regardless of race'.16 Charles Duguid would have agreed. The disparaging 'do-gooder' label also probably underlines what has, until very recently, amounted to a paucity of historical scholarship on the important roles that white people have played in Aboriginal politics.17

In their documentary history of Aboriginal peoples' political activism, The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights (1999), Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus make the simple, but nonetheless astute, observation that 'white activists and organisations ... both helped and hindered the cause of Aboriginal campaigners'. They explain that although white support was crucial since many Aborigines lacked the necessary financial resources and/or freedom to engage in political activity, the presence of white people 'often led to government claims that Aboriginal protests were inauthentic or unrepresentative, the work of outside, non-Aboriginal agitators'. Even more problematic, Attwood and Markus contend, is the fact that many white activists failed to listen to or respect the wishes of the Aboriginal people they claimed to represent, and instead imposed their own political ideals on them.18 Whether for good or ill, the role of white people in Aboriginal rights campaigns cannot, however, be ignored.19

16 Moriarty, Saltwater Fella, p. 148.
17 Several historians have commented on this lack of recognition. See Bain Attwood, Making of the Aborigines, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989, p. 140; Reynolds, This Whispering, p. 248.
19 The value of this support has been acknowledged in the memoirs of prominent indigenous activists such as Joe McGinness and Oodgeroo Noonuccul (Kath Walker). In his autobiography, McGinness registered his 'gratitude' for the 'foresight' and 'untiring' efforts of non-Aboriginal
Remembered forever

In 1933, the Aboriginal leader and activist, William Cooper, posed the following challenge to historians:

Of course, all whites are not destroyers of natives. And not all whites give no consideration to them ... They who devote their lives to the preservation and uplift of the Aborigines will be remembered forever, and given [an] honoured place in the history books of the future.20

The last five to ten years have witnessed a burgeoning of scholarship about the role of white people in Aboriginal politics: feminists, missionaries, anthropologists, humanitarians, administrators and others.21 Together with studies which focus on Aboriginal political leaders and movements, and works such as Bain Attwood's Rights for Aborigines (2003) which 'seeks to emphasise the roles played by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal activists', this growing body of scholarship shows as false the idea that political activity by and for Aboriginal people is a relatively recent phenomenon, comprising events such as the 1967 referendum, the Aboriginal tent embassy and land rights campaigns.22 Another important feature of this work, according to Reynolds, is that it shows 'that an alternative agenda was aired, a more humane course projected, was listened to, understood and then

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comprehensively rejected, often with derision'. With particular reference to white humanitarians, Reynolds' work demonstrates that

there always were people who objected to the course of events, who stood out against conventional and accepted views and who proclaimed the cause of justice and equality, reparation and regret and who often paid a high price for their principled dissent.

Echoing William Cooper, Reynolds maintains that it is 'important for indigenous Australians to appreciate that all Europeans were not hostile to their rights'. He acknowledges that humanitarians were 'often paternalistic/matrernalistic' and that some of them 'undoubtedly were racists in the way we understand that term now', but he argues that 'if inquiry and understanding stops there we miss the passion for justice, the anger about cruelty and indifference which drove humanitarians along lonely, thankless paths'.

This study, which focuses on Dr Charles Duguid's campaigns on behalf of Aborigines from the 1930s to 1970s, picks up where Reynolds' *This Whispering in Our Hearts* (1998) leaves off. Reynolds' book examines humanitarian activity during the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Australia. It ends during the inter-war period and includes an analysis of the Caledon Bay affair in 1933-34 which, in addition to threatened punitive expeditions, saw the trial, acquittal and subsequent disappearance (presumed murder by police) of Dhakiyara Wirrpanda or Tuckiar, an Aboriginal man accused of killing a police trooper in Arnhem Land. The tragedy of Tuckiar, and the earlier Coniston massacre in 1928, altered the course of Charles Duguid's life: he 'stuck his nose into the Aboriginal question' and there it remained.

In distinguishing her thesis ("Saving the Aborigines'. The White Woman's Crusade. A Study of Gender, Race & the Australian Frontier, 1920s-1960s") from Reynolds' work, Alison Holland points out that Reynolds is primarily concerned with male humanitarians (even though he earmarks Mary Bennett's inter-war crusade and similarly acknowledges her feminist counterparts). Likewise, Andrew Markus' discussion of inter-war humanitarians in *Governing Savages* (1990) pays insufficient attention to the feminist contribution, according to Holland, and completely overlooks the work of Mary Bennett. Holland also suggests that stronger 'connections between [the women activists'] analysis of the 'problem' and the wider humanitarian one' could have been drawn in Russell McGregor's *Imagined Destines* (1997), particularly since he discusses the work

23 Reynolds, *This Whispering*, p. 249.
24 Ibid., pp. 248-49.
25 Ibid., p. 251.
of Mary Bennett and two of her contemporaries'.

Holland sees her work as expanding on, and departing from, the work of Fiona Paisley and Marilyn Lake. I provide a detailed analysis of Holland's position and Paisley and Lakes' work in chapter three. For now it is suffice to note that these historians' resurrection of a white middle-class feminist activism during the inter-war years, and in the case of Holland, up to the 1960s, have made a significant contribution to the historiography of white activism in general, and the role of white women in particular. Victoria Haskins' work on Joan Strack, Peter Sekulless and Peter Read's work on Jessie Street, and my own on Anna Vroland have also contributed to this growing discourse.

In An Attitude of Respect: Anna Vroland and Aboriginal Rights, 1947-1957 (1999), I commended feminist historians such as Paisley and Lake for redressing an imbalance in the historiography that, like Holland, I saw as favouring male humanitarians. I still commend them, but if there remains an imbalance, I am no longer convinced that it favours white men. Hence, this study is unashamedly about a 'great white man'—possibly (and proudly) the greatest 'do-gooder' of them all.

I first came across Charles Duguid during my research on Anna Vroland, a white campaigner in Victoria who urged that the 'greatest possible publicity be given to views of Dr Donald Thomson and Dr Charles Duguid' because both men had 'proved their ability to understand the needs of the Australian Aborigines'. During my research on Vroland, I

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31 Anna Vroland to radio compare, Radio Rodeo (ABC Adelaide), 25 June 1948, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Papers, State Library of Victoria, La Trobe Collection, MS 9377, Box 1726, Folder 3.
became interested in the networks that existed between white campaigners such as Vroland and Thomson in Victoria, Duguid in Adelaide, Mary Bennett in Western Australia and A.P. Elkin in Sydney, and I commenced my doctoral research with the intention of examining these networks. I started with Duguid and soon discovered that he was a central—if not the central—and leading figure during the middle-third of the twentieth century. In making this claim, I am conscious that others might, and probably will, disagree. They might point out that Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney and author of *The Australian Aborigines: How To Understand Them* among other widely read works, had far greater influence with government, missionary societies, lobby groups and the public in general. However, whereas Elkin benefited financially from his work with Aborigines—it was, after all, his job—Duguid did not. Whether warranted or not, this raised doubt in the minds of some about Elkin’s objectivity. When Duguid and Elkin came head to head over the federal government’s proposed rocket range in 1947—Duguid opposed the project and Elkin supported it—Elkin was accused of subordinating Aboriginal welfare to the demands of government.

In the hotly contested arena of Aboriginal politics, perceptions mattered. Duguid was perceived as 'one champion of the black man's cause who [was] entitled to talk'. This was because Duguid did 'not [confine] his crusade to mere criticism', but instead actively sought to find and implement solutions. It was because he was 'not an armchair reformer', but instead made frequent trips to remote parts of Australia to see the conditions under which Aborigines lived (see Plate 2). Duguid was perceived as a man of high moral integrity: he was an elder in the Presbyterian church, the first lay Moderator of the South Australian Assembly, a medical doctor and family man. In an era when the slightest hint of communist sympathy, let alone support, could ruin reputations, Duguid’s remained

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33 See chapter two.

34 'A place in the sun', *The Sun News Pictorial*, 8 September 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 1, p. 68.

35 Ibid.

unblemished. Politically, he described himself as 'a strong supporter' of the Australian Labor Party, but he was prepared to support any government that promised 'justice for the Aborigines'. Six-foot tall with a shock of red-hair and strong Scottish brogue, Duguid was intelligent, articulate and, most of all, he was passionate. In 1951, People magazine described Duguid's approach to the Aboriginal question as

an honest, straightforward, down-to-earth one that plunged straight to the heart of the problem and trod on innumerable political and some theological, toes. He didn't ask for justice, he demanded it. He didn't stand hat in hand, he pounded tables and shook threatening fingers. And, he was heard ... When the final chapter is written, Duguid will probably stand out as the most colourful, the most insistent, and perhaps the most successful of them all. He gets results because he stubbornly refuses to give way.

According to a reporter for the Adelaide Advertiser, people liked Duguid 'because he [was] a fighter' and 'they admire[d] him because he [was] dedicated': 'State government officials say he is pepperish and puckish; Federal government officials say he is fiery and fervent but they all like him'. Duguid's fellow campaigners also admired him, appointing him the first president of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (FCAA) in 1958.

During his lifetime, Duguid was described as 'the most active champion of the Aborigines in Australia today' and 'Australia's best known campaigner for Aboriginal causes', yet surprisingly little is known of his activism. Apart from this study, the only detailed histories of Duguid's involvement in Aboriginal causes have been penned by Duguid himself. In 1963, Duguid published No Dying Race, a work which documented his efforts on behalf of Aborigines since the 1930s. This was followed by his autobiography Doctor and the Aborigines in 1972. Where Duguid is mentioned in scholarly works, autobiographies, biographies and other histories, he is usually dealt with in a line or two, and is often described as 'a prominent white campaigner for Aboriginal

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37 As with most Aboriginal rights activists, the Australian Security Intelligence Office (ASIO) kept a file on Duguid. ASIO did not consider Duguid a threat, recording in 1953 that: 'Dr Duguid's main interest in life, outside his profession, is the protection, education, and general welfare of the Australian Aborigines. He has spent a great deal of time and money on this work and has undoubtedly done a great deal to improve the living conditions and general standard of members of that race, as well as to bring the whole subject very much before the public. Dr Duguid is a highly educated and apparently very religious man. There is no evidence to show that he was ever a member of the C.P. of A [Communist Party of Australia]'. Memorandum on Dr Charles Duguid, 23 March 1953, National Archives of Australia, A6110/78, 1081.

38 Duguid to J.S. Collings, Minister for the Interior, 9 December 1942, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

39 'Dr Duguid - champion of the dark-skinned underdog', People, 14 February 1951, p. 42.


41 See Part 3: Introduction.

42 Reg MacDonald, 'Day by Day'; 'Aborigines and Rockets', Smiths Weekly, 12 October 1946.
rights', 'a courageous churchman' and/or 'indefatigable'. He is most commonly referred to as 'the Presbyterian founder of Emabella mission', and is sometimes misrepresented as a Presbyterian minister, missionary and/or anthropologist. Those works which devote more than a few lines to Duguid's activism tend to be focussed on a single campaign or 'event' such as the establishment of Emabella mission, Duguid's disagreement with the Reverend John Flynn or the rocket range controversy, with the result that Duguid often appears in the historiography as a single issue campaigner. Moreover, like Duguid's entry in the Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography, it is often the case that the principal, and sometimes the only, sources consulted are No Dying Race and/or Doctor and the Aborigines. Although these works provide an invaluable and otherwise unobtainable overview of Duguid's activism, like all autobiographical works, their usefulness as a primary source is limited. I examine the implications of an over-reliance on Duguid's autobiography in relation to his role in the establishment of Emabella mission in chapter one.

This thesis is based on manuscript and archival sources. Duguid kept wonderful records: letters, diaries, published and unpublished articles, addresses and broadcasts, volumes of annotated newspaper clippings, official reports and photographs. In addition to Duguid's personal papers at the National Library of Australia and the State Library of South Australia, I was granted access to a private (and previously unexamined) collection of Charles and Phyllis Duguid's papers held by their children, Andrew Duguid and Rosemary Douglas, in Adelaide. This private collection has since been deposited with the National Library, however, at the time of writing it was not yet open to researchers. These three collections of Duguid's personal papers serve as the backbone of this thesis, and are supplemented by other personal, organisational and institutional papers, and state and federal government records.

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Public—Private—Assimilation: a thesis in three parts
Charles Duguid is the central character of this thesis; his ideas and activism act as a lens through which the changing scene of Aboriginal politics, attitudes towards Aborigines, and policy are explored over four decades. Other important figures including Elkin, Bennett, Thomson and Phyllis Duguid, Charles' second wife, feature prominently, but Duguid is the thread that holds this study together. Reflecting both the manner in which Duguid's campaigns on behalf of Aborigines have been remembered, and the various distinct aspects of his campaigning, this thesis is divided into three parts: public, private and assimilation. Each part comprises an introduction and two chapters. They are arranged thematically and chronologically, with parts one and two focussing on the period 1930-1950, and part three on the period 1950-1970. Historiography is embedded throughout this work. Broadly put, there are two main historiographical arguments and approaches. The first concerns the practice of biography (using an individual or group of individuals to illuminate an age) and the second centres on assimilation (the policy as well as historical and popular misconceptions about the term).

In part one, I examine the campaigns for which Duguid was (and is) best known, the public aspects of his advocacy that saw him become a well known figure in South Australia. Beginning with the Reverend John Flynn's alleged disparaging remarks about Aborigines, I reveal the connection between Duguid's anger at Flynn, a fellow Presbyterian, and the establishment of Emabella mission in 1937. In chapter one, I also examine the intellectual antecedents of Emabella mission, and show how Duguid's thinking about this important mission—his mission—was influenced by contemporary anthropologists and missionaries of long experience. In chapter two, I examine Duguid's campaign against the rocket range in 1946-47, demonstrating through a close analysis of Duguid's views on the vital importance of land to 'tribal' Aborigines, why he was so opposed to this project. Subtitled 'Rockets, Reserves and Detribalisation', chapter two documents a succession of real and imagined threats to the Aboriginality of the Aborigines who frequented Emabella during its first ten years, and examines Duguid's determined efforts to 'save them from extinction' by preserving their 'tribal' integrity.

In part two, I focus on the lesser known aspects of Charles and Phyllis Duguid's campaigning, including their fostering of an Aboriginal child. Chapter three examines the Duguids' domestic and working relationship. It looks at Phyllis Duguid's activities on behalf of Aboriginal women, and introduces the issue of 'stolen' and/or 'rescued' Aboriginal children paying close attention to the importance of 'race' in Charles and Phyllis Duguid's conceptualisation of the 'Aboriginal problem', and its various solutions. In chapter four, I examine the Duguids' understanding of what it meant to 'be Aboriginal' with particular reference to their foster son, Sydney James Cook. Cook lived with the Duguids for six years, from 1944-1950. In 1950, the Duguids sent Cook, aged twelve, to live with Aborigines at a remote Christian mission in the Northern Territory. As well as
investigating the extent to which Cook's 'race'—he was an Aboriginal of full-descent—informed this decision, chapter four explains why Charles and Phyllis Duguid did not view Cook's relocation to Aboriginal society as contrary to the aims of assimilation.

Part three brings the public and private aspects of Charles Duguid's campaigning together under the heading 'Assimilation'. In its various guises of 'uplift', 'development' and 'advancement', assimilation is one of the constant, and most important, themes of this thesis. In chapter five, I examine Duguid's views on the assimilation of Aborigines of full-descent in the Northern Territory and Central Australia, and in chapter six I look at the same process at work among Aborigines of mixed-descent in Adelaide and the settled south. Duguid was a strong supporter of assimilation and of Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories from 1951 to 1963, but he was not supportive of all that was done in the name of assimilation. Understanding what Duguid and others meant by assimilation at different times and in different contexts allows for a detailed analysis of this promiscuous, and much maligned, term. Terminology, or the different meanings attributed to words, plays an important role in this thesis. Terms such as 'assimilation', 'absorption', 'tribal', 'detribalised', 'full-blood' and 'half-caste' need to be understood as having had shifting meanings and significance. Duguid, for example, was particularly concerned to prevent Aboriginal detribalisation, but what he meant by detribalisation was not necessarily what others meant. Duguid's meaning flowed from his appreciation of 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines, which in turn flowed from his understanding of pre-contact Aboriginal life.

Another person undertaking research on Duguid might have chosen to structure their thesis/book differently. They might, for example, have emphasised the international—perhaps even 'transnational'—dimensions of Duguid's campaigning. Although, in this thesis, I refer to works that Duguid published in Scotland and England, and show his interest in organisations such as the London-based Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, I decided to emphasise Duguid's Australian campaigns. It was not a difficult decision to make. Duguid tended to use his United Kingdom connections as a threat to prompt the Australian government into action. In 1937, for example, Duguid warned the Minister for the Interior, Thomas Paterson, that if the Haast's Bluff country west of Alice Springs was turned over to pastoralists he would 'leave no stone unturned here and at home to sheet home the crime': in this instance, the threat of adverse publicity had the desired result. To judge the effectiveness of Duguid's other quite modest efforts to educate the British public about Australia's Aborigines would

47 As Attwood has observed, terms such as 'rights', 'Aborigines' and 'race' are well known, 'yet their meaning cannot be taken for granted'. See Attwood, Rights for Aborigines, p. xi.
48 See chapters two and four.
49 Duguid to Thomas Paterson, 8 February 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. See also Markus, Governing Savages, p. 67; Henson, A Straight-out Man, p. 109; Barry Hill, Broken Song, pp. 333-34; M.A. Smith, Peopling the Cleland Hills, Aboriginal History Monograph, Canberra, (forthcoming, 2005).
require research overseas that I considered (and still consider) unnecessary for this project. The other, and I suspect more important, international dimension of Duguid's campaigning concerned his attempt to educate white Australians about 'the native inhabitants of other lands'. However, since this amounted to one published address in which Duguid briefly contrasted the Australian situation with several African countries, New Zealand and the Soviet Union—the latter was a positive but entirely unfounded portrayal based on communist propaganda—I decided against giving it prominence.\(^{50}\)

In researching and writing about Charles Duguid, I found his moral passion and conviction of empirical certainty a constant source of inspiration and irritation. While I admired his dedication, I found myself agreeing with critics who called him 'arrogant'.\(^{51}\) Eventually, and thanks largely to Tim Rowse's insightful observations, I realised that one way to understand Duguid is to view him as an 'experimenter' because anyone who attempts to change a society—for better or worse—is invariably an experimenter: the outcome is always unknown.\(^{52}\) The public sphere demands of such people a full measure of moral passion and empirical certainty: they must talk and act as if they know what they are doing. Personality and other factors make this an easy or a difficult persona to adopt. In Duguid's case, his moral passion easily included a constant presumption of empirical certainty: he did not doubt that he was right. This arrogance, for want of a better word, was an essential element of Duguid's success as a campaigner on behalf of Aborigines.

Whether Duguid was 'right' is not a judgement this thesis seeks to make. Judged by the standards of today, many of Duguid's statements and actions appear misguided, or worse, abhorrent, while others appear insightful, progressive and 'modern'. While it can be difficult to avoid such teleological interpretations, and in certain circumstances they can be helpful, they tend to obscure the historical specificity of a period. In this thesis, I leave it to the reader to decide whether Dr Duguid 'did-good'.


\(^{51}\) Personal communication with Dr Basil Hetzel, 27 January 2000.

\(^{52}\) Personal communication with Tim Rowse, January 2004.
PART I: PUBLIC
Part 1 Introduction

A 'GREAT MAN' (OF HISTORY)?

'You are a great man and an immortal. It may be that more people have heard of Winston Churchill than have of you, but you are by far the greater man', wrote Ashley Montague to Charles Duguid in 1973. An American, Montague presided over an international award for writing related to the improvement of race relations, the Ainsfield Wolf Award. Duguid received this award for his autobiography, *Doctor and the Aborigines*, in 1974. Having been made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1970, it seemed to those who knew him that Duguid was finally receiving the recognition he deserved for his services to Aboriginal welfare. While many of Duguid's admirers felt that his OBE—a 'long over-due award'—should have come much earlier (and was 'inadequate recognition' for all that he had done for Australia and its Aborigines), others felt that Duguid's highest reward was the satisfaction he could take in having 'aroused[ed] the conscience of a Nation'.

The letters and telegrams Duguid received on the occasion of his one-hundredth birthday expressed similar sentiments. Robert James Gilchrist, former headmaster at Scotch College, Adelaide, captured the congratulatory mood when he wrote: 'What a great man you are. So long ago you saw clearly your destiny and pursued it with a purpose and tenacity that has been a shining example to all of us. Your contribution to your day and age has been inestimable'.

It is one thing to acknowledge that Charles Duguid was a great man or a great person. It is quite another to suggest that he was a 'great man of history'. Often linked to the nineteenth-century Scottish philosopher and historian Thomas Carlyle, who declared that 'The history of the world is but the biography of great men', the great man theory of history has generally, and with good reason, fallen out of fashion. Carlyle believed that history was made by 'great men'—through the vision of their intellect, the beauty of their art, the prowess of their leadership and, most importantly, their divine inspiration: men who mostly appeared to be white Anglo middle-class heterosexuals. This view not only ignores and obscures the contributions of women, people of different ethnic, racial, class

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1 Ashley Montague to Charles Duguid, 13 March 1973, Charles Duguid Papers, Private Collection, Adelaide, since deposited at the National Library of Australia (hereafter Duguid Papers: 3).
4 Robert James Gilchrist to Duguid, 3 April 1984, Duguid Papers: 3.
6 Carol Ferrier, 'Resisting Authority' in Ian Donaldson et.al. (eds.), *Shaping Lives: Reflections on Biography*, Humanities Research Centre Monograph No. 6, Australian National University, Canberra, 1992, p. 104.
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and religious backgrounds and sexual orientation, it presumes that people (usually men) are capable of making history. According to Robert Skidelsky, 'most historians now reject the Great Man theory of history—the view that historical events are caused by, or bear the imprint of, or would have been different but for, the unique personalities of leading actors. The most common view is that the hour produces the man—not the other way round'. Alternatively, Frank E. Vandiver has argued that 'whether or not you agree with Thomas Carlyle and the "great man" theory of history, you must concede that people do make history; people even shape some of the so-called great forces that seem immutable'.

Do people shape history (the hour) or does history shape people? In a recent article addressing Charles Duguid's public denunciation of the Reverend John Flynn, 'Inland Flynn. Pioneer? Racist? Or product of his time?', Brigid Hains has described Flynn as 'a man who was quick to point out injustice to Aboriginal people, and slow to do anything about it'. In Flynn's defence—and against Duguid's characterisation of him as a racist—Hains asks, 'How many of us would have had the imagination and boldness to do more, were we children of his time?'. Flynn was born in 1880, four years before Charles Duguid. They were born in different countries, and into different socio-economic and family circumstances—Flynn's mother, for example, died in 1883—but they were both children of the same time. Recognising this, Nancy Sheppard, a friend of Duguid's, cautioned me against judging Flynn too harshly: 'John Flynn was a man of his times', she told me, and 'Charles Duguid was a man ahead of his times'. Outside academia, such explanations are commonplace; they help people make sense of the past. However, it is only from the vantage point of the present, with knowledge of later intellectual and political discourses, that such claims can be made. On a deeper level, they imply that human thought and action is confined within predetermined boundaries of time and space and that people are not responsible for their actions, as Gillian Cowlishaw has observed:

To argue that beliefs and activities are merely products of their time is to see human action as some automatic playing-out of an inevitable history that is created elsewhere, and to see our own part in oppressive relations as beyond

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our recognition. It denies the existence of ideological struggles, and precludes the study of the dynamics of changing discourses or a critical assessment of individuals or groups in relation to their times. Such teleological interpretations are an easy and complacent way of dealing with historical vicissitudes.12

The key word in Cowlishaw's argument is 'merely'. People are not merely products of their time. Nor can they simply shape history. The answer lies somewhere in between.

For his efforts on behalf of Australia's Aborigines, Charles Duguid 'earned the respect and gratitude of many people, not only for beginning the struggle, but in the more strenuous aspect of keeping on with it, even when the odds must have seemed almost impossible'. In Gilchrist's opinion, 'no man could have stuck to the task more indomitably'.13 It is clear that many of Duguid's contemporaries saw him as a 'great man of history'; as someone who tried to change Australian society, enjoyed a certain amount of success, and thus helped to make history happen. Duguid also saw himself this way. He was proud of the fact that for half his lifetime he publicly assailed the apathy and indifference of Australians towards Aborigines, and that he lived to see white attitudes come much closer to his own viewpoint.14 But more than Duguid's personality and persistence was responsible for this change. It was equally about the times in which he lived.

From dilettante to public crusader:
Charles Duguid's narrative of involvement
In 1973, an interviewer for ABC radio, Janet Robertson, asked Charles Duguid about his involvement in Aboriginal causes: 'What led you to become involved?', she inquired, to which Duguid replied—'What led me to become so involved'. The correct emphasis established, Duguid explained that 'there were three factors really':

The first was the massacre, the last massacre happily of tribal Aborigines—quite defenceless—a good many miles west of Alice Springs in 1928 ... That shook me to my marrow. Then, in 1930 a lady missionary from Goulburn Island off the northern coast of Arnhem Land consulted me. It was quite evident that she was suffering from leprosy. I'd seen her for three and a half years and she told me of the appalling things that happened [to Aborigines] ... I didn't believe it and I said to her, "These things couldn't happen as late in the day as this in a Christian country." She said, "Why don't you go up and see for

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13 Gilchrist to Duguid, 6 February 1974, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
14 Stewart Cockburn, 'There's no way round a lie', Advertiser, 26 October 1971.

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yourself." Well, in 1934 I did, and it was the inhuman, I would almost say unchristian attitude of everybody in Alice Springs ... that finally made me come out into the open. 15

Unsolicited versions of this story can be found in Duguid's published articles, books, broadcasts and addresses from 1936 to 1978. It was Duguid's signature story—his narrative of involvement.

Over the years, and through constant re-telling, Duguid's story changed in slight, but significant ways. The massacre in 1928, known as the Coniston massacre, was a late addition to Duguid's narrative. Doubtless the killing of at least 31 Aborigines by Constable George Murray and others pricked Duguid's conscience—it caused considerable disquiet among white Australians in the settled south—but it was not until 1933 that Duguid made any kind of public statement about Aborigines, and it was not until the 1960s that Australia's last official punitive expedition gained a prominent place in Duguid's narrative. 16 The 'lady missionary', by contrast, was there from the beginning. She was the central and most important figure in Duguid's story. Accordingly, Duguid confessed to having 'only a dilettante's' interest in Aborigines prior to meeting her: 'I was interested in the customs of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the land but not moved beyond pity for the people themselves', he explained. Then in 1930 a lady suffering from leprosy consulted me'. 17 Her tales of injustice, exploitation and cruelty fired Duguid with 'a human interest in the Aborigines'; 'she troubled my conscience and awakened my sense of responsibility, and sent me out to see for myself'. 18 In early versions of this story, Duguid found his patient's tales 'difficult to believe'; in later versions he 'could not believe' and 'refused to believe' them. 19

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15 Janet Robertson, Interview with Charles Duguid, ABC radio (now in retirement series), broadcast 1 April 1973, audio cassette, State Library of South Australia, OH 561/31. Duguid's three factors were: (1) the massacre in 1928, (2) the lady missionary, (3) visiting Alice Springs.

16 For an account of the Coniston Massacre see Henry Reynolds, This Whispering in Our Hearts, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1998, pp. 178-200.

17 'There's no way round a lie', Advertiser, 26 October 1971; Duguid, 'White Doctor', Evening News (Scotland), 27 December 1954. Duguid had 'an academic knowledge' of the Aborigines gleaned largely through the collaborative writings of Walter Baldwin Spencer and Frank Gillen. An anthropologist of international standing, Spencer occupied the foundation chair of biology at the University of Melbourne from 1887-1920. With Gillen, an amateur ethnographer and postmaster at Alice Springs, Spencer published The Natives Tribes of Central Australia in 1889, and The Northern Tribes of Central Australia in 1904. According to Duguid, he 'was thrilled to learn of [Aboriginal] lore as revealed by Spencer and Gillen', but it was not until the lady missionary 'forced [him] by her importunity to see things for [himself] that [his] interest became a passion'. Duguid, The Future of the Aborigines of Australia, Presbyterian Board of Missions, Adelaide, 1941, p. 1; Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, Rigby, Adelaide, 1972, p. 83. For more information on Spencer and Gillen see Russell McGregor, Imagined Destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1997.


19 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', Aborigines Protector, p. 11; Duguid, 'Voices from Overseas', transcript of radio broadcast, 30 May 1954, Duguid Papers: 3; Duguid, 'White Doctor'.

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Together with his professed naivety, the question of belief was Duguid's hook. He wanted his readers to see themselves in his story—to identify with his refusal to believe. More importantly, Duguid wanted his readers to examine their own disbelief, to suspend it, and then to follow him on his journey to 'prove that all this talk about the ill-treatment of the natives is a lot of rot'.

According to Duguid, Alice Springs in 1934 signified the moment his life changed. What he found there convinced him that his patient had not exaggerated the situation: 'The interior is not the land of romance pictured to us by some people who have travelled to and fro. It is a land of stark realism', he explained. The Aborigines 'live in utter degradation—clad in dirty rags and sheltered in kennel-like arrangements put together with old bags and bits of disused galvanised iron picked up at the village dump'. Through images such as these, Duguid hoped to shock his readers into understanding. He wanted them to 'incur the upset which follows a revelation of the situation' as he himself had done, and act accordingly.

Viewed as a clever tactic of a skilled campaigner, Duguid's narrative of involvement reveals as much about him as an activist as it does about his reasons for becoming involved in the Aboriginal cause. For as well as a kind of 'call to arms', in telling and re-telling his story, Duguid sought to distinguish himself from other less credible campaigners, and probably also strengthened his own resolve to keep fighting.

Duguid was wise to the importance of a good story, cleverly and convincingly told. In reality, however, he was far from naive or unbelieving in 1934. Seeing the situation for himself merely cemented views already held. According to A.P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, '1934 witnessed a great stirring of public interest in Aboriginal matters' for that was the year that saw the 'sequel to the Caledon Bay killings'. In September 1932, five Japanese trepang fishermen were killed by Aborigines at Caledon Bay in the north-east corner of Arnhem Land. In June 1933, a member of the police party sent to apprehend the culprits was fatally speared. The death of Constable Steward McColl resulted in a call for strong and swift revenge: newspapers throughout the country reported that a punitive expedition 'to punish [the] blacks' was planned. Following a torrent of unprecedented opposition from around Australia and overseas, government agreed to send a party of missionaries—a 'peace expedition'—instead. The missionary party returned triumphant with four self-confessed killers of the fishermen, and a fifth man, Tuckiar, who admitted to spearing McColl. In Darwin, harsh sentences were handed down: twenty years imprisonment to each of the killers of the fishermen, and for Tuckiar, a

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20 'Dr Duguid—champion of the dark-skinned underdog', People, 14 February 1951, p. 42.
22 Duguid, 'White Doctor'.
24 Having a clearly defined, sane and respectable reason for becoming involved in the Aboriginal cause set Duguid apart from the 'outsiders, eccentrics [and] obsessive personalities'. See Reynolds, This Whispering, p. xiv.
sentence of death. Another outpouring of protest saw Tuckiar's conviction quashed. He was released from prison, but disappeared soon after and was never seen or heard from again.26

From his home in suburban Adelaide, Charles Duguid did more than watch these events unfold. He clipped newspaper articles on Caledon Bay and pasted them into a journal: this was to become a regular habit for Duguid who filled three such journals, each containing up to 1000 articles, between 1933 and 1966. With alarming headlines such as 'Punitive Expedition May Be Sent Out', the first articles in Duguid's collection date his active involvement in Aboriginal causes to September 1933. Duguid made his first public statement on Aborigines at a meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Melbourne that month. He delivered a 'scathing attack' on government policy with particular reference to its 'Vengeance is mine' attitude at Caledon Bay, and appealed 'for a nation-wide effort by Christians to put an end to the appalling injustices the Aborigines were suffering'.27 Completing his transformation from dilettante to public crusader, Duguid made his first trip to Alice Springs in July 1934, thereafter becoming 'widely known throughout Australia ... as a leading champion of the Australian Aborigines'.28

Charles Duguid actively participated in the cultivation of his own 'great man' image; an image which enhanced his ability to win support from government and other influential institutions, which in turn enabled him to better help Aborigines. Equally important, however, was the existence of a body of people thinking and saying similar things; a critical mass of ideas and intellectual paradigms that made the emergence of new political discourses (and individual 'greatness') possible, as the following two chapters demonstrate.

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26 Ibid.; Reynolds, This Whispering, pp. 201-15. According to Reynolds, it was widely believed in Darwin that Tuckiar was shot by police and that his body was dumped in the harbour.

27 "Blacks are outlawed"—Scathing Attack on Policy—Doctor's Views', [Age, September 1933], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 1, p. 3; Duguid, No Dying Race, Rigby, Adelaide, 1963, p. 21.

28 Mount Barker Courier and River Murray Advocate, 21 January 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 1, p. 73.
Chapter 1

ESTABLISHING ERNABELLA

An elder of St Peters Church in Adelaide, Dr Charles Duguid became the first lay Moderator of the South Australian Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in March 1935. For Duguid, the honour of such an appointment was matched only by the responsibility it entailed:

That I am unworthy to hold the high office of Moderator no one is more conscious than myself, but I go forward to the responsibilities of the year, knowing that God has called me as I am and the Ministers and my brother elders are behind me in the work to which I now set my hand.

With exploitation as his theme, Duguid used his inaugural Moderator's address to deliver a powerful indictment on Australia's treatment of its Aboriginal population. From poor wages and conditions to the inappropriateness of government laws on rations, from dispossession to the lack of education, from cultural misunderstandings to the health of Aborigines, Duguid drew his audience's attention to some of the more insidious, yet authorised, forms of exploitation suffered by Aborigines at the hands of white people. Perhaps the most shocking of all, Duguid implied, was the Presbyterian Church's own misappropriation of money intended for Aborigines. Long entrusted with a Bequest in the name of Mrs Smith of Dunesk intended 'entirely for the education and evangelisation of the Aborigines', the Presbyterian Church, having transferred the proceeds of this Bequest to the Australian Inland Mission (AIM)—a mission that 'is, and has always been, for the white pioneer population; never at any time in the interests of the natives'—was arguably as guilty of 'misused power' as any white settler. Yet it was not too late to right this wrong, Duguid assured his audience, for he had devised a plan 'to honour the wish of Mrs Smith'. 'My plan', he announced, 'is for the Presbyterian Church to lead the way ... by starting a mission ... in the vicinity of the Musgrave Ranges'.

This address marked the beginning of Duguid's campaign to establish Ernabella mission, and his campaign to wrest the Smith of Dunesk Bequest from the AIM, the flagship of the Presbyterian Church in the outback. With the opening of Ernabella at the end of 1937, the first part of Duguid's campaign was met with rapturous applause. The

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1 According to Reverend A. Irving Davidson, Dr Charles Duguid was the first lay person in Australia, and only the fourth in the world, to become a Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. See 'Treatment of Aborigines', Argus, 15 May 1936, Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 1), Series 3, Clipping Book 1, p. 60.
2 Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', Presbyterian Banner, April 1935, p. 5, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 4, pp. 6-10.
second part, in contrast, caused nothing but controversy within the Presbyterian Church and was never fully resolved to Duguid’s satisfaction. Whereas the establishment of Ernabella was Duguid’s first, and arguably his greatest success as a campaigner for Aboriginal causes, his frustrated efforts to secure the full proceeds of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest left his spiritual life severely impoverished, his faith in the Church undone.

‘Until I advocated a mission to Aborigines my life in the Church was most happy’, Duguid told the Reverend David Chapman in 1941; ‘since, it has been the very reverse’.4 The mission itself was not the cause of the problem however, for had Duguid advocated a mission without reference to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest, there would have been no cause for controversy. In his autobiography, *Doctor and the Aborigines* (1972), Duguid signalled his appreciation of this fact by separating his account of Ernabella’s establishment from the Smith of Dunesk saga; the former being portrayed as the result of miraculous inspiration attendant upon seeing the Pitjantjatjara people of the Musgrave Ranges in June 1935, and the latter as a source of funding with an ‘unusual history’.5 Only by leaving his Moderator’s address out of his autobiography could Duguid sustain this carefully—and deliberately—constructed narrative, for his Moderator’s address, delivered several months before he visited the Musgrave Ranges, revealed a connection between his inspiration for the mission and the Smith of Dunesk Bequest that Duguid sought to obscure. The implications of that omission are considered in the first section of this chapter; the remainder being devoted to an alternative account of Ernabella’s establishment thus far effectively obscured.

I. ’A man of vision’?

‘How is the success or failure of a mission to be defined?’, Tony Swain and Deborah Bird Rose ask in their introduction to *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions* (1988).6 Taking up the challenge, Bain Attwood, in his entry on ‘Aboriginal Missions’ in *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, suggested that:

The most successful missions were those in which Aborigines were agents in their foundation and management, the missionaries learned and respected Aboriginal cultural practices and the authority of the traditional landowners,

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4 Duguid to Reverend David Chapman, 10 March 1941, Charles Duguid Papers, Private Collection, Adelaide, since deposited at the National Library of Australia (hereafter Duguid Papers: 3).
and relationships developed in which the imperatives of Aboriginal kinship and religion co-existed with those of white paternalism and Christianity. Although Attwood did not name any specific mission, he could have been describing Ernabella. Widely regarded as one of the least oppressive and most culturally sensitive missions ever established in Australia, Ernabella has been hailed by Richard Broome as 'possibly the greatest tribute to missionary endeavour in Australia'. My question, therefore, is different to Swain and Rose's. With regard to Ernabella, I ask: how has the success of this important mission been explained?

Reflecting the view of most historians and other chroniclers of Ernabella's establishment, Robert Scrimgeour has argued that the 'name of one man stands out in the founding and development of [Ernabella mission], that of Dr Charles Duguid': he was 'the driving force behind Ernabella's establishment'; he was the one who believed the mission 'should act as a 'buffer station' to cushion the cultural shock' of contact with white society; and he was the one who devised the 'revolutionary' principles on which the mission was founded. With the exception of Broome's observation that Ernabella was 'founded in an era of new thinking', and Russell McGregor's suggestion that Ernabella 'operated along lines similar to those advocated' by the anthropologist, Professor A.P. Elkin, little thought has been given to the context in which Duguid's ideas for the mission were formed. The persuasiveness of Duguid's autobiographical account of Ernabella's establishment is such, it seems, that few historians have sought to look beyond it to explain Ernabella's success.

In Doctor and the Aborigines, Duguid set the scene for Ernabella's establishment by recalling a conversation he had with Pastor F.W. Albrecht, superintendent of Hermannsburg mission, following his tour of Alice Springs and surrounding regions in July 1934.

[Albrecht] asked, "What do you think about the situation in the Centre now that you've seen it?"

"Ashamed," I told him. "But next year I mean to go further afield, to make contact with Aborigines before station-life overtakes them."


The question of whether Ernabella was 'successful' during its first ten years, and how its success or failure was defined, is examined in chapter two. An account of Ernabella/Pukatja in the present is given in the epilogue.


"Then I suggest you go to the Musgrave Ranges, in your own State", [Albrecht] said. "Nobody's quite sure what's happening there." 12

Taking Albrecht's advice, Duguid travelled to the Musgrave Ranges in the north of South Australia in June 1935. Of his first meeting with the Pitjantjatjara people of that region, Duguid wrote:

They were a fine people with a striking dignity, living naked and with few possessions amid the rocky hills and escarpments of the Ranges, wandering their tribal territory in the constant search for food and water, and yet contented and virile. 13

Despite their contentment, 'it was ominously clear', Duguid continued, 'that one could not expect them to be left in peace for very much longer':

The boundaries of civilisation were being extended every year, and already white men were in the area to scratch a living from "dogging" ... I was deeply concerned for their future. They were on the edge of a civilisation which had no understanding of them and no feeling of responsibility for them. 14

It was during the long journey back to Adelaide, according to Duguid, that the 'important project' that became Ernabella began 'taking shape in [his] mind':

I had seen that the Pitjantjatjara people of Musgrave Ranges were so far uncontaminated by contact with the white man and I was determined that they should be given a chance to survive in their own country. It seemed that the best way to do this would be to establish a Christian mission at the Eastern end of the Ranges, possibly close to the spot where we had stayed and that this mission should act as a buffer between the Aborigines and the encroaching white man. 15

Back in Adelaide, Duguid shared 'the many disturbing experiences of [his] trip' with his wife Phyllis, and together they formulated the 'principles which [they] felt fundamental to the establishment of the Mission':

12 Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, p. 104.
13 Ibid., p. 110.
14 Ibid., pp. 110-11.
15 Ibid., p. 115 (emphasis added)
There was to be no compulsion nor imposition of our way of life on the Aborigines, nor deliberate interference with tribal custom. [2] We believed that medical help should be offered at the outset, that only people trained in some particular skill should be on the mission staff, and that they must learn the tribal language. [3] As the economy of the mission developed responsibility should be passed to the Aborigines as soon as possible. [4] With the setting up of a school the acceptance of the native tongue would be vital and all teaching for the first years should be in Pitjantjatjara tongue.

There followed a period of intense campaigning and fund-raising, the outcome of which was agreement on the part of the Presbyterian Church and the South Australian government to back Duguid's mission proposal. At the end of 1937, Emabella mission was established.

The 'elaboration of personal myth is part of every autobiography', Paul Eakin has argued, and Duguid's is no exception. This seamless narrative, perfected by Duguid during the thirty-five years between Emabella's establishment and the publication of his autobiography, is the final expression of Duguid's personal mythology. For the insight it provides into Duguid's commitment to a notion of his own posterity it is invaluable, yet this is not how it has been read. Instead, historians and others have used it as evidence of how Emabella—'the outstanding Christian Mission to Aborigines in Australia'—came to be established. Whether Emabella mission was 'outstanding' is not the issue here. The perception that it was, and the attribution of that success to Duguid via his autobiography is where the problem lies, for while historians and others have observed that Duguid's 'idea of what the purpose of a mission should be was not the traditional one', and that his ideas were 'very advanced', few have sought to explain, or even ask, how it was that Duguid—a medical doctor with minimal experience or knowledge of Aborigines—came to formulate his ideas.

According to Duguid, he saw the Pitjantjatjara people, became inspired and through his actions Emabella mission was born. Devoid of any reference to the intellectual antecedents of his ideas, and in light of Emabella's success, one interpretation of Duguid's account has been that he was a 'visionary'. Several former teachers at the mission have described Duguid this way. Nancy Sheppard, for example, nominated Duguid's 'visionary

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16 Ibid., pp. 115-16.
17 Paul John Eakin, 'Writing Biography: A Perspective from Autobiography', in Ian Donaldson et.al. (eds.), Shaping Lives: Reflections on Biography, Humanities Research Centre Monograph Series No. 6, Australian National University, Canberra, 1992, p. 199.
19 'Outstanding' is the word most commonly used to describe Emabella mission. See Scrimgeour, Some Scots were here, p. 195; John Harris, One Blood: 200 years of Aboriginal encounter with Christianity: A story of hope, Albatross Books, Sutherland, 1990, p. 883.
20 Peter Morton, Fire Across the Desert, p. 70; Scrimgeour, Some Scots were here, p. 193. See, for example, 'How the land was won', Age, 6 October 1980. In this account of the Pitjantjatjara peoples' battle for their land, Duguid is described as Emabella's 'visionary founder'.

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establishment of Ernabella' as his 'greatest achievement', while Alison Elliot claimed that Ernabella was established 'because of [Duguid's] vision'. Replete with notions of mystical-grandeur or super-natural foresight, 'visionary' is not a comfortable concept for historians. Nor is the idea of 'vision'—pertaining to something 'apparently perceived otherwise than by ordinary sight'—especially persuasive, yet in considering the factors behind Ernabella's success, Scrimgeour likewise paid homage to 'Duguid's vision, his understanding of the needs of the Pitjantjatjara people, his enthusiasm and his enlightened thinking'. More than the product of an uncritical mind, Scrimgeour's hagiographical tribute is the product of an over-reliance on Duguid's autobiography. Looking further afield, Broome has argued that Ernabella's success owed much to Duguid's determination 'to avoid the errors of other missionaries'. In much the same way, William Edwards and B.A. Clarke have claimed that 'Duguid was aware that where missions had followed a policy of seeking to eradicate traditional customs, Aborigines had suffered'. Although apparently more considered than Scrimgeour's view, the idea that Duguid may have learned from the mistakes of others and/or that he was a 'visionary', are both variations on a theme first propounded by Winifred Hilliard, another former teacher at the mission, in 1968.

Hilliard's history of Ernabella *The People in Between* was published before Duguid's autobiography, and cannot therefore have been influenced by it. However, because her source was Duguid himself, the same basic problem applies. In this work, Hilliard portrayed Duguid as 'a man of vision and purpose' whose 'vital concern' for Aborigines came 'from God': 'In his vision of a Mission in the Musgraves', she explained, 'Dr Duguid had the knowledge and wisdom to see where the earlier missionary efforts had gone astray'. Since divine intervention is not generally accepted by historians as an acceptable explanation for why change occurs, the question remains: from where did Duguid gain his knowledge and wisdom? If, as seems likely, Duguid learned from the mistakes of others, from whom did he learn?

Next to Duguid, Hilliard and Scrimgeour provide the most detailed, if not the most accurate, accounts of the events preceding Ernabella's establishment. Both agree that Duguid's inaugural Moderator's address was a key moment in this history, for it was

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21 Personal communication with Nancy Sheppard, 17 January 2000; Alison Elliot, 'To whom it may concern', 26 June 1972, Nancy Barnes Private Collection, Adelaide.
23 Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, p. 117.
25 Winifred Hilliard, *The People in Between: The Pitjantjatjara people of Ernabella*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1968, pp. 86, 93. See also transcript of interview with Ron Trudinger, 11 August 1995, Ara Iritji Archive, Item s1511. In this interview, Trudinger, a former superintendent at Ernabella, expressed the view that 'God ... direct[ed] Dr Duguid to the site of Ernabella'.
during this address, delivered in March 1935, that Duguid first proposed the establishment of a mission in the Musgrave Ranges. Given that Duguid, by his own account, did not visit the Musgrave Ranges until June 1935—that is, several months after he gave this address—the premise underlying Duguid's account of Ernabella's establishment should have crumbled with its disclosure. He proposed the establishment of a mission in the Musgraves before he visited the area: his inspiration must, therefore, have come from somewhere else. That Hilliard and Scrimgeour managed to remain true to Duguid's 'vision' despite this anomaly owed much to Hilliard's belief that Duguid first visited the Musgraves in 1934. Scrimgeour, while maintaining that the critical visit occurred in June 1935, also implied that Duguid had made earlier journeys to the Musgraves in 1933 and 1934. There being no evidence, whatsoever, to support the occurrence of these earlier journeys, it seems that Hilliard and Scrimgeour, persuaded by the emphasis that Duguid placed on seeing the Pitjantjatjara people for himself, assumed that he had visited the Musgraves before he gave his Moderator's address.

Duguid's decision to leave this critical address out of his autobiography suggests that he was aware of the fragility of his own story. He may have come to believe his own mythology, but he was not about to upset it by including his Moderator's address. The larger problematic of memory and its tendency to change over time notwithstanding, there are several other problems with Duguid's account. The term 'buffer', for example, so important in Duguid's articulation of the mission's purpose, and in historical accounts of Ernabella's success, was not used by Duguid until after the mission was established. Of the principles that Duguid claimed to have formulated prior to Ernabella's establishment, only the first two appear in his initial mission proposals; the third was developed in the early 1950s and the fourth with the opening of the Ernabella school in 1940. Considered separately, these indiscretions appear minor—even trivial. Doubtless Duguid was inspired, if not formatively, by seeing the Pitjantjatjara people; Ernabella did become a 'buffer mission'; and the principles, although developed over time, were developed by Duguid. The point is not to condemn Duguid for these indiscretions, but to read them as revelatory of his abiding sense of self. An understanding of how Duguid's account deviates from the 'truth' is, therefore, essential.

As is the case with most, if not all autobiographies—and, it could be argued, with history writing in general—the choices that Duguid made in deciding which events, people and places to include, and conversely exclude, is representative not of the past, but of the story he wanted to tell. In the case of Ernabella's establishment, Duguid simplified the story so that his initial ideas for the mission and what the mission became were one. He made it appear as if he had indeed had a 'vision' and that vision became Ernabella. While an important part of Duguid's motivation, as indicated previously, was his desire to

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26 Hilliard, The People in Between, p. 94.
27 Scrimgeour, Some Scots were here, p. 193.
distance Ernabella's establishment from the Smith of Dunesk controversy, other factors were also at work.

In the early 1980s, Phyllis Duguid warned an overly inquisitive interviewer not to press her aged husband too hard with abstract questions about his philosophy of life: 'He's always been a doer, a worker, rather than a philosopher'—or thinker—she explained. 'Get[ting] on with the job', Phyllis implied, was what Duguid did best. In terms of Aboriginal politics, 'getting on with the job' meant being listened to by those in authority; it meant having, and maintaining, a public profile with newspaper and other reporters; it meant being known and preferably respected, or at least tolerated, by government. For Duguid, 'getting on with the job' meant being known as the founder of Ernabella. Even before the mission opened, he received wide acclaim for devising 'one of the biggest schemes ... in South Australia, and probably Australia, for assisting the Aborigines'. Since ours is a society that values originality of thought, Duguid also wanted it known that he alone had 'shaped [Ernabella's] early policy—a policy almost unique among missions'. Towards this end, Duguid began re-writing the history of Ernabella's establishment soon after the mission opened, excluding all reference to outside influences on his thinking, and to the many transformations the mission went through before it opened, thereby implicitly casting himself in the role of visionary. Occasionally he was more explicit. Writing to the Reverend J. MacDonald Webster, general secretary of the Church of Scotland's Overseas Department in 1940, Duguid explained that '[it] was on [his 1935] patrol [that he] got the vision of the ... Mission to the Musgraves'. Over time, and by methods such as these, the mythology of Duguid's 'visionary' establishment of Ernabella slowly developed, culminating in Doctor and the Aborigines.

The great casualty of this process has been context. While it may have benefited Duguid (and his cause) to be considered a visionary, given Ernabella's status as an exceptional Christian mission, the benefit to history has been severely limited. Rather than 'a man of vision', Duguid is better understood as 'a man of action'—a man who had little time for 'arm-chair reformers', or scientists who studied Aborigines for the sake of science, or missionaries who saved souls at the expense of bodies—but who borrowed ideas from all these people and put them into practice at Ernabella. Viewed in this way, by his very lack of originality, Duguid serves as an ideal window onto his age, his plans for the mission providing new perspectives on the politics of inter-war debates about the 'future of

29 Stewart Cockburn, 'Power of a selfless love', Advertiser, 2 December 1981.
32 Duguid to Reverend J. MacDonald Webster, General Secretary of the Church of Scotland, Overseas Department, 14 February 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
33 W.H. Fenwick, 'A Scalpel That Cut to Size', Newcastle Morning Herald and Mines Advocate, 30 June 1962, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 155. In this article, Duguid is described as 'A man of action'.
the Aborigines', and rare insight into the exchanges between ideas, and between ideas and actions, that were productive of the type of innovation witnessed at Ernabella.

But first, the question of inspiration: if not from seeing the Pitjantjatjara people of the Musgrave Ranges, from where did Duguid's initial inspiration for the mission come?

'Dammed dirty niggers'?
Duguid's initial inspiration for the mission can be traced back to his first encounter with the harsh realities of outback life in Alice Springs in July 1934. After three and a half weeks investigating the condition of Aborigines in and around Alice Springs, Duguid returned to Adelaide deeply ashamed and determined to do all he could to change the deplorable circumstances under which Aborigines lived. As a medical doctor, his first concern was with the health of the Aborigines he encountered, many of whom were severely malnourished and suffering from venereal and other introduced diseases. While in Alice Springs Duguid learned that the town's only medical facility, the AIM hostel, refused to admit Aborigines, and so he arranged a meeting with the Reverend John Flynn, founder of the AIM, to discuss the matter immediately upon his return to Adelaide.

Held at the Commercial Travellers' Club, this interview of fifty minutes duration has been the cause of continuing debate among Presbyterians, academics and other interested observers from 1934 until the present.34 Only Duguid's account of what was said at this important meeting remains, hence the debate: did Flynn say what Duguid said he said? In Doctor and the Aborigines, Duguid claimed that Flynn had been 'utterly frank': "The AIM is only for white people", [Flynn] told me. "You are only wasting your time among so many dammed, dirty niggers." As Brigid Hains has argued, this quote,
attributed to Flynn by Duguid in a memoir written nearly forty years after the event, is a 'flimsy piece of evidence indeed for condemning Flynn'.\(^{36}\) If there were no evidence from the time to support Duguid's claim, it could be read as yet another of Duguid's autobiographical indiscretions—an indiscretion with serious consequences, but an indiscretion nonetheless. The weight of evidence suggests otherwise.

In October 1934, Duguid wrote to the Minister for the Interior, J.A. Perkins, urging the dire need for a public hospital in Alice Springs that would treat Aborigines as well as whites. The situation, Duguid explained, was that:

The AIM Hostel is not suitable for more than giving social service to the white station people. Flynn, too, definitely told me it was not intended for the "hobo white, the half-caste or the nigger". I, a member of the executive of the AIM in Adelaide, am ashamed of the attitude of John Flynn and of [Kingsley] Partridge, the missioner of the AIM for Central Australia, towards the native problem. It is not human let alone Christian, and I not only tackled Flynn but brought the matter before the executive of the AIM.\(^{37}\)

In May 1935, Duguid told George Simpson, a retired AIM Board member, that he had recorded Flynn's 'exact words' following their meeting, and added that 'if what [Flynn] said of the natives [was] the viewpoint of the AIM, God help the AIM'.\(^{38}\) These references, together with Duguid's further assertion in February and September 1937 that Flynn had told him that he was 'wasting [his] time among so many damned, dirty niggers' at their meeting in 1934, prove that Duguid had been attributing such remarks to Flynn long before he wrote his autobiography.\(^{39}\) While this is not the same as proving that Flynn said them, it does take the onus off Duguid's autobiography and return the debate to its proper time.

In a recent article 'Inland Flynn. Pioneer? Racist? Or product of his time?', Hains has argued that while it is 'impossible to know what Flynn said in private', his writings 'contradict Duguid's account'. Citing extracts from Flynn's published writings on Aborigines from 1915 onwards, Hains makes a strong case for understanding Flynn as a man whose views on race were more complex than indicated by Duguid's hearsay remarks. Much of Hains' defence of Flynn rests on the word 'niggers', a 'repugnant' word

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\(^{36}\) Governor was not misled, Advertiser, 13 September 1972; 'Aborigines not his job', News, 2 October 1972, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3.


\(^{38}\) Duguid to J.A. Perkins, 2 October 1934, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

\(^{39}\) Duguid to George Simpson, 21 May 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid to Reverend John McKenzie, 11 February 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 3 September 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

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that Hains insists she has 'never seen ... in any AIM files, [or] Flynn's correspondence'.

It is there, however, in a letter from Flynn to the Reverend Andrew Lennox of Otago, New Zealand, in 1919. After explaining, somewhat laconically, that the AIM cared 'only for the whites' because it was '[o]nly by specialising' and looking 'after our own side' that the AIM could 'get satisfaction', Flynn reflected on the Presbyterian Church's tendency to send nurses overseas, rather than employ them in Australian missions:

Sister Simpson is particularly interested in the Aborigines, as you will know already; but trained nurses are apparently only for niggers outside of Australia, if the invariable practice of the past is any guide. We should say, however, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", for in consequence We got Miss S., and she is worth having.41

The casual manner in which Flynn used the word 'niggers' to refer to people of non-European origin both inside and outside Australia suggests that it was probably a part of his normal vocabulary, as it was for many white Australians. That the AIM was 'only for white people', Flynn was irrefutably adamant.

Taking Hains' defence of Flynn to its logical conclusion, if Flynn did not describe Aborigines as 'damned, dirty niggers' in 1934, then Duguid must have been lying. Again, an incident which occurred at the end of that year suggests otherwise. On the morning of 27 December 1934, Duguid delivered an address on 'Our Duty to the Aborigines' at a Presbyterian Fellowship Conference which, later that afternoon, was reported in the Adelaide News under the heading 'Blacks Shot Like Animals'. The article claimed that Duguid had made sweeping allegations concerning the callous treatment of Aborigines by the federal government and private individuals which Duguid hotly denied.42 Expressing himself 'hurt beyond measure by the misrepresentation in spirit and in word' of what he had said, Duguid called for an immediate apology to be printed.43 Not receiving one, Duguid threatened legal action, the News article having 'done harm not only to [his] reputation for sound judgment, but also to the cause' on which he had spoken.44 With the printing of a full apology and retraction on 10 January 1935, Duguid let the matter drop, however, he considered it nothing 'short of a scandal that a paper could so misrepresent a public man'.45 Having suffered the indignity of being misquoted and misrepresented
himself, it seems unlikely that Duguid would have knowingly and wilfully misrepresented Flynn, the legendary 'Flynn of the Inland' whose status as a 'public man' was far greater than Duguid's own.46

Whether Flynn told Duguid that he was 'wasting his time among so many damned, dirty niggers' is ultimately an unresolvable question, there having been only two parties at the meeting, both long since deceased. While I believe that Duguid quoted Flynn correctly, the only uncontestable facts are that Flynn used such terms—'nigger' was not an uncommon word, even amongst those sympathetic to Aborigines, and particular amongst the 'squatters' Flynn worked with—and that Duguid reported the comment shortly after it was made, as well as in distant recollection. Whatever was said at the Commercial Travellers' Club that day, something upset Duguid enough to complain about Flynn in September 1934 in a letter to Mary M. Bennett, a fellow Aboriginal rights campaigner in Western Australia. In reply Bennett wrote:

I have met [Flynn]. And he certainly works in with the squatters in everything. Mr [J.R.B.] Love told me at Kunmunya, (and doubtless you know all the facts of the case) that the AIM was originally founded by the misappropriation of the legacy left by Mrs Henrietta Smith of Dunesk to found a mission to the Aboriginals. This large sum of money was left to the Presbyterian Free Church of South Australia. The Presbyterian Church of South Australia sent Mr Mitchell to institute a mission, NOT TO THE ABORIGINALS, but to the squatters, who by taking all the natives' country, and working it often under compulsion, with unpaid native labour, have done more to compass the extermination of the Aborigines than any other agency.47

Although Duguid had heard the name 'Smith of Dunesk' at Assembly meetings, he had paid the Bequest no heed, not knowing its true purpose, or that it had been misappropriated. With his ire already raised over Flynn and the AIM's apparent antipathy towards Aborigines, Bennett's revelation concerning the true purpose of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest, combined with Albrecht's injunction that he visit the Musgrave Ranges, prompted Duguid to propose the establishment of a mission there during his Moderator address in March the following year. Thus, somewhat ironically, it was Flynn, or more precisely, whatever Flynn said at that meeting, that helped set in action the chain of events that led to Emabella's establishment.

46 Ion Idriss' best seller Flynn of the Inland was first published in 1932. It is possible, even likely, that in condemning Flynn Duguid was seeking greater status for himself, but this does not mean that he invented the allegations against Flynn.

47 Mary Bennett to Duguid, 7 October 1934, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 11.
II. From 'Christian Anthropological Mission' to 'Medical Mission' to 'Buffer Mission': Unravelling Ernabella's intellectual origins

Although undeniably linked, Duguid's campaign to establish a mission in the Musgraves, and his campaign to secure Smith of Dunesk funding for that mission, were largely conducted separately; the latter was a matter for the Church of Scotland to decide and much time was lost due to delays in overseas correspondence. Since there was also the risk, keenly perceived by Duguid and others, that the AIM's reluctance to part with the Bequest could jeopardise his plans for the mission, Duguid focussed first on establishing the mission before renewing his efforts to have the Bequest used in the manner its donor intended. As will be discussed later, in order to gain full access to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest, Duguid portrayed Ernabella as Smith's ideal mission, describing it in 1941 as 'purely for the education and evangelisation of the Aborigines of South Australia', as Smith had intended. Misreading this as the basis of Duguid's policy at Ernabella, Hains has argued that the 'rationale of Ernabella was not, of course, the preservation of Indigenous culture, but the 'education and evangelisation' of the Aborigines'. Although present in Duguid's early mission proposals, 'education and evangelisation' was not conceived as the main purpose of the mission until after it was established, and then only with reference to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest. As for the 'preservation of Indigenous culture', this was an essential part of Duguid's mission ethic from the outset: he wanted to '[help] the natives to maintain their identity' while gradually introducing them to white ways of living.

Duguid's ideas for the mission were formed in a climate of changing ideas about the role of missions and missionaries in Australia. Upon entering the highly contested arena of Aboriginal politics in the mid 1930s, Duguid was immediately faced with a barrage of conflicting and often contradictory ideas about the 'future of the Aborigines', whether Aborigines had a future and, if they did, what that future might look like. Although noticeably in decline, the previously dominant theory of inevitable extinction still held sway with missionaries, anthropologists, government authorities and other interested observers who argued that if something was not done to save Aborigines of full-descent, they would die out. Aborigines of mixed-descent, or 'half-castes' as they were known, were generally considered exempt from extinction; their numbers being on the rise, they posed a different, though no less difficult problem. How best to save the 'remnant' population of

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48 H.C. Matthew, Secretary Presbyterian Board of Missions, to Duguid, 1 December 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. Regarding Duguid's proposed mission, Matthew advised that: 'We have not, of course, said anything to [Kingsley] Partridge or to any of the AIM Rep[resentative],s, and we have made the matter quite vague in our minutes, lest they should get into the hands of any of them before we have got where we want to get'.
50 Hains, 'Inland Flynn', p. 32.
51 Duguid to Thomas Paterson, Minister for the Interior, 28 July 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1
'full-bloods', and to what end, were the questions that occupied the minds of those interested in Aboriginal welfare at this time, Duguid included.\textsuperscript{52}

In Duguid's view, the 'only way to save the remnant was along the way of Christ', as argued by the London based Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society (ASS) in an open letter to the leaders of the Christian Churches in Australia in 1932: \textsuperscript{53}

As a well-known Society, working for weak and oppressed races in all parts of the world, we now venture to appeal to the Christian leaders of Australia to make a united effort in this great cause, and to do all that is possible to sweep away old wrongs and injustices, to make generous reparations for the past, and to secure not only protection, but also appropriate educational and moral uplift for the very considerable remnant of a race which is not only most ancient, but also endowed with remarkable and attractive qualities of mental and moral character.\textsuperscript{54}

The ASS's 'plea on behalf of the Australian Aborigines' was Duguid's call to action; not so his contemporaries working in the field of science at the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Museum who viewed any attempt—and especially missionary attempts—to alter 'tribal' Aborigines' way of life as tantamount to signing their death warrant.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Adelaide was the home of medical scientists such as Frederic Wood Jones and John Burton Cleland who specialised in physical anthropology. Sponsored by the Medical School, the Museum and after 1926, by the newly formed Board of Anthropological Research of the University of Adelaide (BAR), scientific expeditions were regularly sent forth from Adelaide to Central Australia to collect blood samples and other physical data on the structure and function of 'uncontaminated' Aboriginal bodies.\textsuperscript{55} Their findings, as Warwick Anderson has explained, generally confirmed the view that Aborigines of full-descent were racially 'akin to the white man', but whereas an earlier generation of scientists had lamented the demise of these 'primitive'...
dark-skinned Caucasians, and had sought to study them before they fell victim to an evolutionary logic that predicted their extinction, Wood Jones and Cleland, among others, maintained that Aborigines of full-descent could be saved from this fate.\textsuperscript{56}

'If any remnants of the Aboriginal population [were] to be granted permission to survive', Cleland was convinced that Aboriginal Reserves 'must be conserved inviolate from European settlement, either religious or commercial'.\textsuperscript{57} On behalf of the BAR, in 1932 Cleland submitted a proposal to the three governments responsible for administering the Central Aborigines Reserve—South Australia, Western Australia and the Commonwealth—requesting that this reserve, having so far 'escaped European occupation', be extended by 'roughly 40 miles' on its eastern and northern borders.\textsuperscript{58} According to Cleland, this extension—or 'buffer area'—would serve a three-fold purpose. First, it would 'render the native population of the present reserve more secure from outside influence which may destroy it'. Second, it 'would help to preserve the country' around the reserve by 'prevent[ing] despoliation' attendant upon European occupation. And third, if leased to 'some responsible body such as the University of Adelaide', the 'buffer area' would facilitate 'further study' of the Aborigines.\textsuperscript{59} Unlike J.W. Bleakley, the Chief Protector of Aboriginals in Queensland, who had earlier recommended a similar extension of the Central Aborigines Reserve and the establishment of a mission there, the BAR did 'not think that missionary settlement in the reserved area should be made'.\textsuperscript{60} 'Our reason for this', Cleland explained, is that contact with European settlement causes a disorganisation of the native social system. When this goes, the tribe ceases to exist as such, and the natives are no longer adapted to their environment, and die out. The missionary settlements, which aim directly at changing the native customs and mode of life, can be in this way, even more inimical to the survival of the native, than are the cattle stations.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{56} Anderson, The Cultivation of Whiteness, pp. 183, 194-5, 200; McGregor, Imagined Destines, pp. 113-14, 125.
\textsuperscript{57} Typescript entitled 'Memorandum from members of the Board of Anthropological Research of the University of Adelaide as to the protection and care of Aborigines' (hereafter BAR Memorandum), October 1932, J.B. Cleland Papers, Museum of South Australia, (hereafter Cleland Papers) Acc. 60.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} J.B. Cleland to Professor A.J. Gibson, Honorary Secretary Australian National Research Council, 18 February, 1934, Cleland Papers, Acc. 60; BAR Memorandum.
\textsuperscript{60} BAR Memorandum. See also, J.W. Bleakley, The Aboriginals and Half-Castes of Central Australia and North Australia (1928), Commonwealth of Australia, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1929, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{61} BAR Memorandum.
Although the Chief Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, M.T. McLean, expressed any sympathy for Cleland's proposal, it was not successful. As will become apparent, however, the idea of a 'buffer area' stayed with McLean who later used the term 'buffer' to describe Duguid's apposite proposal to establish a Christian mission in the same area.

Even more disdainful of missionaries than Cleland, Wood Jones likened their attempts to bring Aborigines 'within the fold of Christianity' to a form of euthanasia. In *Australia's Vanishing Race* (1934), Wood Jones argued 'that any attempt to find a place for [full-blood] Aborigines] anywhere within the white man's scheme of civilisation [was] doomed to certain failure':

> And a century of experience in three States has amply verified this conclusion. Continued racial life and adoption of the white man's ways are incompatible for the native. Racially he is inevitably doomed to death once contact has been made with our alien culture.

In an article specially written for the Adelaide *Advertiser* in April 1934, Wood Jones demanded a 'new regime' based on the findings of scientists like himself. 'It must be admitted', he argued, that the "civilising" experiment has failed utterly:

> Mission stations, one after another all over the southern portion of the continent, have come to the same end. Started in fervent hope and with high ideals, they have inevitably ended in the abandonment of the station when the last Christianised native was dead.

No matter how 'well intentioned', the efforts of missionaries could have 'but one end', according to Wood Jones, and that 'is inevitably death'. In his view, the only solution to the problem of the 'uncontaminated native' was to '[preserve] him from contamination by the establishment of inviolate reserves for his sole occupation'. By allowing onto such reserves 'no traders, no missionaries, no exploiters, not even Government police themselves', Wood Jones sought to shield Aborigines of full-descent from contact with white society, thereby preserving their cultural integrity and their racial purity: in Wood Jones' terms, their 'continued racial life'.

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62 [M. T.] McLean, Chief Protector of Aborigines, South Australia, to Gibson, 23 June 1933, Cleland Papers, Acc. 60. See also A.O. Neville, Chief Protector of Aborigines, Western Australia, to Gibson, 19 May 1933 and Cecil Cook, Chief Protector of Aboriginals, Northern Territory, to Gibson, 13 January 1934, Cleland Papers, Acc. 60.


65 Wood Jones, 'Black and White'.


Wood Jones' characterisation of missionaries as the harbingers of 'racial death' brought a string of spirited denials from people who had spent years labouring under harsh conditions to bring the doctrine of Christ to Aborigines. In a lengthy letter to the editor of the Advertiser, J.J. Stolz, president of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, rejected Wood Jones' verdict on the failure of missions thus:

As to the fact that the Aborigines of Australia have not survived where their country was overrun by whites, although mission work was carried on amongst them, we must not forget that other influences were at work upon the natives, either before the mission appeared upon the scene, or soon after its establishment— influences that offset the good influence of the Christian mission. ... When these evil influences had succeeded in disintegrating the racial life of the natives, when our doubtful civilisation had brought to them those dreadful diseases ... it was expecting too much of Christian missions that they should arrest the dying out of the natives.68

Reverend T.T. Webb, chairman of the Methodist Missions to the Aborigines, likewise argued that where missions had failed, it was 'mostly because the tide of white settlement [had] swept the Aborigines to destruction before their work could be effective'.69 Thus, according to Reverend H.C. Matthew, secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Missions, it was 'not the missionaries who [had] failed, but the people of Australia who [had] failed to provide for the Aborigines [those] protections and fellowship which the Christian Churches [provided]'.70 Rather than continue to criticise one another, Matthew argued that it would be 'better for all those who are interested in the Aborigines of Australia to co-operate'. His call for a combination of 'scientific and spiritual methods in dealing with the Aborigines' was matched by Stolz's advocacy of '[h]earty co-operation of missionaries and anthropologists' and Webb's conviction that '[w]hen the best anthropological science and the best missionary effort join[ed] hands, then splendid results [would] follow'.71

The Reverend J.H. Sexton, Honorary Secretary of the Aborigines' Friends' Association (AFA) in Adelaide, agreed. Having denigrated missionary endeavour and won the ear of government, the anthropologist was in ascendancy, Sexton observed in 1934, yet 'time [would] show whether science [could] meet the strivings, yearnings, and spiritual needs of the Aborigines as well as their physical necessities'. Sexton thought not, but rather than dismiss science entirely, he too argued that 'surely it would be much better for

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the anthropologist and missionary to co-operate, for each has a distinctive contribution to make to the solution of a most difficult problem'. For Sexton, as for many others, A.P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, and an Ordained Priest in the Anglican Church, embodied this ideal.

The leading social anthropologist in Australia, Elkin had little time for the type of physical anthropology conducted by the Adelaide researchers, or their conclusions. Provided that the policy of missions was 'not so much to save individual souls, as to preserve societies, especially during periods of cultural clash and transition', Elkin believed that Aborigines offered 'a great opportunity for religious missions'. The problem with most missions, Elkin observed in 1934, was 'not so much the result aimed at' (ie. Christian conversion), but 'the emotional attitude of shame which is adopted and inculcated with regard to the native's own social and religious life'. Rather than brand Aboriginal religion as 'devilish', Elkin advised missionaries to 'build upon' it, for in Aboriginal society, as in 'most primitive societies', religion was 'one of the most important cohesive factors' and could not be lost without the disintegration of that society. Missionary success—defined in terms of Christian conversion but without the total obliteration of the Aborigines' own social and religious life—demanded 'knowledge of the native language and view of life, together with patience and conviction', according to Elkin. Moreover, it required training in social anthropology with special reference to primitive and non-European peoples, the functional and comparative study of religion, the study of population-problems, cultural contact and mission methods ... [and] medicine'.

By showing that anthropologists and missionaries could work together, and indeed had to work together if missions were to attract sincere and lasting converts, Elkin did much to bridge the gulf between science and religion. At the beginning of 1935, Sexton, clearly influenced by Elkin's teachings, was reported in the Adelaide press as saying that:

Any new missionaries who go out to work among the Aborigines should certainly have a knowledge of anthropology, and languages and customs of the natives. The aim should not be to destroy ruthlessly native culture, but to guide the longings and aspirations of the Aborigines into the right channels.

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73 A.P. Elkin, Missionary Policy for Primitive Peoples, St John's College Press, Morpeth, 1934 (reprint from The Morpeth Review, No. 27), p. 8.
74 Elkin, Missionary Policy for Primitive Peoples, pp. 2, 8; Elkin, letter of commendation in The Aborigines: A Commonwealth Problem and Responsibility, 1934, p.11.
75 Elkin, Missionary Policy for Primitive Peoples, pp. 5, 10.
Duguid, who joined Sexton's organisation, the AFA, at around this time, carefully clipped this article from the newspaper, and pasted it, along with Wood Jones, Stolz, Webb and Matthews' articles into a large bound journal.\textsuperscript{77} As mentioned previously, this was to become a habit for Duguid who filled three such journals during his years as a campaigner for Aboriginal causes. The value of these journals is further magnified by the fact that Duguid rarely, if ever, acknowledged the influence of others on his thinking. In the case of Ernabella's establishment, the clippings provide much needed insight into the 'spirited controversy' out of which Duguid's ideas for the mission which became Ernabella were born.

Duguid's contribution to this debate came in March 1935, during his Moderator's address, with his proposal to establish a 'Christian Anthropological Mission' in the Musgrave Ranges.\textsuperscript{78} With this proposal Duguid sought to put a stop to 'futile talk' about whether missionaries or anthropologists, science or religion, was best suited to help Aborigines, and 'get on with the job of saving one of the finest as well as one of the most interesting races on earth'.\textsuperscript{79} Having only recently conceived the idea himself, Duguid was more concerned with securing support for his scheme in principle than in practice and so gave little indication as to how such a mission would function. That it was to be no ordinary mission was implied by its title, and reinforced by Duguid's insistence that 'whoever [took] up the work [would] have to learn the language and understand the ways of the people among whom he [was] placed'. In line with Elkin's recommendations, Duguid pledged 'to give 100 pounds for three years at least towards the salary of an approved Christian Medical Missionary, who had anthropological training'. Implicitly rejecting Wood Jones' assertion that the ways of white men and Aborigines were 'incompatible', Duguid described his proposed mission as a place where whites could 'learn much from the native and the native much from us'; a testing ground of sorts where Duguid hoped 'good laws and proper enlightenment' would prove the 'two cultures ... complimentary'.\textsuperscript{80}

While appreciative of their new Moderator's initiative, the South Australian Assembly of the Presbyterian Church needed more information, and less prevarication, and so appointed a committee 'to investigate the possibilities' of Duguid's scheme.\textsuperscript{81} With Duguid as convenor, this committee of six helped to refine and redefine his proposal, transforming it from a 'Christian Anthropological Mission' to a 'Medical Mission'; a title

\textsuperscript{77} Duguid was a member of the Aborigines' Friends' Association for three years, from 1934 to 1937. According to Duguid, he was 'the only person who ever questioned anything' during that time. See Duguid to Oliphant, 18 November 1946, Papers of Dr Charles Duguid, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 387, Series 1.

\textsuperscript{78} Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', p. 10.


\textsuperscript{80} Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', p. 10.

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Minutes of Proceedings of the South Australian Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia Held in Adelaide, March 1933}, p. 23, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
which better reflected Duguid's own area of expertise and his concern for the health of the Aborigines. 82

Disease had long been regarded one of the principle causes, if not the principle cause; of the 'dying out' of the Aborigines. 83 However, whereas during the nineteenth century it was believed that along with disease and other physical causes, a 'deeper and more mysterious' force was at work, according to Anderson, the early twentieth century saw divine providence—or the hand of God—gradually give way to modern science and explanations which centred on the 'predictable biological consequences of personal contact between the immunologically competent and the immunologically naive'. 84 In other words, although contact with Europeans was still considered potentially fatal to Aborigines, rather than the result of some 'mystical process', by the 1930s it was generally understood that Aborigines reacted to 'the new diseases they encountered ... in much the same way as anyone born of a previously isolated population'. 85 Thus, Duguid observed that while the 'health of the Aboriginal in his native haunts, where he has been almost untouched by civilisation, is excellent ... where he has had to compete with cattle and [the] white man it is very bad'. 86 Duguid described the 'health of the natives in the northern parts of South Australia [as] serious'; 'scurvy ... influenza, tuberculosis, and venereal diseases [being] among those to which the native has fallen a prey'. 87 Keeping Aborigines 'away from the townships and as far as possible from contact with white men' was their 'only hope' in the short term, but the long term demanded a different solution. 88

A Medical Mission, described by Duguid as 'a permanent hostel [with] two trained nurses in attendance somewhere in the vicinity of the Musgrave Ranges' would help to 'preserve the South Australian Aborigines from the ravages of disease and epidemic that [were] rapidly lessening their numbers' by providing medical attention for 'Aborigines from the whole of the surrounding country', including the Central Aborigines Reserve. 89 At Australia's first and 'only purely Medical Mission' to Aborigines, there would be 'no need for a padre', Duguid declared, but there was a 'definite need' for a 'medical missionary patrol'. 90 'My idea', he explained, 'is to have a fixed point, out near the Reserve, and a patrol (medical) from it'. 91 This was not a new idea. In 1933 the National Missionary Council (NMC) included the provision of a 'travelling medical service' for 'migratory Aboriginals'.

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82 'Medical Mission for Aborigines', Advertiser, 4 June 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 1, p. 46. In this article, Duguid's proposed mission is described as a 'medical mission' and a 'Christian anthropological mission'.
85 Ibid., p. 211.
86 Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', p. 9.
87 Ibid.; 'Medical Mission for the Aborigines', Advertiser, 4 June 1935.
88 Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', p. 9.
89 'Medical Mission for the Aborigines', Advertiser, 4 June 1935.
90 Ibid.
91 Duguid to Matthew, 19 April 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
outside reserves, and for Aborigines on reserves untended by missions, among its many recommendations to government. Sexton, in his review of the NMC's recommendations, likewise stressed the 'urgent need in widely-scattered areas of a travelling medical service, in order to minister to sick Aborigines'. Indeed, the AFA had, 'in some measure ... tried to supply this in Central Australia', Sexton claimed, 'by the periodic visits to scattered tribes by its missionary', Reverend E.E. Kramer.92 Duguid, who met Kramer in Alice Springs in 1934, maintained that while he and other missionaries 'working on faith lines' were 'fine people in their [own] way', they were 'incapable of anything but the simplest methods, eg. they could do nothing for gonorrhoea or tuberculosis'.93 Nothing less than a medical doctor on patrol, and two nurses trained 'in infant welfare, as well as general medical work', would suffice at Duguid's proposed Medical Mission.94

The Presbyterian Church was still not convinced. In April 1935, the executive of the Presbyterian Board of Missions requested that Duguid's committee 'give consideration to possible alternative schemes for the provision of a medical patrol', such as giving 'more medical power' to existing missions; reminded the committee of the 'present obligations of the Presbyterian Church'; and further reminded the committee that under the Constitution of the Board of Missions 'No new Mission shall be originated by a State Assembly without approval of the General Assembly', next scheduled to meet in September 1936.95 Duguid was outraged. Had the Presbyterian Church 'lost all faith, all adventure, all daring for Christ' he wondered? 'For God's sake, the Church's sake, and the sake of the Aborigines', Duguid implored the Board to 'lift [their] eyes unto the hills'. 'Rome is burning', he exclaimed, and 'I shall not wait ... for permission to go on'.96

With 'a view to gaining further information for [the] Board in presenting the case for a medical patrol', Duguid left Adelaide bound for the Musgrave Ranges on 8 June 1935.97 After nearly a week's travelling over unsealed roads, creek-beds and sandhills, Duguid and his party—R.M. Williams as guide and E.B. Robinson as mechanic—reached their destination, a partly built homestead and sheep station belonging to Stan Ferguson in the foothills of the Musgrave Ranges.98 Named 'Ernabella' after an Aboriginal man who had told the surveyor John Curruthers that 'he owned the country' in the late 1880s, Ferguson's property was the destination of several scientific expeditions in the early 1930s.99 Situated at the eastern edge of the Central Aborigines Reserve, and with
a permanent water supply which attracted Aborigines, Ernabella was also the destination of 'doggers'; white men who traded in dingo scalps, 'buying' them off Aborigines for a handful of flour and sugar, and selling them to the South Australian government for more than seven shillings per scalp. Fergusson, Duguid observed, had several doggers working the reserve for him, all of whom, including Fergusson himself, had fathered 'half-caste' children. In his travel diary, Duguid recorded the names of these white men, the number, names and ages of their children, and their various venereal diseases, where known.100

After 'five days and nights in the dogging country, where every white man, without exception, [was] living with a black woman and breeding half-castes', and where one man 'boasted he would give every lubra he came across gonorrhoea', Duguid returned to Adelaide even more convinced of the need for a medical patrol.101 In a submission to the South Australian government in August 1935, Duguid suggested a three-fold solution to the 'native problem in the far north':

1. The Aboriginal Reserve to be increased to the east as far as Ernabella, and to be Inviolable. The entire Musgraves should be in the Reserve.
2. A police patrol of the eastern border of the Reserve.
3. A medical patrol of station whites and natives, and of natives on [the] Reserve, with Oodnadatta as headquarters and depots as Marree, Ernabella and Coober Pedy.102

According to Duguid, while he was at Ernabella, Fergusson told him that if a 'police patrol of the SA Reserve ... [was] started, he would pull out'.103 This, it seems, was Duguid's intention. 'To rid [that] so-called Reserve of financially interested white men, and to keep the natives in it' was his goal, yet Duguid was no supporter of segregation. In his view, it was 'too late to leave our Aborigines alone'. By ridding the reserve of 'undesirables', Duguid sought to ensure that 'the Aborigines' early contacts [were] with the best type of white man', namely missionaries and men like himself.104

In his third and final proposal for the establishment of a mission in the Musgrave Ranges, presented to the Presbyterian Board of Missions in September 1935, Duguid brought the main elements of his earlier proposals together in a greatly enlarged scheme. Prefaced with the ASS's 'plea on behalf of the Australian Aborigines', Duguid described

the curator of mammals at the South Australian Museum, H.H. Finlayson. See Finlayson, The Red Centre: Man and Beast in the Heart of Australia, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1936.

100 Duguid, Travel Diary, 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 2, pp. 11-13.
101 Duguid to Matthew, 19 July 1935; Duguid, Travel Diary, 1935.
102 Duguid to H.S. Hudd, Commissioner of Public Works, 15 August 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10 (original emphasis).
103 Duguid, Travel Diary, 1935.
104 Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', pp. 9-10; Duguid to editor, Daily Telegraph, [May] 1936; Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II)', The Australian Intercollegian, 1 July 1940, p. 88. Duguid and others' views on segregation and inviolable reserves are examined in chapter two.
his proposed mission as the 'only hope for the natives of the Great Inland Reserve'. With 'detribalisation ... fast taking place', it would provide 'a spiritual prop—non credal—to fill the gap created by us', 'education and training for the changed conditions created by our coming', and 'medical care for their own peculiar ills and those acquired through contact with us'. With government co-operation, the mission would 'control' the dogging problem, prevent Aborigines from drifting towards white society and 'eliminate the exploitation of the native women'. 'Perhaps the most important part of the work', Duguid stressed, 'would be the medical patrol—a white man with natives guides on camels moving west and north from the depot in the Musgrave area'. Like the 'native patrols' initiated by Albrecht at Hermannsburg, the medical patrol would answer 'the curiosity of the unspoilt native, and [show] him how much better he is in his open country than in at the station as a hanger on'.  

The mission itself, Duguid explained, would 'be run on the lines of similar Christian Missions in the Australian Mandated Territory of New Guinea, the missionaries learning the language of the native and getting to understand their side of the clash of culture as well as ours'. In order to further explain and distinguish his proposal from other missions operating in Australia at that time, Duguid argued that it was 'worse than useless to attempt to civilise and Christianise [Aborigines] in one fell swoop'. Rather, he professed, 'Jesus must be lived among them before they can understand what Jesus is, and the best of their own culture must be retained'. The 'process [would] be slow', Duguid advised, but ultimately 'worthwhile', for once Aborigines had 'seen and experienced the best that the new civilisation' had to offer, 'they [would] desire it'.

105 Minutes of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia Held in Sydney, September 1936, Session Twentieth, Robert Dey, Son and Co., Sydney, 1936, pp. 98-105. Duguid presented this statement to a meeting of the Board of Missions in September 1935. The full text of Duguid's statement can also be found in Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', Aborigines Protector, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1936, pp. 11-17. Same, including J.R.B. Love's comments, can be found in Love's personal papers. See Love to Matthew, 13 July 1936, J.R.B. Love Papers, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 214, Series 1/66-82. A shorter version was submitted to the South Australian government. See Duguid to H.S. Hudd, 14 August 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

106 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', Aborigines Protector, p. 16. Duguid did not develop his ideas on the operation of missions in the Australian Mandated Territory of New Guinea. It is likely that he borrowed this idea from Charles Genders, former president of the Aborigines Protection League (APL) in South Australia. In 1927, the APL submitted a petition to the federal government calling for the creation of a Model Aboriginal State. An accompanying 'Manifesto' highlighted 'the main features of the Federal Government with regard to the Mandated Territory of New Guinea' which were 'the preservation of native laws and customs and the participation of the natives, to an increasing extent, in the government of the Territory'. In 1935, Duguid became president of the APL. See The Proposed Aboriginal State—Manifesto', [1927], Papers of Constance Terrence Cooke, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA), GRG 52/32/5. Elkin also referred to the Australian Mandated Territory of New Guinea in his A Policy for the Aborigines, St John's College Press, Morpeth, 1933, p. 1 (reprinted from Morpeth Review, October 1933). For more information on the Australian Mandated Territory of new Guinea see Christine Winter, "Looking After One's Own": The rise of Nationalism and the Politics of the Neuendettelsauer Mission in Germany, New Guinea and Australia (1928-1933)', PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 2004. The APL is examined in chapter two. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', Aborigines Protector, p. 16.
Both in terms of phraseology and ideas, it is clear that Duguid was influenced by Elkin, as McGregor has argued, but there were other influences as well. The Reverend J.R.B. Love, a fellow Presbyterian and superintendent of Kunmunya mission in the West Kimberley region, had long sought to integrate Christianity into Aboriginal culture with minimal disruption to the latter. Through Love's reports to the Board of Missions—and later through Love's highly celebrated book *Stone-age Bushmen of To-day: Life and Adventure among a Tribe of Savages in North-Western Australia* (1936)—Duguid would have known of his efforts to 'preserve tribal organisation, to conserve everything that was good in it, not to cast down and break up old beliefs and traditions, but ... to build up gradually a civilised Christianity'. Without means of employment, a Christian community, no matter how 'civilised', would not last long in the dry interior. From Albrecht Duguid learned that there was 'no end of work that the natives [could] be taught to do', such as:

the tending of cattle, sheep and goats and camels; attention to wells, and the general work of an outback station; preparation and tanning of the skins of the animals they are so expert in catching, viz., wild-dog and the kangaroo; the making of leather belts and watch-chains—pleated and plain; the collection and preparation of mulga and other woods and poker-work there on, and many other forms of handicraft.

According to Barbara Henson, Albrecht's biographer, Duguid was fascinated by the array of goods for sale at Hermannsburg in 1934, and purchased several items from the cash store, including a snake skin, two stone knives and a message stick. Together with the other influences already mentioned, including Duguid's visit to the Musgrave Ranges, Love and Albrecht's practical experience as missionaries helped to shape Duguid's thinking, making his mission the 'greatest anthropological, cultural and industrial venture' ever proposed in the interests of the South Australian Aborigines.

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111 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', *Aborigines Protector*, pp. 16-17.
113 'Plans for Native Mission Work', *News*, 10 February 1937; See also *A Mission to the Aborigines in South Australia* (statement and appeal issued by the Presbyterian Board of Missions), Brown, Prior, Anderson, Melbourne, March 1937, p. 5, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10. Apart from Love, Duguid does not appear to have been particularly influenced by other Presbyterian missionaries. He referred to the 'splendid results' achieved by [our] missionaries on the Northern coasts' in his Moderator's Address, but otherwise made no specific reference to the
ESTABLISHINGERNABELLA

Ernabella 'buffer' mission
In September 1936, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church agreed to establish Duguid's mission. In November that year, the South Australian government pledged its support, promising a subsidy of up to 1000 pounds for the mission's inauguration.\textsuperscript{114} Negotiations with Fergusson to buy Ernabella were completed in April 1937, and in May the Board of Missions sent Love, then on furlough from Kunmunya, and Dr Lewis J. Balfour to examine and report on the situation there. Although favourably disposed to Duguid's scheme, Love and Balfour disagreed with Duguid on one crucial point. Finding the health of the Aborigines to be, 'on the whole, good', Love concluded that 'the task of head of the Emabella Mission [was] not one for a doctor, but for a clerical missionary'.\textsuperscript{115} Dr Balfour agreed, arguing that 'unless the presence of the mission [drew] many sick natives from the surrounding districts ... there would not be enough work for a medical man'.\textsuperscript{116} As a consequence of Love and Balfour's reports, the Presbyterian Church appointed the Reverend Harry Taylor, a colleague of Love's from Kunmunya, the first superintendent at Ernabella.\textsuperscript{117}

Love and Balfour were not the first to comment on the relative good health of the Aborigines at Ernabella, as Duguid likely knew. A copy of the \textit{Medical Journal of Australia}, dated June 1934, and book-marked to J.B. Cleland's article on the 'The Natives of the North-West of South Australia', was among the last of Duguid's personal papers deposited at the National Library of Australia. In this article, which documented the results of physiological and pathological tests conducted among the Aborigines at Ernabella in 1933, Cleland claimed that apart from old scars and burns and minor wounds and injuries, 'the natives appear[ed] almost free from serious disease'.\textsuperscript{118} The Chief Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, M.T. McLean, having accompanied Cleland on this expedition, concurred, noting in his Annual Report for 1933 that 'all the natives inspected were in remarkably good physical condition and free from disease'.\textsuperscript{119} Thus, rather than based on empirical reality, it seems that Duguid's claim that the 'health of the natives in the northern parts of South Australia [was] serious', was based on his assessment of situation in Alice Springs, and his fear that the physical degradation he had witnessed among

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\textsuperscript{114} Rudd to Matthew, 18 November 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{116} 'Report by Dr Lewis J. Balfour' in \textit{Ernabella}, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Ernabella}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{118} Cleland, 'The Natives of the North-West of South Australia', \textit{Medical Journal of Australia}, 30 June 1934, p. 850, Duguid Papers: 3.
\textsuperscript{119} Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 'A brief outline of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia since colonisation', unpublished manuscript, 1963, p. 22, SRSA, GRG 52/22/2 (emphasis added).
Aborigines there would spread to other less settled regions. By calling his proposed mission a 'Medical Mission', it is also likely that Duguid sought to highlight the AIM's neglect of Aborigines, thereby increasing his chances of gaining full access to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest.

Duguid was nothing if not pragmatic. Without a doctor as head of the mission, it could not, in good faith, be called a Medical Mission. Shortly after Ernabella was established it became known instead as a 'Buffer Mission'. From 1938 onwards, the 'buffer' concept became the central and defining characteristic of Ernabella—both pre and post establishment—with Duguid claiming that '[f]irst and foremost Ernabella has been called into being to act as a buffer between the white settlers east of it and the Native Reserve west of it'.

Although Duguid had had such an object in mind from the outset, he had neither used the term 'buffer' to describe this aspect of the mission's work, nor viewed it as the mission's 'great purpose' until after it was established. But others had. In his Annual Report for 1936, McLean reflected that:

It appears to be impossible to stop the progress of the white race, even if it does upset the life and habits of the indigenous people. It therefore becomes our duty to buffer the contact in some way so that the clash will not only be gradual but will, in the first instance, be with persons who have the welfare and love of the Aboriginal at heart ... Doctor Charles Duguid has been urging this duty upon the people of South Australia and is endeavouring to get support for a scheme, which, gaining by the errors of missionary enterprise in the past, will serve to assist the Aboriginal to retain his virility and self-respect and save him from the general degradation which usually follows his association with white settlement.

Uncommonly sympathetic to the plight of the Aborigines in his care, McLean, it will be recalled, was the only authority to express any interest in Cleland's proposal for the establishment of a 'buffer area' in 1932. While also serving as the likely source of Hilliard, Broome and Edwards' claim that Duguid learned from the mistakes of other missionaries,
this excerpt from McLean's report, quoted in full in *Doctor and the Aborigines*, foreshadowed Duguid's recreation of Ernabella as a buffer mission.122

As the earlier titles he gave his proposed mission suggest, Duguid was aware of the power and importance of naming and cleverly capitalised on current trends. His use of the term 'buffer' closely followed the anthropologist, Donald Thomson's use of the term in his 'Recommendations of Policy in Native Affairs in the Northern Territory', submitted to the commonwealth government in 1937. A former student of Wood Jones', Thomson recommended a policy of 'absolute segregation' for Aborigines who were 'still in possession of their culture'. As a concession to missionary interests, however, Thomson suggested that mission stations could be established on the outskirts of otherwise inviolable reserves 'to act as "buffers" and to prevent the entry of outside influences into the reserve'.123

In July 1938, *The Adelaide Church Guardian* informed its readers that Ernabella was a 'Buffer Mission of the type of which Dr Donald Thomson so strongly approves'.124 With the release of the commonwealth government's policy for Northern Territory Aborigines in 1939, Duguid's timely appropriation of the buffer concept received a further boost. Known as the 'New Deal', this policy was drawn up by the Minister for the Interior, John McEwen in consultation with Elkin. Rivals for influence with government, Thomson and Elkin held different views on Aboriginal welfare, and so while McEwen indicated the Thomson's 1937 recommendations had been considered, it is clear that his advice had been rejected in favour of Elkin's more assimilatory approach.125 The one point on which McEwen's 'New Deal' came closest to Thomson's recommendations was in relation to Aborigines 'still living in [a] tribal state', towards whom it would be 'the policy of the Government to, at least for the present, leave these natives to their ancient tribal life protected ... from the intrusion of whites'.126 In keeping with Thomson's suggestion, McEwen added that 'missions or district officer stations' would be maintained on the boundaries of the reserves 'to act as *buffers* between the tribal natives and the outer civilisation'.127


125 Tigger Wise, *The Self-Made Anthropologist: A Life of A.P. Elkin*, Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1985, pp. 143-44. According to Wise, McEwen's policy 'was a document that was pure Elkin ... Dr Thomson's ideas were out'.


Following the release of this policy, Duguid went to great lengths to show that the 'lines laid down [by him] in 1935-1936 for the working of a buffer Mission Station in the Musgraves, [were] identical with those in McEwen's New Deal'. The way Duguid told it, the federal government's new policy was not only the same as his, it was his: 'The new Federal Government scheme for the untouched tribal natives is just my scheme adopted by the Presbyterian Church for Ernabella', he claimed in 1939. While the similarities between Ernabella and McEwen's policy went beyond the buffer name, the name was of central importance. By calling Ernabella a buffer mission, and claiming that he had always intended it to be so, Duguid was able to expeditiously imply that government was following his lead.

This kind of self-promotion was a key factor in Duguid's success as a champion of Aboriginal causes. The more he was viewed as a leading figure, the more his views were taken seriously and the greater his image as a leading figure became. Rarely did he miss an opportunity to emphasise the 'strong support' his mission was receiving from 'leading government authorities in native affairs, both federal and state', and 'anthropologists throughout Australia', including Wood Jones. Staunch critic of missionary endeavour though he was, Wood Jones publicly declared that Ernabella 'was likely to do more good to the natives than anything attempted previously'. Duguid's discursive reconstruction of Ernabella as a 'buffer mission' notwithstanding, Ernabella was regarded as the 'greatest step yet taken for the uplift and maintenance of the native race' because of its policy of minimal interference with tribal custom. Although formulated by Duguid, this policy was not the result of miraculous inspiration, nor was it conceived in an intellectual vacuum. Instead, as the Reverend Harry Taylor, Ernabella's first superintendent put it: 'Ernabella is a Christian mission on scientific lines, using the findings of anthropologists, doctors, educationalists, and missionaries to help in the work'.

III. 'Some day I shall be thanked for what I have done': the Smith of Dunesk Bequest controversy and Duguid's 'search for truth'

All the praise that Duguid received for Ernabella's establishment could not make up for what he perceived as a lack of appreciation on the part of the Presbyterian Church. Most other Churches, he complained in a letter to H.C. Matthew, secretary of the Board of

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128 Duguid to E.W.P. Chinnery, 1 August 1941, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
129 Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 31 May 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
130 Duguid to Mr Webster, Convener Foreign Missions Committee, Presbyterian Church, 13 February 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10; Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 9 December 1939; 'Ernabella's value - Haven of Refuge for Natives', News, 14 March 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 172.
131 Our Brothers the Aborigines (pamphlet issued by the Presbyterian Board of Missions), Brown, Prior, Anderson, December 1937, Duguid Papers: 3.
132 Reverend Harry L. Taylor to editor, Advertiser, 6 December 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 189.
Missions, would have been 'very proud that one of their members had achieved so much for the Aborigines'; not so the Presbyterian Church, at whose hands Duguid claimed to have suffered a severe 'battering' instead.\(^{133}\) Shunned by AIM members and sympathisers alike over his efforts to have the full proceeds of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest transferred to Emabella, Duguid felt that he deserved, at the very least, 'a minute of appreciation for [his] part in the starting and maintaining of Emabella'.\(^{134}\) As for the Bequest, Duguid was adamant that 'so long as Mrs Smith's money [was] diverted from the natives it [was] incumbent on [him] to go on with the fight'.\(^{135}\) Even if it meant 'washing [his] hands of the Presbyterian Church', Duguid told Matthew that he would continue to fight 'till Mrs Smith [was] honoured and Emabella benefited by the entire funds'.\(^{136}\) Once the true purpose of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest was known, returning Smith's money to 'the natives for whom it was first intended' became more than a matter ofhonouring Smith's wish; for Duguid, it became a matter of restoring honour upon the Presbyterian Church.

As Robert Scrimgeour has observed, the 'Smith of Dunesk story is one that does not reflect credit on the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland nor on the Presbyterian Church in South Australia'.\(^{137}\) Beginning in 1839, when Henrietta Smith of 'Dunesk', Lasswade, Scotland, purchased land in the new colony of South Australia with the sole intention of benefitting the Aboriginal residents there, her Bequest 'has been accompanied by frustration, discontent and controversy'.\(^{138}\) Due to delays in the survey and allocation of land in the new colony, Smith's purchase was not realised until 1852. Having meanwhile been reliably informed that the Aborigines of Australia were a dying race, incapable of survival let alone advancement, Smith signed a Deed of Gift which empowered the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland to apply the proceeds of her Bequest more generally 'towards promoting the cause of the Gospel in South Australia'.\(^{139}\) Dissatisfied with the wording of the Deed of Gift, and determined that her money be spent on Aborigines so long as Aborigines remained, Smith detailed her original intention in a letter that was recorded in the Colonial Committee minutes in December 1853:

With reference to the gift of certain lands in South Australia recently made by me to the Free Church of Scotland, I beg to state that my original design in purchasing from the Government 14 years ago six sections of land in that colony of 80 acres each, was that the annual proceeds of them might be

\(^{133}\) Duguid to Matthew, 30 August 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
\(^{134}\) Ibid.
\(^{135}\) Duguid to Moderator General, Presbyterian Church, 30 December 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\(^{137}\) Scrimgeour, *Some Scots were here*, p. 106; Scrimgeour, *Robert Mitchell: Pioneer missioner to the Inland*, Paradise, Adelaide, [1994], p. 50
\(^{138}\) Scrimgeour, *Some Scots were here*, p. 106; Scrimgeour, *Robert Mitchell*, p. 50

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entirely devoted to the education and evangelisation of the Aborigines of South Australia ... The lapse of 14 years, however, producing changes of circumstances, thereby putting an end to the plan I had formerly laid down for benefiting the parties first intended. I have thought it best, in order that the property may not be lost to the cause of Christ, to convey it over to the Free Church of Scotland, trusting and believing that they will not lose sight of the welfare of the natives for whom it was first intended, along with their other pious objects in South Australia.140

Until her death in 1871, Smith continued to insist that her money was for the 'South Australian blacks alone, not whites ... again I say, not whites'.141 Between 1861 and 1896 a small proportion was paid to an Aboriginal mission at Point McLeay and small annual grants were made to the AFA, but most of Smith's money was left unspent. By 1896, the Smith of Dunesk fund had accumulated revenue exceeding 2000 pounds which, from that time until 1937, was used exclusively for work among white settlers; first by the 'Smith of Dunesk Mission', and later by the AIM.142 With Duguid's plea to have the fund returned to the Aborigines in 1935, the 'betrayal of trust' that had characterised the Bequest's history finally ended, according to Scrimgeour: 'Gradually the percentage of the Fund allocated to Aboriginal work was increased so that from 1941 until Church Union in 1977 the South Australian Presbyterian Church gave 75% of the fund to Aboriginal work and 25% to the AIM'.143

Rather than signalling the end of the Smith of Dunesk saga, as Scrimgeour has suggested, Duguid's entry marked the beginning of a new, and perhaps even more dishonourable chapter. Until Duguid revealed the true purpose of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest in his Moderator's address in March 1935, few within the Church had known of Smith's original intention, and those who thought they knew were largely mistaken.144 Historical inaccuracies, such as that printed under the heading 'The AIM: Its Formation' in the AIM's magazine Frontier News in July-August 1934, led readers to believe that Smith had been 'thinking of the destitute religious condition of the outback settlers' when she made her gift.145 Two esteemed members of the Church, the Reverends J.R. Fiddian and J.R.B. Love, were aware of Smith's real intention prior to Duguid's revelation, however, only Love, it seems, was aware of any wrong doing. Fiddian, in his history of the life of Robert Mitchell of the Inland (1931), argued that although Smith's 'original intention had

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140 Henrietta Smith to Colonial Committee, Free Church of Scotland, 28 November 1853, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
141 Smith to Reverend Peter Hope, Secretary Colonial Committee, 30 March 1871, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
142 Scrimgeour, Some Scots were here, pp. 106-115.
143 Scrimgeour, Robert Mitchell, pp. 50, 104; Scrimgeour, Some Scots were here, p. 118.
144 Matthew to Duguid, 19 April 1935. In this letter, Matthew wrote: 'Your paragraph in your Moderational address about the Smith of Dunesk benefaction was a revelation to all of us.'
been the care of the Aborigines ... in 1853 [she] allowed a larger scope for her benefaction' which provided for work among white settlers. Love, in contrast, heartily commended Duguid for his efforts to 'right this wrong'. I have been sore about this taking of blacks' money to help the whites, who were never in so dire need, ever since I was interested in the blacks; but my small voice went no-where with effect', he told Duguid in 1936. Yet even Love was wary of criticising the AIM, describing it as 'one of the greatest forces for good in our branch of the Church'. Fiddian, a former Moderator of the Victorian Assembly, refused to even discuss the matter with Duguid. With little support from anyone within the Church, the task of challenging the AIM's right to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest was, as Matthew put it, left 'to [Duguid] to carry through'.

To correct the impression that Smith had left her money for the benefit of white settlers, Duguid's first task, as he saw it, was to prove otherwise. From the Church of Scotland he obtained a copy of Smith's letter to the Colonial Committee in 1853, and from the AFA he obtained minutes, letters and other records concerning the Bequest dating back to 1871. While Phyllis undertook the laborious task of going through these records and compiling a short history of the Bequest, Duguid concentrated his efforts on establishing the mission. He had 'no intention', he claimed in 1935, 'of revealing publicly' what Flynn had told him at their meeting a year earlier 'unless an attempt [was] made to prove a case which [did] not exist', namely that the AIM treated Aborigines. Duguid's case, maintained somewhat ingeniously, was that while the AIM provided 'a magnificent social service to the white pioneers of the Commonwealth through its wireless and its hostels', it was 'for the white people, not the natives'. Since Smith had clearly bequeathed her money for work among Aborigines, this should have been enough, Duguid believed, to prove the AIM undeserving.

There were several problems with this approach. First, as Love pointed out, Duguid entirely underestimated the AIM's 'dislike of losing [the] Smith of Dunesk money'. Second, he underestimated the amount of service the AIM provided Aborigines, even though Aborigines were not in their purview. And third, Duguid overestimated his own ability to refrain from criticising the AIM in light of Flynn's (alleged) remarks. Prior to visiting Alice Springs in 1934, Duguid had believed that the AIM 'treated all men and women, black and white', and his dismay at discovering otherwise 'saddened [him] beyond words'. While in Alice Springs, Duguid also learned that the AIM missioner in Central Australia, Kingsley Partridge, did 'not hold [Christian] services with the station folks, the

147 Love to Duguid, 20 April 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
148 Ibid.
150 Matthew to Duguid, 5 November 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
151 Duguid to George Simpson, 21 May 1935.
152 Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 27 May 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
153 Love to Duguid, 27 November 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
154 Duguid to Simpson, 21 May 1935.
fettlers or the miners'. It was this lack, according to Duguid, that accounted for the contempt in which Aborigines in Central Australia were held, for if Partridge represented Christ to the white settlers, then 'the uplift of the native would be well on the way'. Soon after his return from Alice Springs, Duguid brought his concerns before the Executive of the AIM Field Committee in Adelaide, of which he was then an associate member. Finding the policy of the AIM unchanged two years later, Duguid resigned his membership of the Field Committee, citing 'Christian principle' as his reason.

At the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in September 1936, Duguid made several attempts to air his concerns about the AIM's policy, but 'every attempt was definitely frustrated', he claimed, by AIM members and Flynn in particular who 'confused the Assembly with half-truths' and 'words creating an effect at variance with the facts'. According to Duguid, Flynn 'did everything in his power to put the people against [him] and the Mission [he was] sponsoring for the natives'. This being unsuccessful, Flynn '[t]hen tried to pose as a friend to the native', moving an amendment to the effect that the Board of Missions 'be authorised to take appropriate steps towards ensuring adequate care of Aborigines in Central Australia'. Having earlier tried and failed to move a similar amendment compelling the AIM hostel at Alice Springs to 'admit or treat anyone in medical need, irrespective of colour', Duguid viewed Flynn's posturing with scorn. It was, he declared, yet another example of 'the Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde nature of the man'.

Twice thwarted through official channels, Duguid tried a different approach, this time penning his grievances in article form. Entitled the 'The Clash of Cultures in Central Australia and the Church's Attitude', Duguid's article, published in the Presbyterian Messenger on 25 December 1936, sent shock-waves through the Church. 'If Jesus were alive today in Central Australia', Duguid boldly asserted, 'He could not be admitted to...

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155 Ibid.
156 Duguid to Chapman, 7 July 1936 and R.C. Racklyeft, Convenor AIM Field Committee to Duguid, 29 July 1936 and Duguid to Racklyeft, 6 August 1936, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. Duguid joined the executive of the South Australian AIM Field Committee in 1933, but attended very few meetings. See Minutes of the AIM Field Committee, May 1933 to July 1936, Records of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, South Australian Assembly, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, SRG 123/14.
157 Duguid to McKenzie, 11 February 1937. For an alternative reading of this meeting, see McPheat, 'The Life and Work of John Flynn', pp. 369-70. According to McPheat, Duguid's 'attack ... needled [Flynn] into one of the most spirited speeches of his career. He pointed out that the Flying Doctor Service treated twice as many blacks as whites, and quoted the numbers of Aborigines treated in AIM hostels'.
158 Duguid to McKenzie, 11 February 1937; Minutes of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, Sydney, 1936, pp. 64.
161 Reverend A.S. Houston warned the AIM about Duguid's article. He wrote: 'There is a nasty article to come out in the Presbyterian [Messenger], written by Dr. Duguid, and criticising the AIM again ... I tried to have it kept out, but was unsuccessful'. A.S. Houston, extract, 11 December 1936, AIM Collection, Box 196, Folder 6. See also John Cormous, editor Messenger, to Duguid, 26 January 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
our hostel at Alice Springs because of the darker colour of His skin'. It was difficult to imagine anything more 'contrary to the spirit of Christ' than the AIM's refusal to admit Aborigines to its hostels, Duguid argued, yet nothing was being done to prevent it: 'Surely to a Christian this ban against colour is a deep humiliation'. Citing case after case of the AIM's discrimination against Aborigines, and failure to carry out 'definitely religious work' among the white population of the Inland, Duguid called on the Church to act. The AIM, he declared, 'is the responsibility of the whole Church', not just AIM members and certainly not Flynn:

The Church must see to it that the love of Jesus for all men is a living factor in the work of our Inland Mission. If we do not abide in His word the truth is not in us as a Church, and we choose the shackles of this earth in preference to the glorious power of being free.162

What Duguid wanted was 'a full and impartial inquiry into the whole work of the AIM, beginning with the Board in Sydney and extending to the limits of the Service'.163 What he got was a severe reprimand from the highest levels of the Church, threats of legal action and ridicule from AIM members and supporters.164

Duguid was unrepentant. 'I stand by every word I have written', he told the Reverend John McKenzie, Moderator General of the Presbyterian Church in 1937,

and I am prepared to give evidence in any Court of the Church. So long as I am a member of the Presbyterian Church, I am not prepared to stand by and see the Church brought to nought by the hypocrisy that is being perpetrated by certain members of the AIM.165

Flynn viewed the publication of Duguid's article as an 'unfortunate lapse into 'yellow journalism' in which one part is encouraged to irritate another—right or wrong being irrelevant for the time being—in order to provoke a controversy which will provide a tonic for weary readers'.166 Flynn's cynicism, borne out in the letters column of the Messenger, found some respondents claiming that Duguid had been the unsuspecting victim of 'a mighty "leg-pull", in the true and accepted spirit of the inland', and others that Duguid was clearly 'ignorant' of the duties of the AIM, as opposed to the Board of Missions; the

163 Duguid to McKenzie, 11 February 1937.
164 John Flynn, Memorandum—'Dr Duguid's Attack on AIM', 31 December 1936, AIM Collection, Box 196, Folder 6; R.G. Macintyre, Memorandum [re: Dr Duguid], 2 February 1937, AIM Collection, Box 196, Folder 6.
165 Duguid to McKenzie, 11 February 1937.
166 John Flynn, Memorandum—'Dr Duguid's Attack on AIM'.

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former being for white people only, and the latter for the 'blacks'.167 Perhaps more
damning than Duguid's article, however, were the letters of support received by a former
AIM worker, Jean Finlayson, who described Duguid as 'the only man I have known who
has had the courage to fearlessly declare what we all know to be the absolute truth
regarding the natives, the white man, and the AIM'.168 The final word was left to R. Wilson
Macaulay, Clerk of the General Assembly, who stated that since the matters Duguid
referred to in his article were now 'sub judice'—meaning under review—'the discussion
should cease'.169

Duguid's efforts to reform the AIM for the 'glory of the Church', the Aborigines
and the white settlers of the Inland, did nothing to help, and much to hinder, his efforts to
wrest the Smith of Dunesk Bequest from that organisation. As the Reverend J.
MacDonald Webster, general secretary of the Church of Scotland's Overseas Department,
pot it:

I do not ... think that you will get very far ahead by denouncing the AIM in
any public way. Whatever may be your own opinion about its operations or
the line of work it has been pursuing in recent years, we cannot get away from
the fact that it is an institution held in the highest regard by many and by very
influential people not only in Australia, but in many other parts of the
world.170

Although sympathetic to Duguid's cause, MacDonald Webster was convinced that only
'part of the revenue from [Smith's] Bequest [could] be applied for the welfare of the
natives'. This, he maintained, was clearly appointed by the final line in Smith's 1853 letter
which referred to 'other pious objects in South Australia'. What proportion of the Bequest
should go to each, MacDonald Webster initially left to Duguid and the Smith of Dunesk
Committee in Adelaide to decide, asking only that he be kept informed of their decision.171

Most of the members of the Smith of Dunesk Committee were also members of
the AIM; in light of Duguid's 'Dan-to-Beer-Sheba article of denunciation in the
Messenger', their sympathies did not lie with Ernabella.172 In 1937 the Smith of Dunesk
Committee granted 20 pounds to Ernabella, an amount equalling less than 10 percent of
the total funds available, with the AIM receiving the remainder. As a consequence of
Duguid's constant agitation, Ernabella received 50 pounds in 1938, and 75 pounds in

167 W.T. Alexander to editor, Messenger, 8 January 1937, p. 465, AIM Collection, Box 196, Folder
6; Wicking to editor, Messenger, 15 January 1937.
168 Jean Finlayson to editor, Messenger, 8 January 1937, p. 465, AIM Collection, Box 196, Folder
169 R. Wilson Macaulay to editor, Messenger, 12 February 1937, p. 545, Duguid Papers: 1, Series
4.
170 MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 7 October 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
171 MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 24 July 1935, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
172 John Flynn, Memorandum — 'Dr Duguid's Attack on AIM'.

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1939.\(^{173}\) In a move bitterly resented by the Reverend David Chapman, acting convener of the Smith of Dunesk Committee and deputy chairman of the AIM State Council, the Church of Scotland sold the Smith of Dunesk lands in 1939 'without either seeking advice ... from the Smith of Dunesk Committee ... or notifying [them]'.\(^{174}\) It was not losing the property which angered Chapman, for annual revenue remained assured, it was losing what he perceived as his Committee's control over the Smith of Dunesk Bequest. Therein lay the problem, according to MacDonald Webster, for Chapman had clearly 'failed to grasp' that the whole funds and land connected with the Smith of Dunesk Bequest were under the administration of the Church of Scotland.\(^{175}\) Rather than the Church of Scotland 'interfering' with Smith of Dunesk affairs, MacDonald Webster made it clear that the interference 'was solely on [Chapman's] part, for ... one does not interfere in one's own affairs'.\(^{176}\) Reasserting the Church of Scotland's right to allocate the Smith of Dunesk funds, MacDonald Webster instructed Chapman's Committee to pay equal amounts to Ernabella and the AIM in 1940, and three-quarters to Ernabella in the following year.\(^{177}\)

Chapman's attempts to censure the Church of Scotland over its sale of the Smith of Dunesk lands may have inadvertently tipped the scale in Ernabella's favour, but it was Duguid who left MacDonald Webster in no doubt as to Chapman's 'dishonourable' character, his Committee's bias towards the AIM—'the majority of its members are also members of the AIM committee'—and the scare tactics Chapman employed to prevent Ernabella from receiving 'a fair hearing'.\(^{178}\) Duguid saw it as his 'duty' to communicate material which 'would assist the Church of Scotland in its control of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest', but it was more than duty that prompted him to write as often, and in as much detail, as he did.\(^{179}\) For Duguid, it was personal. Chapman stood between him and his goal of gaining the full amount of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest for Ernabella, and he seemed to delight in doing so, deliberately withholding vital communications from the Church of Scotland, blocking Duguid's motions and using 'cruel exaggeration to frighten members who don't know the facts'.\(^{180}\) A mutual acquaintance told Duguid that Chapman 'knew the Smith of Dunesk money would eventually go to Ernabella', but that he was 'going to prevent it as long as [he] could'.\(^{181}\)


\(^{174}\) *Minutes of Proceedings of the South Australian Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, March 1939*, p. 40.

\(^{175}\) MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 25 April 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.

\(^{176}\) MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 21 March 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.

\(^{177}\) MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 3 September 1937; MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 4 July 1939; MacDonald Webster to Duguid, 4 March 1941, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

\(^{178}\) Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 27 February 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9; Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 19 March 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

\(^{179}\) Duguid to Mr Martin, Clerk of Assembly, 20 March 1941, Duguid Papers: 3.

\(^{180}\) Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 19 March 1940.

\(^{181}\) Duguid to Chapman, 10 March 1941.
Following the decision to pay three-quarters of the fund to Ernabella, Chapman
drew the Church of Scotland’s attention to ‘the great amount of service which the AIM
[was] rendering to the Aborigines in South Australia’, and protested that:

at least half of the Smith of Dunesk income should be paid to the AIM to
partially cover the cost of the service which has been rendered for many years
in the past, and is still being carried on irrespective of the fact that the Smith
of Dunesk money has been taken from the AIM.\textsuperscript{182}

This was the challenge that Duguid had been waiting for; a direct falsehood that he could
authoritatively deny. Much of the ensuing debate came to centre on the AIM hostel at
Oodnadatta, recently renovated so as to better accommodate Aborigines. Although treating
Aborigines was precisely what Duguid claimed he wanted the AIM to do, their apparent
acquiescence in this regard seriously undermined his main argument for transferring the
full proceeds of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest to Ernabella.\textsuperscript{183}

Assuming a position of moral superiority, Duguid insisted that no-one rejoiced
more than he ‘that the Inland Mission ... [was] now giving more heed to such Aborigines
as may require the help of our Hostels, but it was not always so’:

\begin{quote}
Let us thank God that a better understanding is coming between Aborigines
and whites, and between those in the Church who care for them, but let us
cease to make claims for a past of which we should be ashamed.\textsuperscript{184}
\end{quote}

According to Duguid, the AIM hostel at Oodnadatta received 100 pounds per year from
the South Australian government for the treatment of ‘indigent patients, white or black’, and
an extra 20 pounds per year from the Aborigines Department. The other AIM hostels in
South Australia received similar grants and also charged white employers for treatments
provided their Aboriginal workers.\textsuperscript{185} That Chapman would claim Smith of Dunesk
money for services to Aborigines that were ‘being fully paid already’ was inconceivable to
Duguid, particularly given Ernabella mission’s precarious financial position. Whereas the
AIM was ‘flooded with funds’, finding the 1500 pounds per year that it cost to run
Ernabella was a constant struggle.\textsuperscript{186} Moreover, whereas the AIM was principally for the
white people, and only incidentally for the Aborigines, Duguid argued that Ernabella was

\textsuperscript{182} Minutes of Proceedings of the South Australian Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of
Australia, March 1941, p. 45.

\textsuperscript{183} Duguid to Matthew, 30 August 1939. In this letter, Duguid complained that the AIM’s new
accommodation for ‘natives and half-castes at Oodnadatta’ made his work ‘with the Church of
Scotland very difficult re: Smith of Dunesk grant’.


\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., pp. 6-11.

\textsuperscript{186} Duguid to MacDonald Webster, 19 March 1940; Duguid, ‘Smith of Dunesk Report’.
'fulfilling Mrs Smith's wishes to the full' by 'carrying out the work [she] envisaged ... when she made her gift'.

Using Smith's own words to reinforce his position, Duguid maintained that the 'work of Ernabella [was] purely for the education and evangelisation of the Aborigines of South Australia'. He even went so far as to claim that Ernabella, on occasion, treat[ed] white settlers' as well, thereby showing that the 'other pious objects' mentioned in Smith's letter were not forgotten. Considering how poorly the AIM fared in comparison, Duguid felt confident that Ernabella would be granted the full proceeds of the Bequest, there being 'no other course', in his view, 'compatible with honour'. Yet honour was precisely what Duguid risked in describing Ernabella as Smith's ideal mission. The emphasis he placed on 'education and evangelisation', particularly the latter, found no parallel in his requests for funding from government and other sources, in which he described the 'chief phase' of the mission's work as medical and/or its buffer effect.

Although funding was a major and ongoing concern at Ernabella, the lengths Duguid went to to secure the full proceeds of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest were, in many ways, disproportionate to the anticipated end result. Had Ernabella been granted the full proceeds, it would have amounted to an annual payment of between 200-250 pounds; certainly enough to relieve some of the Church's financial burden, but not enough to make a dramatic difference at the mission. Duguid's relentless pursuit of the full amount, even after Ernabella was granted three-quarters of the total, suggests that for him, the battle was about more than money, or even honour. In the end, it was about winning. Having denounced the AIM, its founder and its members, and subjected the Presbyterian Church to intense scrutiny, both historically and in the present, Duguid was determined to prove his cause right; to win at almost any cost, be it peace within the Church or his own spiritual life. 'Some day', Duguid declared, 'I shall be thanked for what I have done in this search for truth. And I am prepared to wait.'

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189 Duguid to Moderator General, Presbyterian Church, 6 February 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
190 Duguid to Senator Foll, Minister for the Interior, 29 May 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
191 'Some day', Duguid declared, 'I shall be thanked for what I have done in this search for truth. And I am prepared to wait.'
192 Duguid to Chapman, 10 March 1941.
193 Duguid to Martin, 20 March 1941.
The praise that Duguid thought he deserved for honouring Smith's wishes never came; Ernabella never received any more than three-quarters of the annual revenue of the Bequest; and despite his threats to do so, Duguid did not leave the Presbyterian Church. His fellowship with the Church, sorely missed during this controversy, was too important to him. While it could be argued that gaining three-quarters of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest for Ernabella was a victory in itself, it was not the victory that Duguid wanted; in his eyes it was a defeat. Unable to reconcile his greatest success—the establishment of Ernabella—with this defeat, Duguid obscured the link between them by leaving his Moderator's address out of his autobiography. As this chapter has shown, the implications of that omission went far beyond such a purpose: it enabled the myth of Duguid's 'visionary' establishment of Ernabella to develop. In reality, had Duguid not complained about Flynn in a letter to Mary Bennett, and had Bennett not responded with reference to the Smith of Dunesk Bequest, Ernabella—'the outstanding Christian Mission to Aborigines'—might never have been established (see Plate 3). 193

193 Dunstan, Felicia, p. 112.
Next to the establishment of Ernabella mission, Charles Duguid is best known for the post-war campaign he led against the British and Australian governments' plan to test rockets in Central Australia. Duguid had two main objections to the rocket range; its route through the Central Aborigines Reserve and the threat it posed to the cause of world peace. For the sake of the latter, Duguid was opposed to the testing of rockets anywhere in Australia, or elsewhere in the world. For the sake of the former, however, Duguid was prepared to accept an alternative rocket trajectory, one that bypassed the Central Aborigines Reserve and left the 1000 or more 'tribal' Aborigines who lived there 'unmolested'. Asked in 1947 if he knew of anywhere that rockets could be tested without risk to Aborigines or whites, Duguid replied that 'there [was] no place in the whole wide world where these tests [could] be conducted without risk to all humanity'. His personal view, unchanged throughout the year-long controversy, was that there was little hope for all humanity if Aborigines suffered as a result of the rocket tests. Thus his rallying cry, 'Hands off the Aboriginal Reserve'.

Duguid's battle against the rocket range was foremost a battle to save the Central Aborigines Reserve. But from what? According to government, the military and Professor A.P. Elkin, Australia's leading authority on Aboriginal issues, the risk to Aborigines from either falling projectiles or contact with whites was 'negligible', and could be adequately guarded against by the appointment of patrol officers. Moreover, apart from allowing a
few small areas to be excised for the building of observation stations, it was not proposed that the land's legal status as a 'reserve' be altered. Against this, Duguid and his fellow protesters argued that any violation of the reserve would spell disaster for the Aborigines who lived there. 'Why was the Aboriginal reserve chosen', Duguid repeatedly asked: 'Why pick the reserve set aside for the welfare of the tribal Aborigines?'

Duguid suspected, and indeed alleged, that government had chosen the reserve in spite of 'the fact that the whole life of a maximum number of Aborigines [would] be completely upset'. However, the official answer was disarmingly simple. The route through the reserve was 'both the best available in Australia and most suitable for the project'. In the eyes of government, the media and the majority of white Australians, the Central Aborigines Reserve was 'just what the rocket doctor ordered'—dry, desolate and largely devoid of people (see Plate 4). Duguid could not, and would not, accept this view. 'The reserve, be it noted, is not a playground', he declared: 'It is the home country of a people, their all'. As well as fighting to save the reserve, Duguid was striving to save a people and a way of life for which he felt personally responsible. 'I know that country. I know its people', he insisted, and 'I am not prepared to accept the preventable death of my friends in the north for any reason': 'I am not prepared to see them sacrificed'. For nearly a decade, Ernabella mission had served as 'a carefully planned first contact' for the 'tribal' Aborigines of the Central Aborigines Reserve, 'protecting [them] ... from a too sudden introduction' to modern civilisation. That government would knowingly 'wreck the whole scheme' by firing rockets into the reserve, and by allowing military personnel, scientists and other observers to enter the reserve, struck Duguid as 'madness'; it could not be condoned. Yet despite his efforts, and those of the hundreds who joined him in opposition to the project, the rocket range went ahead as planned.

This chapter has three parts. With a view to understanding Duguid's fierce and unrelenting opposition to the rocket range, the first section examines his views on the importance of land to Aboriginal people. The second section, an overview of the work of

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6 Duguid to editor, *Advertiser*, 22 August 1946; Duguid to Dedman, Minister for Defence, 6 November 1946, Papers of Dr Charles Duguid, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 387 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 2), Series 1.
7 Duguid to editor, *Advertiser*, 9 December 1946.
12 Duguid, *The Rocket Range Aborigines and War*, The Rocket Range Protest Committee, Melbourne, 1947, p. 11; Duguid, 'Should Rocket Bomb Tests be held in Central Australia'.
Ernabella mission during its first ten years, serves a similar purpose. As will become apparent, understanding what Duguid was fighting for, as well as against, helps to sharpen the contours of the rocket range debate, enabling its hitherto under-examined dimensions to come to the fore. The most significant of these, I argue, came with the Australian Guided Projectile Committee's startling prognosis in March 1947 that 'detribalisation of the Aborigine [was] inevitable' and could be hastened without negative effect.\(^{14}\) Given Duguid's firm belief in the necessity for gradual change, this announcement served to highlight the difference between his and governments' approach to Aboriginal welfare. More importantly, it reflected the changing direction of Aboriginal administration in post-war Australia, and revealed the extent to which Duguid's thinking about Ernabella was out of touch with government objectives. In the final section, Duguid's opposition to the rocket range is contrasted with Elkin's support for the project; a climactic battle of the 'experts' that Duguid lost, yet emerged victorious in other ways, his reputation as an uncompromising advocate on behalf of Aborigines greatly enhanced as a result.\(^{15}\)

I. 'Their future depends on land'

Like many advocates on behalf of Aborigines, Duguid was preoccupied with the future. At its core, his activism was directed towards preventing extinction and securing a future for the Aborigines of Australia. 'The past [should] not be dwelt on', he argued, 'and the present [should] be examined chiefly with a view to the future development of the race'.\(^{16}\) Duguid's numerous publications on the topic—including 'Our Natives and Their Future' (1938), *The Future of the Aborigines of Australia* (1941), 'The Future of the Aborigines' (1944), and 'The Aborigines' Hope of a Future' (1946)—all carried the same important message: 'The future of the Aborigines of Australia depends on land'.\(^{17}\) But not just any land. According to Duguid, it had to be:

1. their father's country, for all the principal features of it are related to their life and well-being. The tribal organisation is bound up in their tribal territory, which must remain theirs, and only theirs, if they are to live as tribal natives.\(^{18}\)

\(^{14}\) 'Report by the Australian Committee on Guided Projectiles on the Welfare of Aborigines Located Within the Range Area', 1 February 1947, NAA: A816/1, 12/301/74; Dedman, 'The Long Range Weapons Project', 10 March 1947.

\(^{15}\) Duguid considered himself an 'expert' on the Central Aborigines Reserve. See Duguid to Dedman, 6 November 1946. In this letter, Duguid wrote: 'I can assure you that whoever told you that there are very few natives in the Reserve is not an expert on the Reserve'.


The phrase—'if they are to live as tribal natives'—was the key. As will be discussed in chapter four, Duguid believed that there were three main 'types', or groups, of Aborigines; 'tribal', 'detribalised' and 'half-caste'. Once dispossessed of their land, 'tribal' Aborigines became 'detribalised', according to Duguid, and eventually became 'half-caste'. At the 1937 Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities, J.A. Carrodus, Minister for the Interior, advanced a similar argument: 'Ultimately, if history is repeated, the full bloods will become half-castes', he declared.19 However, whereas Carrodus and his fellow Conference delegates sought to harness this process by means of racial absorption and 'eventually forget that there ever were any Aborigines in Australia', Duguid wanted a future with 'tribal' Aborigines in it.20

Duguid's understanding of the vital importance of land to 'tribal' Aborigines owed much to Mary Bennett's influential monograph *The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being* (1930). According to Bennett, 'the whole culture and social organisation of the Aboriginals as well as their material welfare [was] based on land ownership':

On land ownership rests the title to hunt for a living. On land ownership is based the peace of the tribes. On land ownership is constructed the social organisation with its geometrical design of marriage laws and inheritance, with its obligations and privileges. On land ownership is founded the right to perform ceremonies for increasing the supply of animals and plants. Parted from their land the race dies as surely as an uprooted tree.21

Echoing Bennett, Duguid argued that 'tribal' Aborigines lived 'healthily and happily under a social organisation ... [that was] founded on the ownership of land':

The country owned by a tribe [is] the centre of its being. Their religious rites, the laws of inheritance and food gathering, their traditions and customs are centred in their own particular country. Banishment from it immediately detribalises them.22

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Like Bennett, Duguid believed that Aborigines 'deprived of their land, and their living, must in the course of time die'. Before death, however, came detribalisation; a state of utter 'bewilderment and 'degradation' that Duguid aimed to prevent by helping Aborigines to retain their tribal lands.

During the 1930s and 1940s, Duguid's strongest criticisms of Australia's governments, both federal and state, were over land. Rather than take steps to 'preserve the race', Duguid 'really believe[d] that at heart the Australian Government would like to see the Aborigine die out and so relieve it of its responsibility'. He claimed to be 'in possession of facts which prove[d] that the finding of gold and the fattening of bullocks [was] ... considered by some Governments of more value to Australia than the preservation of her Aboriginal people'. Witness, he repeatedly argued, the devastation wrought by the alienation of the Aboriginal reserve at Tennant's Creek when payable gold was found there in 1934:

Their beautiful waterhole is now used for washing gold and their corroboree ground is a series of mining leases. They have been transferred to new ground, badly stocked with game and poorly watered in comparison with their age-old territory.

Separated 'from their ceremonial grounds and deprived of their tjuringas', the Warramunga tribe, formerly of Tennant's Creek, had been 'detribalise[d] ... by Act of Parliament', according to Duguid; 'sacrificed' in pursuit of gold, just as others of their kind had been, and were 'still being sacrificed for the fattening of bullocks'.

Aborigines had 'no rights, no voice and no security of tenure of land', for their reserves 'exist[ed] only on paper and could be altered or done away with at the stroke of a pen at Canberra'. To white Australians—the 'voters of the Commonwealth'—Duguid charged the responsibility of altering this 'inhuman situation'.

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24 'Detribalisation' is an anthropological term that pre-supposes a static and unchanging 'tribal life'. As McGregor has argued, 'in the anthropological imagination, [cultures were] real things, which people either did or did not possess'. McGregor, Imagined Destinies, p. 231.
26 Duguid, 'The Aborigines of Australia', typescript article for Venture, February 1940.
29 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', The Australian Intercollegian, 1 May 1940, p. 46; Duguid, 'Moderator's Address', p. 7. See also Bennett, The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being, p. 134.
30 Duguid, 'The Aborigines of Australia', typescript article for Venture, February 1940.
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your tribal natives you must force your Governments to declare all existing reserves inviolate, and you must do it this year—now', he declared:

The native people where not being exploited are not dying out ... But if White Australia is going to banish the natives from a reserve when gold is found there ... and if the white man is going to be allowed to run bullocks on every blade of grass left in the Interior, the day of highly intelligent native tribes will fast close in to the night of their extinction.\(^{31}\)

In calling for the creation of inviolable reserves, Duguid joined a chorus of campaigners—humanitarians, missionaries, anthropologists and others—whose commitment to inviolability was tempered by the type of violation they proposed. The National Missionary Council, for example, wanted inviolable reserves with missions on them; anthropologists such as Frederic Wood Jones believed that scientists had a 'duty' to study Aborigines on otherwise inviolable reserves; Duguid argued that regular missionary patrols were necessary to prevent Aborigines from leaving their reserves.\(^{32}\)

Although equally flawed, Duguid's support for inviolable reserves differed from other campaigners; it was also longer lasting. As Bain Attwood has observed of two Victorian based campaigners, Amy Brown and Helen Ballie, their focus on inviolability and all that it entailed—segregation and protection of Aborigines on large reserves—began to shift in the mid 1930s (just as Duguid was entering the field) towards policies which emphasised 'assimilation and adaptation and development'. The catalyst, according to Attwood, was A.P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, whose call for a 'positive policy' from 1934 increasingly influenced humanitarian demands.\(^{33}\) In Elkin's view, it was not enough to declare an area an Aboriginal reserve and expect the Aborigines to remain there. Whether inviolable or not, Elkin argued that:

natives will not remain permanently on the Reserves, for they are gradually attracted away to white settlements of which they hear through their kin in neighbouring tribes, and as the years go by, the younger folk lose the attachment for the old country; then as the tribe in the settled country dies out,

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they take its place, work for, or hang round, the white man, and in their turn
die out.34

Elkin's 'positive' alternative was to suggest that:

if there were established on each large reserve an institution, practical,
educational and religious in nature, which would give the Aborigines a new
interest in life, they would not be so readily lured away to white settlements off
the Reserve, but rather would themselves be the cause of other natives being
attracted to it.35

As influential and important as Elkin was, Duguid drew inspiration and ideas from other
anthropologists and campaigners who thought differently from Elkin, with the result that
Duguid supported the establishment of missions near, but not on reserves; inviolability,
but not segregation; Aboriginal development and preservation.

Duguid's linking of detribalisation with degradation and death resonated with
Wood Jones' principal argument in support of inviolable reserves. According to Wood
Jones, '[d]etribalisation [was] the first step towards certain racial death'.36 Like Duguid,
Wood Jones believed that Aborigines could be saved from this fate by the establishment
of large inviolable reserves. Here their views departed, however, for whereas Duguid saw
dispossession as the main cause of detribalisation, Wood Jones blamed contact with white
civilisation: Aborigines, he argued, were 'inevitably doomed to death once contact [had]
been made with our alien culture'.37 As Russell McGregor has explained, Wood Jones 'did
not mean that such people would leave no progeny at all; rather, that with them the line of
racial purity would terminate'.38 Thus, it was to prevent the contact that led to
detribalisation, and ultimately to the production of half-castes, that Wood Jones stressed
the need for inviolable reserves; locales where the cultural integrity and racial purity of
'uncontaminated' Aborigines could be preserved. While Duguid agreed that contact could
be disastrous, even fatal, for Aborigines, he argued that 'degradation [resulted] from too
sudden contact with white civilisation'; not all contact with all whites was fatal.39 It was a
subtle, yet important distinction, for it meant that Duguid could reject segregation—the
premise underlying Wood Jones' support for inviolable reserves—without rejecting the
need for inviolable reserves, or dooming the Aborigines to extinction.

34 Elkin, 'The Aborigines, Our National Responsibility', The Australian Quarterly, 14 September
1934, p. 56.
35 Ibid., p. 57.
36 Frederic Wood Jones, Australia's Vanishing Race, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1934, p. 39.
37 Ibid.
38 McGregor, Imagined Destines, p. 226.
39 Duguid, 'The Natives on the Edge of Our Civilisation' (1943), in C. Duguid, The Aborigines of
Australia: Broadcasts and an Address, p. 8 (emphasis added).
In Duguid's view, segregation, or the "leave-them-alone" policy, ceased to be practical politics the moment our forefathers decided to inhabit Australia, not least because 'contact with our civilisation [was] in the end inevitable', but because it amounted to an abrogation of responsibility.\footnote{Duguid, \textit{The Future of the Aborigines of Australia}, 1941, p. 11; Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II), \textit{The Australian Intercollegian}, 1 July 1940, p. 88.} According to Duguid, the grave unwisdom of segregation was 'painfully demonstrated' to him following his trip to the Petermann Ranges with T.G.H. Strehlow, Deputy Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory and Pastor F.W. Albrecht, superintendent of Hermannsburg mission in 1939.\footnote{Duguid, \textit{The Future of the Aborigines of Australia}, 1941, p. 11.} Where as late as 1936 an estimated 500 Aborigines were believed to have lived, they found 26 Aborigines only; 'five men, eight women, one old woman and twelve children'.\footnote{Barbara Henson, \textit{A Straight-out Man: F.W. Albrecht and Central Australian Aborigines}, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1992, p. 131; Duguid, \textit{The Future of the Aborigines of Australia}, 1941, p. 11.} A three year drought had forced the people to move away in search of food and water, and many, Duguid reported, had died of starvation. "These people died not of disease", he stressed, 'but of starvation in Australia'.\footnote{Duguid, 'Ernabella Patrol', 1939, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA) GRG 52/1/1939/52; Duguid, \textit{Ernabella: The Medical Patrol, 1939}, Presbyterian Board of Missions, Melbourne, 1939, p. 9-12.} On his return to Adelaide, Duguid was appalled to find schemes to control the growth of wheat being discussed in daily newspapers. 'We in the South with a glut of food had left the natives in the Petermanns alone—left them to die of starvation', he exclaimed: 'No-one of that 1939 patrol advocates that the natives are best left entirely alone'.\footnote{Duguid, \textit{The Future of the Aborigines of Australia}, 1941, p. 11.} Yet this was precisely what the concept of inviolability, as applied to Aboriginal reserves, meant, according to Cecil Cook, Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory from 1927 to 1939.

In a lengthy internal report headed 'Aboriginal Missions', Cook defined inviolability as the attempt to 'isolate the Aboriginal from extraneous influence of all kinds so that he may continue to live in accordance with native customs, completely unaffected by the development of a progressive alien civilisation across the border'. The effect of such a reservation', Cook observed:

is to give an area of land the status of a sanctuary, within the boundaries of which the Aboriginal lives and moves and has his being as a museum specimen, with the difference that theoretically there should be no observers to study him.\footnote{Cecil Cook, 'Aboriginal Missions', 2 April 1938, NAA: F1, 1944/193 Part 1.}
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bitterly controversial matters as ritual rape ... [and] tribal murder'. The inviolable reserve was an 'illusion', according to Cook; 'at once undesirable and impracticable', 'ineffective if not actually noxious' and a 'menace' to national security. A better model, in his view, was the 'controlled' reserve, which would 'regulate the tribal life within the reserve with a view to the Aboriginal's ultimate adaptation to admission to the new advanced civilisation'. Under Cook's system of 'controlled reserves', missions that submitted 'voluntarily to strict government control' would be responsible for supervising this transition.46

Like Elkin, Cook wanted reserves to 'be used as training grounds for the Aboriginal'.47 However, as McGregor has argued: 'Unlike Elkin, Cook openly avowed that the transformation to Western civilisation must be total, obliterating all traces of Aboriginal culture'.48 As Cook put it:

If ... we resort to interference, we must recognise that there can be no compromise. The policy of the missionary ... that interference should be as far as possible compatible with the retention of tribal organisation and unobjectionable native custom is fallacious. Once having interfered, we must admit the necessity of proceeding step by step until [the] existing social organisation has been completely demolished and replaced by a new structure adapting the Aboriginal to an economic life in the white community.49

Although Cook's views on the proper management and role of Aboriginal reserves differed in several important respects from Elkin's, the similarities were enough for McGregor to align them, together with other critics of segregation, under the heading 'Elevation by Reservation'. In Imagined Destines: Aboriginal Australi ans and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939, McGregor likewise aligned the supporters of segregation, including Wood Jones and his former student Donald Thomson, under the heading 'Preservation by Reservation'. Thus juxtaposed, the differences of opinion and approach within these two groups paled next to those between them, creating an impression of polarity at variance with Duguid's reality.

As will become apparent, Cook's program for missions on reserves was the complete antithesis of Duguid's policy at Ernabella, yet Duguid considered Elkin his ally and one of the Aborigines' 'greatest friends'.50 He also admired Wood Jones and Thomson—'two other noted Australian anthropologists'—for their tireless devotion to the Aboriginal cause.51 The greatest difference between Duguid and the men in McGregor's

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
49 Cook, 'Aboriginal Missions'.
51 Ibid.
study was that Duguid did not see reserves only, or even mainly, as administrative tools. They were not simply a means to a bureaucratically determined end, be it preservation or elevation. Rather, Duguid saw reserves as land that belonged, or should belong, to the Aborigines, not just until such time as they were ready to join white society, but forever. 'Secure the land, that still is his, for all time', Duguid implored, 'otherwise he will soon die out'.52 Duguid held 'very strongly that all areas marked on the map of Australia as Aboriginal reserves should be sacro-sanct to the natives', meaning inviolate and irrevocable.53 Although inviolability implied a kind of segregation, Duguid could support it without supporting a policy of segregation because he believed that Aborigines would choose to stay on their own land—and away from contact with 'undesirable' whites—if the amenities of civilisation were brought to them via the establishment of 'buffer missions' outside reserves like Ernabella. What Duguid wanted, therefore, was preservation on reserves and elevation off them; the best of both worlds, leaving Aborigines free to travel in between as they pleased.

'A Model Mission'

Among the most important influences on Duguid's thinking about Aboriginal reserves was the Aborigines Protection League (APL), an Adelaide-based organisation that Duguid joined, and became president of, in 1935. The APL was formed ten years earlier to give organisational support to its founder, Charles Genders, whose idea of a Model Aboriginal State still permeated the League's philosophy when Duguid took over as president.54 In 1927 the APL submitted a petition and manifesto to the Commonwealth House of Representatives that called for:

>a large area of land—say Arnhem Land—[to] be handed back to the natives now on it, and that they be told it is to be their own country, to be managed by themselves (with such assistance as is necessary) according to their own laws and customs but prohibiting cannibalism and cruel rites. In other words, a separate Aboriginal State, with such provisions in its Constitution for a severe penalty on any unauthorised white person entering it.55

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The APL's petition was not successful. On the grounds that Aborigines had 'no conception of democracy as understood by civilised nations' and could not be 'expected to develop qualities that they [had] never so far displayed', J.W. Bleakley, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, rejected the Model Aboriginal State idea as 'impractical'.

Bleakley's low opinion of Aborigines' ability to govern themselves notwithstanding, the APL continued to believe 'in the inherent ability of the native race' to govern itself. Under Duguid's presidency, the 'principle of self-government' remained an important feature of the League's 'main duty'; 'to see that sufficient suitable land [was] set aside for the Aborigines'. The APL also recognised 'the Aborigines rights to retain [their] native culture' and cautioned against 'rushing changes on the natives'. It viewed land as the 'whole crux of the Aboriginal problem' and called for 'present reserves [to] be made inviolate' and for new reserves to be established on 'all tribal land'.

Under Duguid's presidency, the League 'actively support[ed] Ernabella mission'. Without over-stating the connection between Ernabella and the Model Aboriginal State, it is clear that Ernabella exemplified many of the League's earlier Model Aboriginal State objectives in revised form. Like Genders, Duguid's ultimate goal was for the Aborigines at Ernabella to become a 'self-supporting, self-reliant race'. 'We are not attempting to make the native into a white man', Duguid explained:

Our aim is to maintain the native as such in his own country; to make his own country more attractive for him than the cattle stations on the other side of us; to co-operate with them [the Aborigines] in the production of a happy and healthy people.

With the APL's support, Duguid was 'determined ... to see Ernabella become a model Mission for the whole-blood tribal natives on anthropological lines as laid down by

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56 The Model Aboriginal State proposal was added to the terms of reference of an inquiry that J.W. Bleakley was conducting on behalf of the Commonwealth. See Bleakley, *The Aboriginals and Half-Castes of Central Australia and North Australia* (1928), Commonwealth of Australia, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1929, p. 30.

57 Minutes of the Aborigines Protection League (hereafter APL Minutes), 14 June 1939, Papers of the Aborigines Advancement League, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, SRG 250 (hereafter League Papers), Series 1.

58 APL Minutes, 14 June 1939 and 14 February 1940, League Papers. Series 1. See also Charles Genders, 'The Australian Aborigines', typescript, 4 January 1937, J.B. Cleland Collection, South Australian Museum Anthropology Archives, AA 60, Acc. 233. In this document Genders reaffirmed the 'basic principle for the which the League was formed—viz. to advocate the return of land to the Aborigines to be governed by themselves'.

59 APL Minutes, 14 June 1939 and 14 February 1940.

60 *Aborigines Protection League* (publicity pamphlet issued by APL), [1940], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3.

61 APL Minutes, 14 June 1939.


63 Duguid to Mr McLeay, Minister for Trade and Customs, 29 April 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
His dream was to see 'buffer stations similar to Ernabella ... placed in many parts of Australia'.

In an effort to garner public support for Ernabella's work, at the end of 1939 the APL hosted a large public meeting at the Adelaide Town Hall at which slides and moving pictures of life at Ernabella were shown. While few present doubted Duguid's claim that Ernabella was 'saving the Aborigines from extinction', at least one member of the audience, Dr E. Couper Black, was not convinced. It was the moving pictures of 'happy, contented adults and family groups with numerous children' that Black found most objectionable. If movie cameras had been in use 50 years ago, he reasoned, similar scenes could have been shown from missions throughout Australia. 'But where are the thriving adults and happy family groups in those places now? They don't exist', Black argued, and neither would the 'laughing children' of Ernabella 50 years hence. 'A few stray individuals may become more or less Europeanised and be shown as exhibits' but the 'hard facts of history' left little doubt that the majority would eventually 'degenerate' and become extinct. Black's letter to the editor of the Adelaide Advertiser in December 1939 served as a counter-point to Duguid's rhetoric, and gave defenders of the mission, other than Duguid, a chance to air their views in public.

The superintendent at Ernabella, Reverend Harry Taylor, then in Adelaide on furlough, was quick to come to Ernabella's defence. The 'main reason for degeneration', he replied, 'is the breakdown of the tribal life, and with it the collapse of moral sanctions caused by sudden and unrestricted white contact'. A devotee of the type of missionary policy that Cook so deplored, Taylor explained that:

Ernabella is there to see that the tribe remains a tribe and that the Aboriginal is not made a poor imitation of the white man, but that he may absorb into his own culture the best elements of civilisation in such a way that the balance of his tribal life is not destroyed.

E.R. Edwards, honorary secretary of the APL, agreed. Having spent the previous three months at Ernabella, and 'seen the reaction of the bush natives to it', Edwards argued that it was:

regarded by them as a sanctuary, where sympathy and understanding are to be had, and where, if they wish, they can obtain work and training; but they are

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64 Duguid to H.S. Foll, 29 May 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
65 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II)', p. 88.
66 Dr E. Couper Black to editor, Advertiser, 4 December 1939. See also Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 9 December 1946.
67 Reverend Harry Taylor to editor, Advertiser, 6 December 1939.
always urged to live their own life in the bush and regard themselves as a people.\textsuperscript{68}

Far from hastening extinction, Edwards insisted that Ernabella was the 'only way to prevent the natives from the Great Central Aborigines Reserve drifting eastwards to the settled country, where only degradation and extinction await them'.\textsuperscript{69}

Following the AFL’s Town Hall meeting, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, W.R. Penhall, stated that: 'The work of Ernabella Mission should be of great importance in retarding the detribalisation of natives living on the adjacent reserve'.\textsuperscript{70} Duguid’s ambitions went beyond retarding or delaying detribalisation, however. Quite the contrary. By preventing the degredation that heralded detribalisation, Duguid believed that Ernabella could prevent detribalisation from occurring. The mission had already proved that degredation could be reversed. According to Taylor, when he first arrived at Ernabella there was an Aboriginal man 'working on the place [who] referred to his fellow tribesmen as "wild niggers" and to himself, proudly, as a "station boy"'. As a consequence of the mission's influence, '[t]hat man now takes his part in the tribal ceremonies and has learnt that not all white men despise him for keeping his age-old customs', Taylor explained: 'The people now sing in the camp and at their work, an indication not only that they are happy, but that the tribal ties still hold.'\textsuperscript{71} Similarly, Edwards claimed that before Ernabella mission was established 'the natives were dressed in filthy rags and treated as useless'. Now 'the natives are treated as human beings—as a race with its own rights and culture', and the 'old clothes are practically gone', Edwards observed: 'Corroborees and sacred ceremonies are encouraged, and the black man is holding his own'.\textsuperscript{72} For Duguid, one of the strongest indicators of this was the fact that 'no half-castes [had] been born' in the area since the mission's establishment.\textsuperscript{73}

None of these arguments could persuade Penhall that detribalisation was anything but 'inevitable'. Like the majority of his fellow administrators, Penhall viewed (controlled) detribalisation as a necessary step on the road to Aboriginal development and assimilation. It could be slowed down to make the 'period of transition as congenial for the natives as possible', but it could not be stopped.\textsuperscript{74} In 1939, in a letter to E.W.P. Chinnery, the Director of Native Affairs in the Northern Territory, Penhall described detribalisation as an 'inevitable process'.\textsuperscript{75} Duguid, in contrast, viewed detribalisation as 'the tragedy of a

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{68} E.R. Edwards to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 6 December 1939.
\bibitem{69} \textit{Ibid}.
\bibitem{70} \textit{News}, 30 November 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 188.
\bibitem{71} Taylor to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 6 December 1939.
\bibitem{72} Edwards to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 6 December 1939.
\bibitem{73} Duguid to Sir Charles McCann, Agent General, South Australian Office, London, 19 May 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
\bibitem{74} W.R. Penhall to A.P. Burdeu, honorary secretary Aborigines Uplift Society, 14 September 1940, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1940/7.
\bibitem{75} Penhall to E.W.P. Chinnery, 22 September 1939, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1939/52.
\end{thebibliography}
sudden jump from a stone-age culture to a twentieth century one'. In seeking to prevent this tragedy, Duguid held no false hope that the Aborigines at Ernabella could remain a 'primitive' or 'stone-age' people. He understood that 'a primitive race [was] altered by every new contact, whether that contact [was] a missionary, an anthropologist, or someone else'. Yet he also believed that Aborigines could, and should, remain 'tribal' during their elevation to a 'higher level of civilisation'. For Duguid, 'tribal' signified 'dignity', 'independence' and 'self-respect' and was contingent on Aborigines remaining on their own land. Unless the intention was to make Aborigines into 'very inferior and degraded editions of white people', 'tribal' was a state of being that needed to be preserved. And this, Duguid claimed, was precisely what Ernabella was doing:

For years before the Mission came to Ernabella the young people of these tribes filtered east and north to the cattle stations and jumped over-night from their civilisation into ours with the worst possible results to themselves. Since the advent of Ernabella that has stopped. In the future, understandingly trained Aboriginal people, quietly prepared for their own place in the economy of the nation will be available when required.

'In a word', Duguid explained, the Aborigines 'who come and go to Ernabella continue to be tribal natives, but in the future they will know how to handle a situation connected with our civilisation that, but for their training at Ernabella, would have puzzled them'.

Although the stress Duguid placed on Aborigines retaining their land, and thereby remaining 'tribal', was not shared by Penhall, their differences of opinion did not become an issue until 1947 when Penhall supported the rocket range, bringing their alliance to an end. Like his predecessor, M.T. McLean, Penhall was sympathetic to Ernabella's work. He understood and approved of Ernabella's intention 'to keep the natives native as long as possible', yet he also believed 'that such an ideal [would] be difficult of attainment'. As the second world war drew to a close, the efficacy of Ernabella's aims and its ability to achieve them came under serious review. Despite Duguid's consistently positive portrayal, Ernabella mission was plagued by problems, some of which were common to Aboriginal institutions in general, while others related specifically to Ernabella's aims and the assumptions that underlay them. A fundamental assumption was that Aborigines wanted to remain on their own land, and that by doing so they could remain 'tribal' despite the mission's influence. With questions such as—'Is this Mission satisfactory? 'Can a

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76 Duguid to Chinnery, 1 August 1941, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
79 Duguid to J.S. Collings, Minister for the Interior, 5 January 1942, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
80 Ibid. (emphasis added).
81 See chapter one.
82 Penhall to H.C. Matthew, secretary Presbyterian Board of Missions, 10 May 1945, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1945/11.
nomadic hunter be a Christian?' 'What of the tribe?'—being asked by the friends and supporters of Ernabella in the years preceding the rocket range controversy, one has to wonder whether Duguid, in fighting against the rocket range, was fighting for an ideal at Ernabella—or an ideal Ernabella—that Penhall and others had long suspected was not working.83

II. 'Is it satisfactory?': Ernabella Mission 1937–46

Three properties lay between Ernabella mission and the Central Aborigines Reserve, and thus between Ernabella and its purpose; to be a 'buffer' between the white settlers to the east and the Aborigines to the west. As a result of Duguid's campaigning, in May 1939 the Pastoral Board cancelled all the leases between Ernabella and the reserve and 'assured' Duguid that so long as Ernabella remained a mission they 'would never be allotted' to white settlers. Expressing his profound relief at this development, Duguid exclaimed: '[We] are now, and shall always be, the first white contacts with the natives'. Although understandable, Duguid's elation at this apparent 'conclusion to [his] efforts with the Government of South Australia' was somewhat premature.84 On the condition that it undertake regular patrols through the 1500 square mile area, the Presbyterian Church was granted a five year licence over the three properties ending in August 1944. Beyond that point, the future of the blocks, and indeed the future of Ernabella, was uncertain. Without the blocks, Ernabella mission was 'dead', according to Duguid, and with nothing more than the Pastoral Board's assurance to go on, they hung like a noose around the mission's neck for the next five years.85 To keep the blocks Ernabella needed to be successful, and be seen to be successful. But what Duguid called success was not necessarily regarded as such by others.

Duguid's efforts with the government of South Australia were far from over. In November 1939, the South Australian Parliament passed an amendment to its Aborigines Act, 1934 which saw the office of the Chief Protector of Aborigines abolished and replaced with an Aborigines Protection Board (APB) consisting of six members and a Minister of the Crown.86 Aware that these changes were taking place, Duguid wrote to

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84 Duguid to Matthew, 1 June 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10; Duguid to Reverend J. MacDonald Webster, General Secretary of the Church of Scotland, Overseas Department, 16 June 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
85 Duguid, Ernabella: The Medical Patrol, 1939; Duguid to Matthew, 1 June 1939.
86 Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 'A brief outline of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia since colonisation', unpublished manuscript, 1963, pp. 22–23, SRSA, GRG 52/22/2.
Malcolm McIntosh, the Commissioner for Public Works, in September that year, listing his credentials and suggesting himself as a possible Board member. 'I would very much like to be the representative on the Board of the whole-blood and the myall natives', Duguid wrote:

The country and its people from the South-North railway line to the Western Australian border I have visited often and know better than anyone in the south. I have wandered among the tribes in their own haunts and eaten their food and attended their corroborees. The latter is a privilege granted to very few. Every year my holiday of four to five weeks is spent among these people and I am sure ... [you] will recognise the extra value my visits to the far north and farthest north west will have if the powers of a Protector were officially vested in me.87

With the establishment of Ernabella mission to his credit, there was scarcely any need for this kind of self-promotion, yet in matters of such importance, modesty, it seems, meant leaving things to chance. For Duguid, the opportunity to 'pool [his] resources with the Board' was simply too good to be missed.88 When an invitation to join the APB was finally extended to him in January the following year, Duguid readily accepted.89

As a consequence of Australia's involvement in the second world war, restrictions on travel and increased demands on his personal and professional life, Duguid was forced to delay his planned visits to the north of the state, and to Ernabella mission in particular, for the duration of the war. The work of the mission, and the people there, were never far from his mind, however, for as Chairman of the South Australian Ernabella Mission Committee, a sub-committee of the Presbyterian Board of Missions, Duguid was in regular contact with the superintendent and other staff at the mission.90 In this capacity, Duguid acted as a link between Ernabella and its various sources of sponsorship—private businesses, humanitarian organisations and government departments, including the APB—while as a member of the APB, Duguid was privy to correspondence to and from the mission, and about the mission, which facilitated his lobbying on Ernabella's behalf.91

Where others may have seen a conflict of interest, Duguid did not, for 'in everything Aboriginal', he asserted, he 'put the interests of the Aborigines first'; a dubious

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87 Duguid to Malcolm McIntosh, Commissioner of Public Works, 21 September 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
88 Ibid.
89 Duguid to A.L. Read, Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Office, 27 January 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
91 Duguid regularly shared 'confidential' information with the Presbyterian Board of Missions. See Duguid to Matthew, 3 June 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. Duguid wrote: 'I am enclosing confidential minutes of the APB ... to show you that the Board will refuse no request to Ernabella'.

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recommendation, but one indicative of Duguid's priorities nonetheless.\textsuperscript{92} With all these contacts and responsibilities in place, there was little about life at Ernabella during the war that Duguid did not know. Except, perhaps, what it was actually like to live there.

A 'few happy days' in August 1939 represented the sum total of Duguid's time at Emabella before the onset of war, time enough to confirm his 'previous conviction' of Ernabella's importance, but not to gain any meaningful impression of life at the mission.\textsuperscript{93} Not that longer or more regular visits would necessarily have altered Duguid's perception, however, for when it came to Ernabella, he tended to see what he wanted and/or needed to see. On this occasion, Duguid saw Ernabella as a 'haven of refuge' for the Aborigines of the Central Aborigines Reserve:

The men bring their wild dog-scalps to the Mission to be exchanged for whole-meal flour; they bring the sick and aged, and they have brought their women and children to the shelter of the camp when they have gone off to a corroboree. But after a spell alongside the Mission the people go out again.\textsuperscript{94}

This was as Duguid had planned it to be; this was Ernabella holding the Aborigines in their own country through the 'fair exchange of flour for scalps'.\textsuperscript{95} However, given that other visitors to the mission, both before and after Duguid's stay, complained about its 'untidy and dirty' state—'why at Ernabella', one man alleged, 'you can't put your foot down for the dung'—a more appropriate description might well have been a 'haven of refuse'.\textsuperscript{96} Was Ernabella the 'dirtiest station' in the region?\textsuperscript{97} Or was it, as Duguid described, 'a centre of friendliness, and of work', a place where Aborigines were being shown 'how much better off they [were] in their own country—free to roam at will—than sitting down at a cattle station in rags'?\textsuperscript{98} Could it be both? In the greater scheme of things, did it matter if the mission was 'untidy'?\textsuperscript{99}

Although generated by white men with little sympathy for the mission, and therefore probably exaggerated, the reports of Ernabella's uncleanliness reflected a reality and a problem at the mission that Duguid seemed reluctant to face. When confronted with news of Ernabella's alleged 'dirty' state in December 1938, Duguid's first response was to insist upon keeping visitors 'away ... until it [was] cleaned up'.\textsuperscript{99} Later, after visiting the mission himself, Duguid sought to lessen the impact of such criticism with the observation

\textsuperscript{92} Duguid to Matthew, 29 June 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{94} Duguid, Ernabella: The Medical Patrol, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{95} Duguid to Matthew, 21 February 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{96} Matthew to Duguid, 20 December 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; G.F. Davis to 'Dear Sir' (not Duguid), 25 April 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{97} Matthew to Duguid, 20 December 1938.
\textsuperscript{98} Duguid, Ernabella: The Medical Patrol, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{99} Duguid to Matthew, 29 June 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
that it was to be expected: 'If the white people of the ... district ever acclaim Ernabella as a
fine thing, there will be something wrong at Ernabella', he told H.C. Matthew, secretary of
the Presbyterian Board of Missions.\footnote{100} In Matthew's view, there already was something
'desperately' wrong at Ernabella. Having previously expressed strong reservations about
the superintendent, Harry Taylor's 'inexperience in the management' of missions, Matthew
viewed Ernabella's reputed uncleanliness as confirmation of Taylor's incompetence:
uncleanliness signalled disorder.\footnote{101} At the end of 1939, after another year of poor book-
keeping, misplaced invoices and evasive answers, Taylor was asked to resign as
superintendent of Ernabella. From then until the beginning of 1941 when the Reverend
J.R.B. Love was finally coaxed from Kunmunya to Ernabella, acting superintendents
oversaw the running of the mission.\footnote{102}

After such an unsettled and inauspicious start, no-one rejoiced more than Duguid
at Love's appointment. As one of 'the most experienced, sensible and anthropologically
minded Missionar[ies] to natives in Australia', Love was the embodiment of Duguid's ideal
superintendent; 'a linguist, a leader and man with knowledge of station life in all its
departments, as well as a fine Christian'.\footnote{103} With Love in charge, 'the future and the
success of Ernabella [seemed] assured'.\footnote{104} At the end of his first year at Ernabella, Love
reported that '[r]elations between the native people and the staff [were] excellent', and that a
'friendly and smiling attitude [was] evident'.\footnote{105} Encouraged by these and other positive
reports emanating from the mission, Duguid described the Aborigines at Ernabella, and
especially the children, as 'the happiest you could meet'.\footnote{106} 'Were you to visit Ernabella', he
told a group of Adelaide school children in March 1943:

you [would] find that no family ties have been broken, and that no superior
complexes have been set up. The children still sleep naked between the family
fires, and by day they still collect food with their mothers, and when older
hunt with their fathers and men of the tribe.\footnote{107}

\footnotetext{100}{Duguid to Matthew, 3 October 1939, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.}
\footnotetext{101}{Matthew to Duguid, 1 July 1938 and 13 October 1938 and 28 November 1938 and 20 December
1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. The reports of Ernabella's uncleanliness were accompanied by
accusations of sheep stealing and cattle spearing at the Mission. See Inspector Parsonage to
Commissioner of Police, 8 August 1938, SRSA, GRG 52/1/38/21.}
\footnotetext{102}{When J.R.B. Love arrived in March 1941 he found Ernabella 'in much better shape that [he] had
feared might be the case', although there was still a 'great deal ... to get cleaned up'. Love to
Matthew and Duguid, 13 March 1941, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.}
\footnotetext{103}{Duguid to Chinnery, 1 August 1941, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid to Matthew, 3 October
1939.}
\footnotetext{104}{Matthew to Duguid, 18 May 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid to Mr Martin, Clerk of
Assembly, 14 November 1940, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.}
\footnotetext{105}{Love to Penhall, 19 January 1942, SRSA, GRG 52/1/41/22.}
\footnotetext{106}{Duguid, 'The Natives on the Edge of Our Civilisation', p. 8.}
\footnotetext{107}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 10.}
With their 'laughing eyes' and healthy countenance—'shining brown bodies [and] white teeth'—the 'happy bush children' at Ernabella served as proof of the mission's success.\(^{108}\)

Having pinned such high hopes on Love, and apparently been rewarded, it was all the more shocking, therefore, to discover that Ernabella, under Love's management, 'was underfeeding its natives'.\(^{109}\)

Unlike the allegations of uncleanliness, the reports of underfeeding came from reputable sources; a police constable at Oodnadatta and two members of the APB, Constance Ternent Cooke and Alice Harvey Johnston. Instead of 'happy bush children', Cooke and Johnston saw 'sick people lying naked on the ground' and 'under-nourished' Aborigines dressed in 'rags' when they inspected Ernabella on behalf of the APB in October 1943.\(^{110}\)

'No work, no tucker' was the 'rule at Ernabella'. Its policy was to feed workers, children, aged, infirm and sick Aborigines only.\(^{111}\) Finding the mission in the grip of an influenza epidemic that had resulted in eight deaths and affected over 300 Aborigines as well as the white staff, Cooke named underfeeding as the first, and most serious, of Ernabella's many problems:

The workers and their families receive for breakfast plain porridge and a hunk of damper; for lunch damper and tea with sugar; for the night meal a stew made of goat meat and vegetables, damper and tea with sugar ... The old and infirm, or "pensioners" as they are called at Ernabella, do not fare even as well as this. With few exceptions, they receive one meal only, at night. This consists of a hunk of damper and tea with sugar.\(^{112}\)

Nor was there much opportunity for Aborigines to boost their meagre rations with provisions from the store, Cooke observed, for although some Aborigines had money and others the means to barter, 'the store [did] not contain enough to supply [them] with ... the ordinary amenities of life'. On scalp-receiving day, Cooke witnessed the frustration this caused:

Unfortunately only a certain number of scalps can be taken at a time, as there is not enough exchange value in the store. We watched from inside the store, and saw that the natives became angry when Mr Love said he could take no more scalps. He had to start to close the door and speak to them firmly ...


\(^{109}\) Duguid to Matthew, 7 May 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

\(^{110}\) Constance Ternent Cooke, 'Impressions of a Visit to Ernabella', [1943], Cooke Papers, SRSA, GRG 52/32/81.

\(^{111}\) Duguid to Chinney, 1 August 1941.

\(^{112}\) Cooke, 'Impressions of a Visit to Ernabella'.

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[Love] said that every male member on the staff of Ernabella had been assaulted by a native at some time.\textsuperscript{113}

As well as being underfed and under-provided for, Cooke suspected that the Aboriginal workers at Ernabella were also being underpaid.\textsuperscript{114}

When further reports of underfeeding at Ernabella were received by the APB in the following year, Duguid blamed Love. Spurred by rumours of an 'appalling death rate' at Love's previous posting, Duguid drew a link between 'Love's failure to save his natives from preventable illness and death at Kunmunya' and the present crisis at Ernabella. Good feeding, Duguid argued, 'is the first bulwark' against disease: 'Ill-fed natives, however, will die like flies no matter what the infection'. Duguid's preferred solution, Love's immediate resignation as superintendent at Ernabella, caused the Board of Missions to look askance.\textsuperscript{115} 'Mr Love cannot be held responsible for the dying of the natives at Kunmunya', the Board reproached, and '[nor] can it be truly said that the dying of the natives [there] was because of underfeeding'. As for Ernabella, the Board insisted that it was up to APB to decide on a 'standard of adequate feeding'. '[If] that were done', the Board maintained that the APB would find 'the Superintendent ready and eager to give the heartiest co-operation in adherence to that standard'.\textsuperscript{116}

Duguid wanted someone, or something, to blame for Ernabella's deficiencies other than the mission itself. So too, it seems, did the Board of Missions. Shifting the blame from Love to the APB could not hide the fact that something was wrong at Ernabella, however. Given Duguid's high opinion of Love before the question of underfeeding arose, his reference to unfounded rumours and his reversal of faith in Love's abilities on the basis of these, revealed his deep anxieties about the future of Ernabella. With the Church's five year licence on the properties between Ernabella and the Central Aborigines Reserve drawing to a close, the source of Duguid's anxieties was clear. The 'government is taking stock of us', he told Matthew in May 1944, and '[we] cannot go on as we are doing'.\textsuperscript{117}

According to Duguid, the secretary of the APB, Penhall, had warned him that:

the future of the blocks between us and the reserve depends on the success or otherwise of Ernabella in the interests of the Aborigines. If Ernabella gives clear evidence that it is acting in the interests of the Aborigines and raising them mentally, morally and physically, the blocks will not be taken from us.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} 'I don't know what the local stations pay their workers', Cooke wrote, but '[it] seems to me that the remuneration given for the work of our native people should be revised'. Cooke, 'Impressions of a Visit to Ernabella'.
\textsuperscript{115} Duguid to Matthew, 7 May 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{116} Matthew to Duguid, 8 June 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{117} Duguid to Matthew, 7 May 1944.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
Apart from the mission school, Duguid worried that Ernabella had little to show for its endeavours.

First opened in 1940, the school at Ernabella was the 'essence of the Mission'. Here 'self-government [was] encouraged', 'personalities [were] being formed and minds trained', and Aboriginal children were 'being prepared for the day when they [would] meet the white race face to face'.119 Instead of being taught in English 'as if their [own] language were one to be despised', the children at Ernabella were 'taught in their own tongue'.120 And the results, according to Duguid, spoke for themselves: 'The average child attending the Ernabella school, after the equivalent of six months can read and write; and after the equivalent of twelve months many of the children can write their own language as fluently, neatly, and correctly as white children'.121 Yet even the school—Ernabella's 'great success'—was not immune to criticism.122 'Whilst in full agreement that the children should be taught in their native language', Cooke felt that they would 'not be able to hold their own' when in contact with white people unless they were also taught English, 'the language of the country'.123 Matthew agreed. Following Cooke's report, Matthew informed Duguid that he was 'now convinced that the learning of English should not be optional ... but should be compulsory'.124

Like Duguid, Matthew was 'full of anxieties' about Ernabella. Unlike Duguid, however, Matthew believed that the 'failure at Ernabella [went] much deeper than underfeeding'. Hesitantly, he explained:

I think underlying it is an unuttered belief that the Aborigines are not worth saving. Or [that] they are not capable of being used worthily in our modern life. We as Churches play at the business of saving them ... [but] our equipment of a mission station is of the most meagre and inadequate kind. Beside a people who are community-minded, who think and work in terms of the group, we set down an individual or even two, who can give to the Aborigines the most inadequate conceptions of what the white community from which they came stands for and does ... What of the tribe? Is the general effect of our insufficient labours on their behalf just to break the tribal life up and so disintegrate the life of the community?125

120 Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I have met' (1946), in C. Duguid, The Aborigines of Australia: Broadcasts and an Address, p. 33.
122 Duguid to Matthew, 7 May 1944.
123 Cooke, 'Impressions of a Visit to Ernabella Mission'.
124 Matthew to Duguid, 18 May 1944.
125 Ibid.
In Matthew’s view, an entirely new approach to mission work was needed. ‘Side by side with the Aboriginal tribe there should be a community group’, he insisted. It should have ‘a carpenter and builder, a gardener, an orchardist, a man in poultry, in pigs and in sheep’; all members ‘should be married and have their own homes as an expression of the full community life of the white man’; and all should be committed to ‘occupying themselves to the full in the pursuits in which they expect the black man to be their partners’. Even if it meant a fourfold increase in the budget for Ernabella, Matthew was convinced that ‘something along these lines’ needed to be done—‘and done soon’—‘to save the Pitjantjatjara tribe’.126

In particular, Matthew wanted more attention focussed on the ‘neglected area of the young people aged 13 or 14 to 20 and upwards, a structure of education and influence that [would] fit them for any future’.127 Duguid and Penhall found much to recommend Matthew’s plan. In Penhall’s opinion, anything that would ‘equip the native for useful work, not only for his own salvation, but to enable him to serve in the general community’ was a step forward.128 Signalling his assent, Duguid agreed that it was time to move beyond ‘the meagre routine and stir ourselves afresh in the development of the native’.129 Love, however, was not convinced. ‘What industry do you visualise for Ernabella?’ he asked Matthew: ‘How far do you wish to go in the way of bringing the young people away from their life as nomad hunters?’ ‘Please do not think me obstructionist’, Love wrote, ‘I want to do everything possible to elevate our people here ... [but] I believe that detribalisation will mean extinction’.130 So did Duguid. However, provided that they remained on their own land and away from contact with harmful whites, Duguid did not associate vocational training for Aboriginal adolescents with detribalisation. And yet, it was exactly the opposite—‘the stubborn fact that they seem[ed] to drift towards the white man’s cattle and sheep stations, away from their reserve’—that made the need for vocational training so urgent, according to Dr R. Trudinger, an ‘honoured and experienced missionary’ whose son Ronald was the teacher at Ernabella.131

At the request of the Board of Missions, Dr Trudinger visited Ernabella in June 1944. In his subsequent report he described a combination of problems ‘unique’ to Ernabella: the ‘pronounced nomadic habits of the people’; the fact that the mission had ‘no control whatever over their movements’; and the ‘almost complete segregation of the youths ... during the period of their initiation’. Rather than continue to labour under the false belief that ‘the natives could be Christianised, and still keep their tribal life’, Dr Trudinger urged the Mission authorities to institute a program of industrial training that would ‘equip the
blacks ... for a useful life'.\textsuperscript{132} However, it was Dr Trudinger's further observation regarding 'the tendency of the natives to move east to the habitations of the white man instead of west to their own reserve and home-land' that most concerned Matthew and the Board of Missions. In seeking confirmation from Love, Matthew asked whether the young people at Ernabella were 'forsaking their nomadic life and losing their skill in hunting and [were] therefore in danger of becoming detribalised'.\textsuperscript{133}

Love did not appreciate outsiders interfering in the running of his mission; that included Matthew and Duguid as well as Dr Trudinger. In answer to Matthew's fears, Love described the eastward movement of Aborigines as normal. These were 'hunting journeys', Love explained. On these journeys, the people lived on 'their accustomed native foods', chiefly kangaroo meat which was more plentiful in the east than the west. Although they also visited the cattle stations, and occasionally found casual employment, most of the people returned to Ernabella and the reserve.\textsuperscript{134} According to Love, the eastward movement of Aborigines was not the problem. The problem was Ernabella:

They come back here with a great collection of old ragged clothes, presumably obtained from their compatriots who are employed and clothed on the stations. Here is one problem for us: we must make Ernabella more attractive than any other station. The attractions are mainly white man's clothing and white man's food, the latter being a long way second.\textsuperscript{135}

The issue of clothing had long been a source of contention at Ernabella. In his first annual report, dated January 1942, Love commented favourably on the Aborigines' 'request for clothes' in exchange for dog-scalps, only to be informed by the APB that 'the wearing of clothing by the natives should, in the interests of health, be discouraged'.\textsuperscript{136} Health was not the only consideration, however. Duguid took pride in the fact that '[at] Ernabella only the few native men and women who are working at the homestead have even the simplest clothing, while those who only the visit the homestead occasionally are encouraged to remain tribal', meaning naked.\textsuperscript{137} Whether for reasons of health or 'tribal integrity' or both, it was one thing to allow the Aborigines at Ernabella to remain unclothed; it was quite another, in Love's opinion, to prevent them from wearing clothes. Ever the pragmatist, Love argued that since the Aborigines at Ernabella desired clothing, and would have it irrespective of the APB's edict, it was far better to provide them with a 'minimum of decent clothing ... and encourage them to use soap, and wash'.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., p. 2; Love to Matthew, 23 October 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
\textsuperscript{134} Ernabella News Letter, December 1944, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Duguid, 'The Natives on the Edge of Our Civilisation', p. 8.
Love wanted Ernabella to be the 'most attractive' station in the district; a place where Aborigines could 'get goods beyond the resources of the bush, equal to what they [could] get anywhere else, and where they [could] find something in the spiritual life of the Mission that they [could] not find elsewhere'. Apart from making Ernabella more attractive, however, Love wanted the mission to remain as it was. Against Dr Trudinger's suggestion that industrial training could begin with 'gardens or flocks looked after by the natives themselves', Love replied: 'Rule it out. The benevolent patriarchate is the only system that will function here in a lifetime'. Love saw himself as the benevolent patriarch. His subjects—all of the people of Ernabella—were nomadic: 'Let them continue to be nomadic', Love declared. As for the adolescent males whose 'initiation into the status of tribal manhood' kept them outside the mission's influence, Love insisted upon a policy of continued acquiescence to the dictates of 'tribal lore'. 'We can visit them', Love allowed, 'but they cannot take part in the life of the Mission, being secluded from contact with the women'. Although, as Love readily acknowledged, his plan offered little that was 'spectacular to show visitors, [or] to write about', he maintained that the 'permanent result ... of respecting tribal life' was the only result worth aiming for.

While the future of the mission was still being debated, Love learned that a white man had applied to lease two of the three blocks between Ernabella and the reserve. Now more than ever, Ernabella needed spectacular results. Love's warning that the Aborigines 'would inevitably die if their tribal lands were alienated from them' was not enough, its impact weakened by the steady and well-documented drift of Aborigines away from the reserve, east towards the pastoralists and south towards Ooldea and the East-West railway-line. Duguid's plea to save 'the last of the tribal natives of South Australia' was equally ineffectual, for if the Aborigines were voluntarily leaving the security of their reserve, and thereby becoming detribalised, perhaps they no longer needed a 'buffer mission'. With or without the blocks, it seemed clear that Ernabella was unable to prevent Aborigines from leaving the reserve. Thus, rather than focus on Ernabella's achievements—or lack thereof—Penhall drew government's attention to the economic benefits of extending the boundaries of the Central Aborigines Reserve to include the blocks in question.

Penhall's most persuasive argument concerned Ooldea. According to Penhall, the several hundred Aborigines currently residing at the Ooldea mission had 'no future hope before them save a parasitic existence on the Government and philanthropic bodies, unless they [could] be transferred to a more suitable region where they [could] continue their

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139 Ibid., p. 4.
140 Love to Matthew, 23 October 1944, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
142 Ibid., pp. 4-5; Love to Matthew, 18 July 1944.
143 Love to Duguid, 23 October 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1944/86.
144 Ibid.; See also Penhall to Chinnery, 22 September 1939.
145 Duguid to Penhall, 1 December 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1944/86.
nomadic existence'. Anticipating Ooldea's imminent closure, Penhall claimed that the Aborigines there could be moved to the area between Ernabella and the reserve 'at no cost to government'. The alternative—allowing white pastoralists to occupy the blocks—would result in 'a still greater drift of natives to Ooldea... where they become an increasing expense to the government, and present a very difficult problem in administration'. The Department of Lands was sufficiently impressed by Penhall's Ooldea solution to allow for the 'possibility' of extending the reserve to include the blocks in question. While it waited to see how successful the APB was in moving the natives now at Ooldea back to the Musgrave Ranges, and keeping them there, the Department agreed to renew Ernabella's licence over the blocks for a further year, ending in August 1946. It was a temporary reprieve for Ernabella. As for Ooldea, the Aborigines there were not moved until 1952, when the entire population was moved south to Yalata in advance of the British testing of atomic weapons at Maralinga.

Duguid visited Ernabella in May 1946. It was his first visit since the outbreak of war, and his first opportunity, therefore, to comment first-hand on the problems that had besieged Ernabella during his seven years absence. In his subsequent report to the APB, Duguid left nothing to chance. He praised the 'tidiness and cleanliness of the Mission', made special mention of the increased ration order and high nutritional value of the food, and noted how well the 'old people [were] being cared for'. Rather than risk inflaming an already volatile situation by addressing the problems of detribalisation and/or Aboriginal migration in his report, Duguid let 'the happiness of the people, whether at the Mission itself, at the native camp, or on the sheep camps' speak for itself. Duguid's message was clear: Ernabella's problems were over. Duguid's agenda, however, was also clear. He wanted Ernabella's boundaries to be finalised in favour of the mission. Less than two months later, at the end of July 1946, this decade-long and increasingly angst-ridden issue was pushed from Duguid's mind, unresolved in the face of a new and far greater threat, the rocket range. Ernabella's problems were far from over.

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146 Penhall to the Minister for Public Works, 21 December 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1944/86.
147 Director of Lands to Penhall, 16 April 1945, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1944/86.
149 Duguid to Penhall, 5 June 1946, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1946/15.
III. 'Detribalisation of the Aborigine is inevitable'

The rocket range controversy focussed unprecedented public attention on the welfare and future prospects of the Aborigines of the Central Aborigines Reserve. While a desire to protect Aborigines from harm was evident on both sides of the debate, opinion varied as to the impact the range would have on them, whether and how their interests could be safeguarded, and what their interests actually were. No-one could deny that the Aborigines would be effected in some way by the rocket range. However, the measure of that effect—be it negative or positive, destructive or constructive—was largely determined by how the reserve's inhabitants were perceived. Duguid perceived and portrayed them as 'fully tribal' Aborigines. In his view, all talk on the part of politicians and others that their interests could be safeguarded was 'utter nonsense':

The invasion of their territory in the way planned by the British and Australian Governments means their end. In place of the fine upstanding myall native of the mountain ranges, within a few years will be a half-caste race, and for this all those supporting the rocket firing range must bear the responsibility.

The supporters of the project, including A.P. Elkin, argued that the 'tribal life' Duguid was so solicitous of preserving no longer existed, or at least not to the extent that Duguid claimed. They pointed to the steady drift of Aborigines away from the reserve, the increased contact with white people and the influence of Ernabella and other missions. Rather than hastening Aboriginal extinction as Duguid claimed, the project's supporters maintained that its only effect would be to hasten Aboriginal detribalisation; a process that all evidence (barring Duguid and his fellow protesters') suggested was well under-way.

In Fire Across the Desert (1989), a commissioned history of Woomera and the Anglo-Australian Joint Project, Peter Morton has argued that the rocket range controversy was 'slow to ignite', an argument in keeping with his further claim that 'few Australians cared much for Aboriginal culture ... [in] those days'. The length of time that elapsed between the British and Australian governments' earliest discussions about a possible rocket range in Australia at the end of 1945 and the first stirrings of discontent mid-way

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150 Between August and November 1946, the Adelaide Advertiser printed more than thirty letters and editorials on the subject, with similar interest and debate reflected in newspapers in Melbourne and Sydney, and to a lesser extent in London. See Morton, Fire Across the Desert, p. 69.

151 Duguid to Chifley, 4 October 1946, Association for the Protection of Native Races Papers, University of Sydney Archives, Series 7.

152 Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 28 October 1946. See also S.G. Eyles, Inquiry Officer to Deputy Director, Commonwealth Investigation Branch, report of 'Meeting Conducted Under the Aegis of Common Cause Protesting Against Rocket Bomb Tests in Australia', 7 August 1946, NAA: D1918/0, S1493.

153 Morton, Fire Across the Desert, pp. 69, 76.
through the following year was not the result of indifference, however, but rather of secrecy. Although enough speculative information found its way into British and Australian newspapers by the end of July 1946 to ignite Duguid and his fellow protesters' rage, the Australian government refused to release any details about the proposed scheme until formal agreement with Britain was reached at the end of November that year. Unofficial reports suggested that rockets would be fired in a north-westerly direction from Mt Eba, a pastoral property in South Australia, to Ninety Mile Beach in Western Australia, and that observation stations would be built at 100 mile intervals inside the Central Aborigines Reserve. According to Duguid, this meant that Ernabella mission was 'in danger' (see Plate 5). Without confirmation from government, however, it was an easy task for Duguid's critics and supporters of the project to discredit his objections as 'unwarranted', 'premature' and 'hysterical', and Duguid himself as 'a well-meaning crank'.

Ending months of speculation, the Minister for Defence, John Dedman, issued the Australian government's first authoritative statement on the rocket range on 22 November 1946. Dedman's statement confirmed Duguid's worst fears—the rocket range was going ahead, and it was going through the Central Aborigines Reserve—yet Dedman maintained that the risk to the Aborigines would be 'negligible':

> It is suggested to me by those most competent to judge, that the accident risk to the Aborigine will be less than that taken by the ordinary citizen of one of our cities in crossing a motor thoroughfare, or from the danger of an aircraft falling from the skies.

In regard to the very limited number of observation posts which may later have to be established along the line of fire, Dedman assured the Australian public that he was 'very conscious of the need to do everything possible to safeguard the Aborigines from contact, or encroachment on any area of special significance to them'. Towards this end, he stressed that instructions had been given to the Australian Guided Projectiles Committee (AGPC) to 'consult with the Director of Native Affairs and other authorities concerned in Aborigine welfare, and to report on the measures necessary to ensure their safety and welfare'.

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155 'Scientists stage atomic and rocket tests', *Sphere*, 6 July 1946; Duguid to editor, *Adviser*, 7 August 1946.
156 Duguid to editor, *Adviser*, 27 July 1946
158 Dedman, 'The position regarding the setting up of Guided Missile Range and a supporting developmental establishment in Australia', 22 November 1946.
In keeping with Dedman's pledge, a special meeting of the AGPC was planned for early in the following year. Hurried letters were sent to the Premiers of South Australia and Western Australia, asking for representatives from their governments to be co-opted to the AGPC 'from the aspect of State Aborigine policy'. The federal Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs, Dr H.V. Evatt, suggested that Elkin should be invited, and Major General L.E. Beavis, recently appointed chairman of the AGPC, was dispatched to see him in person. According to Elkin's biographer, Tigger Wise, Elkin readily agreed to co-operate: 'It would be his pleasure, he told Beavis, to do whatever the government thought fit. To avoid accusations of collusion', however, Elkin suggested that the army invite the Australian National Research Council to nominate an anthropological expert to the Committee, namely himself. The Department of the Interior and Dedman wanted Duguid to be invited as well, but Beavis objected, pointing to what he called Duguid's 'known bigoted outlook' against the range. In the end, government resolved to invite Duguid and Donald Thomson to attend part of the meeting in a non-official, non-voting capacity. On 29 January 1947, two days before the AGPC meeting was due to commence, Duguid received an urgent telegram inviting him to attend. Lending weight to Duguid's claim that 'the whole meeting was a farce', Thomson was given less than a day's notice, his invitation to attend being conveyed by telephone the night before the meeting.

Headed by Beavis, the AGPC comprised six core members from the departments of defence, navy, army, air, munitions and the Council for Scientific Research, most of whom were also members of the Board of Administration responsible for the establishment and supervision of the rocket range. Paul Wilson has argued that this represented 'a striking paradox or conflict of interest', for as members of the Board of Administration their principle task was to ensure the success of the rocket range, while as members of the AGPC they were charged with recommending procedures to ensure the safety of Aborigines whose 'way of life', according to the protesters, was directly threatened by the rocket range. However, there could only have been a conflict of interest if members had had the option of finding the scheme too dangerous. Since the purpose of the AGPC meeting was to recommend measures that would 'ensure the safety and welfare of Aborigines in the range area, on the basis that the range would be built as

160 Chifley to Premier of Western Australia, 4 December 1946, NAA: A5954, 1656/2.
164 In Doctor and Aborigines, Duguid stated that he received this telegram on 20 January 1947, an error repeated in Wilson's thesis. Official records reveal that the decision to invite Duguid was not made until 29 January and that he was cabled thereafter. Shedden to Duguid, 29 January 1947, NAA: A5954, 1656/2.
166 Wilson, 'Rockets and Aborigines', p. 39.
... planned', there was no conflict of interest. The rocket range was going ahead regardless, and to this all members agreed. 'I look at it this way', Elkin explained:

We cannot do anything about this range, and those of us with experience in native matters should get behind the government and do everything we can to help. We have to face it. We cannot [stop] the project going through.

In addition to the six core members, six others were co-opted. Of these, only four had any specific knowledge of Aboriginal matters; F.H. Moy, Director of Native Affairs for the Northern Territory, A O. Neville, former Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia, W R. Penhall, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board of South Australia, and Elkin. The two other co-opted members, L.F. Loder and Lieutenant General J.F. Evatts, represented the department of Works and Housing and the British Long Range Weapons Organisation respectively.

On 31 January and 1 February 1947, the AGPC met at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne, with Duguid and Thomson in attendance on the second day. On the first day of proceedings Elkin persuaded the Committee to agree to five measures that he considered essential for the protection of Aborigines in the range area; 'a patrol officer to regulate contacts, protection of sacred sites, no transfer of Aborigines from place to place, no Aborigines to be used for labour, and airstrips to be used rather than roads'. With these measures agreed upon, and before Duguid and Thomson were called, the second day of proceedings opened with a brief summary of the previous day's discussion:

Contact with white people is increasing the detribalisation of the natives, including the controlled detribalisation brought about by the Missions. An important point is that it should be controlled, and not uncontrolled, contact. A serious aspect is that there is a continuous drift of the natives to South Australia.

At this point, Neville remarked that increased contact was 'only hastening a process which must come soon'; by this he meant detribalisation. Following Neville's interjection, Beavis concluded his summary thus:

167 'Report by the Australian Committee on Guided Projectiles on the Welfare of Aborigines Located Within the Range Area', 1 February 1947, NAA: A816/1, 12/301/74 (hereafter AGPC Report) (emphasis added).
168 'Notes Taken at Meeting of the Australian Committee on Guided Projectiles Held on 1 February, 1947', p. 11, NAA: A816/1, 12/301/74 (hereafter AGPC Notes).
169 AGPC Report.
171 AGPC Notes, p. 1.
I suggest putting in our report—and this is important on the basis of the statement of the proposed activities affecting the Central Aboriginal Reserves—that the conference agrees satisfactory arrangements can be made for the safety and welfare of the natives.\textsuperscript{172}

In terms of the AGPC's subsequent report and recommendations to parliament, it bears emphasising that this 'important general conclusion' was reached prior to Duguid and Thomson being called. It is equally important to note that the question of detribalisation—so crucial in terms of the AGPC's overall findings—was raised prior to Duguid and Thomson's entry, and was not raised at all during their consultation with the Committee.

On entering the Committee room, Duguid made his objections clear. If the rocket range was definitely going through the reserve, he knew 'of no welfare matters at all which [would] save the poor blacks'. 'I know of none', he declared. While Duguid conceded that airstrips rather than roads for the recovery of missiles and transportation of personnel 'minimise[d] things considerably', and was pleased, though sceptical, to learn that Aboriginal labour would not be used, he was adamant that no measures would 'keep the Aborigines away [from] ... the settlements'. Although informed by Beavis that 'settlements' was the wrong term, and that 'at most' there would be three 'observation posts' staffed by no more than 25 people, Duguid was unrelenting. In his opinion, 'the size of the settlements ... [did] not make a great deal of difference to interference with Aboriginal life', for 'whether small or big ... it [would] be quite impossible' to keep the Aborigines away. But 'why is it necessary to keep them away?' another Committee member asked, to which Duguid replied:

Because I do not want their mode of life interfered with. It is inevitable that some outside contacts will be made, but they should be made by anthropologists and enlightened missionaries who are prepared to observe their customs and mode of life generally, and approach them as definite entities.

But what 'if suitable patrol officers [were] employed to take charge of that aspect', Beavis inquired, only to face Duguid's swift retort that he knew of 'only two men who [knew] anything about the language of the Pitjantjatjara in the Reserve'. To Elkin's more inclusive claim that he was 'concerned with the welfare of Aborigines not only in the Reserve but along the whole range', Duguid replied that the 'Aborigines in the Reserve [were] of a

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
much more primitive state'. That is why I stress the value of the Reserve', he explained, and why 'I will not give up my attempt to save it'.

Prior to the AGPC meeting, Duguid and Thomson had never met. Duguid knew of the anthropologist's 1937 'Recommendations of Policy in Native Affairs in the Northern Territory', foremost of which had been 'absolute segregation' and, despite disagreeing with this, had borrowed Thomson's 'buffer' concept for use at Ernabella. More importantly, Duguid knew Thomson by reputation as a fine scientist whose work was 'made human and effective by his deep love for the Aborigines'. The feeling, it seems, was mutual, with Thomson likening the older man's 'honesty and sincerity' to a 'breath of clean fresh air'. At the AGPC meeting, Thomson backed Duguid as best he could. Having received insufficient warning and facts to prepare his case, Thomson's contribution was necessarily limited. Asked what 'ultimate effect' he believed the range would have on the Aborigines, and whether he had any 'helpful suggestions' to give the Committee, Thomson sketched what had happened in other parts of Australia where 'quite untouched' Aborigines had been forced into contact with whites: 'The native gets an inferiority complex, gets into an apathetic conditions, and loses the desire to live'. Although Beavis objected that the Aborigines in question could not be called 'untouched' for they 'already wander in and out [of the reserve], and have their contact with civilisation already', this only reinforced Thomson's view that nothing could protect the Aborigines from contact with range employees.

The AGPC thought otherwise. After hearing Duguid and Thomson's views, the Committee agreed that 'neither of these gentlemen had advanced any reason which precluded the making of satisfactory arrangements to ensure the safety and welfare of the Aborigines in the proposed range area'. More pointedly, Elkin remarked that 'neither of these gentlemen suggested any ways in which the Committee might fulfil its purpose, namely to safeguard the Aborigines while carrying out the project, their attitude being a negative one'. The AGPC's report, tabled in the House of Representatives on 6 March 1947, reflected Elkin's influence. Accordingly the Committee recommended that patrol officers be appointed to provide for the welfare of Aborigines 'both within and without the Central Reserve', thereby ensuring that any interference occasioned by the rocket range was 'controlled and not uncontrolled'. The issue of control was especially important in relation to the 'planned detribalisation of the Aborigine'. Under the heading 'Aims of the Aborigine Protection Authorities', it was explained that:

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173 Ibid., pp. 1-9
174 See chapter one.
176 Donald Thomson to Duguid, 27 December 1946, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
177 AGPC Notes, pp. 9-10.
178 AGPC Report, p. 11.
179 Secretary AGPC to Shedden, 8 February 1947 (quoting 'remarks by Professor A.P. Elkin'), NAA: A5954, 1656/2.
it is now accepted that the detribalisation of the Aborigine is inevitable, and that it is the aim of the Government authorities responsible for the protection of the Aborigine, in conjunction with missionary authorities, to control such detribalisation in the best interests of the Aborigine.\(^{180}\)

Although, by its phrasing, this statement gave tacit acknowledgment to a different (if now obsolete) perspective regarding detribalisation, it is not sufficiently appreciated that not everyone in 1947 'accepted' the inevitability of detribalisation. Alison Holland, for example, has argued that Duguid and Thomson '[b]oth recognised the 'inevitability' of detribalisation, but at the core of their defence of inviolable reserves was a commitment to gradual and sympathetic transition and development'.\(^{181}\) With regard to Duguid, only the second part of Holland's argument is correct; neither part reflects Thomson's views.

As well as being inevitable, the AGPC implied that detribalisation could be hastened without negative effect, thereby making explicit how different Duguid and Thomson's views were from Elkin's and the rest of the Committee. The AGPC acknowledged that '[c]ontact with white people, additional to that controlled by the government authorities and the two main Missions [at Ernabella and Warburton] would accelerate the rate of detribalisation ... as at present planned by those authorities'. However, the AGPC was confident that if 'the contacts brought about by the construction and use of the guided projectiles range were controlled and of a wholesome nature, their only effect would be the putting forward of the clock regarding detribalisation by possibly a generation'.\(^{182}\) Less than three years earlier, in defending Ernabella's hold over the properties adjacent to the Central Aborigines Reserve, Penhall had argued that 'the intrusion of white occupation' in that area 'would inevitably lead to rapid detribalisation and diminution in numbers and efficiency of the natives to the disadvantage, not only of the natives, but of the State of South Australia as a whole'.\(^{183}\) Yet Penhall was one of the four co-opted 'experts' responsible for the AGPC's contrary finding that detribalisation could now be hastened without negative effect. What had changed?

According to Duguid, nothing had changed. If the rocket range went ahead as planned, he predicted that within a generation the 'fine native people' of the Central Aborigines Reserve would 'have ceased to exist except as oddments here and there without any real hold on life', which to him meant 'detribalised'.\(^{184}\) Duguid viewed the prospect of accelerated detribalisation as a repudiation of all that Ernabella stood for, all that he had fought for, and all that had been achieved at Ernabella over the previous ten years. Following the release of the AGPC's report, he delivered a powerful address at the

\(^{180}\) AGPC Report, p. 5.
\(^{181}\) Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 259.
\(^{182}\) AGPC Report, p. 5.
\(^{183}\) Penhall to the Minister for Public Works, 21 December 1944.
\(^{184}\) Duguid, The Rocket Range, Aborigines and War, p. 12.
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Melbourne Town Hall in which he condemned the rocket range as a 'final token of Australia's disregard of her minority race':

Shot and poisoned as they were in the earlier days, neglected and despised more lately, must our Aborigines now be finally sacrificed and hurried to extinction by the sudden contact with the mad demands of twentieth century militarism?185

'Let us be frank and admit that we are forcing a clash between human beings', Duguid declared:

Not only may a few individual Aborigines meet their death in one way or another—and secrecy will prevent us ever knowing—but the whole fabric of life of 1500, or more, of our tribal Aborigines is to be sacrificed in this preparation for another war.186

Since the 'whole fabric' of Aboriginal life was linked to the land—'the land that has been their spiritual heritage for unknown centuries, the land that grows their vegetable food ... the mountain slopes that provide their water supplies, and the nearby plains that carry their game'—Duguid described the 'sudden taking over of [their] country' as equally, if not more, dangerous to Aboriginal survival than 'sudden contact'.187

For Duguid, detribalised meant degraded—or no longer 'tribal'. It also meant 'without land', for it was land, according to him, that made 'tribal life' possible. The number of organisations and individuals who named 'violation of the reserve' as their principal objection to the rocket range suggests that many Australians—black and white—felt as Duguid did. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, the New Education Fellowship, the People's Council for Culture, the Victorian Aboriginal Group and the Australian Aborigines League (AAL) among others, protested strongly against 'any encroachment on the Central Reserve, and consequent interference with tribal life'.188 In his capacity as honorary secretary of the AAL, Aboriginal activist Douglas Nicholls even went so far as to beseech the Queen of England to protect his 'defenceless' people and their land from the

185 Ibid., p. 15.
186 Ibid., p. 10.
188 Amy Brown, honorary secretary Victorian Aborigines Group to Chifley, 21 August 1946, NAA: A816/1, 3/310/435 Part 1. This file contains more than one-hundred letters of protest from various organisations and individuals against the rocket range. See Doris Gray, general secretary Women's Christian Temperance Union of South Australia to Chifley, 15 August 1946; Rupert Best, general secretary New Education Fellowship to Chifley, 31 October 1946; H.J. Tapscott, chairman Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society to Chifley, 6 November 1946; Laura Gapp, honorary secretary People's Council for Culture to Chifley, 10 January 1947.
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According to Elkin, however, it was 'not violation of reserves that [was] at stake'. Rather, he maintained that the rocket range highlighted the more important 'matter of how we assist Aborigines all over Australia to meet the contact with our culture which is hastening upon them during and since the war in an accelerated degree'.

As Tigger Wise, Geoffrey Gray and others have observed, Elkin's views on the effect of sudden contact between Aborigines and whites had changed. Whereas before the war Elkin had convincingly argued that abrupt change caused tribal disintegration and depopulation, the great influx of army personnel into the Northern Territory and subsequent large scale employment of Aboriginal labour during the war persuaded him that under certain circumstances Aborigines could readily adapt to new ways of living with no apparent ill-effects. In *Citizenship for the Aborigines: A National Policy* (1944), Elkin explained his new theory thus:

The Aborigines in the Northern Territory are rendering excellent, interested and willing service to the Army in this time of national crisis. There are several reasons why they are doing so: they are treated with justice and consideration; their work is appreciated; and their group or social life is preserved. But the fundamental reason is that their general health and diet are provided for in the same degree as in the case of the [white] soldiers: Showers, sanitation, good food served at tables, transport to and from work, prescribed hours of work and hospitals and medical attention.

If these conditions—the likes of which had seldom been experienced by Aborigines before—were replicated on a wider scale, Elkin was confident that 'the Aborigines [would] advance much more quickly' than previously expected. It seems that Penhall and the rest of the AGPC shared his confidence.

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189. Elkin to Bishop Cranwick, Chairman Australian Board of Missions, 18 July 1947, A.P. Elkin Papers, University of Sydney Archives, PI30, (hereafter Elkin Papers), Box 55, File 1/12/6.
193. *Ibid.*, p. 24; Elkin to Cranwick, 18 July 1947. Elkin’s war-revised views found support from the Adelaide based Aborigines’ Friends’ Association (AFA) who went further, arguing that ‘inasmuch as the natives rendered satisfactory service in the army, [they] should be permitted to take part in the new defence scheme’. Almost alone among humanitarian organisations, the AFA openly supported the rocket range, seeing it as an opportunity to create employment for Aborigines in ‘their own country’. See Gordon Rowe, secretary AFA to H.V. Johnson, Minister for the Interior, 6 August 1946 and Rowe to Chifley, 13 June 1947, NAA: A816/1, 3/301/435 Part 1. See also *Aborigines’ Friends’ Association Annual Report 1947*, Adelaide, 1947, pp. 5-6.
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In the belief that there were 'many bodies, Missionary, Humanitarian and University, who would be satisfied if [he] could assure them on this matter and give a few substantiating facts', Elkin released a statement on the rocket range in March 1947. Entitled 'Guided Projectiles and the Welfare of the Aborigines', Elkin's statement received wide media exposure, being printed in daily newspapers and church papers. Other than to advise would-be protesters against wasting their 'energy in futile protests or abstract arguments', Elkin's main point was that Duguid and others' '[e]mphasis on the violation of the Central Australian Reserves [had] been overdone'. Not only was there constant movement of Aborigines in and out of the reserve, but the Aborigines there had 'been in contact with white people for at least 30 years'. Moreover, since 'the missions at Ernabella and in the Warburton Ranges [were] educating [Aborigines] in such a way that they must become civilised—a correct policy', according to Elkin, this meant that 'the old way of life [was] already much modified'. As such, it was 'not so much a matter of violation of Reserves that counts', Elkin argued, but of 'doing damage directly or indirectly to Aborigines wherever they may be'. With patrol officers employed to oversee the welfare of Aborigines along the entire length and breadth of the range, both inside and outside the reserve, Elkin had 'no hesitation in saying that the Aborigines [were] not doomed by this experimental work'; indeed, he implied, it was possible that they would be better protected than ever before.

Having been 'associated with Aboriginal welfare, and to some extent with administration, for twenty years', Elkin expected that his statement 'would do a great deal to allay' public fears. He was mistaken. According to Wise, '[u]proar greeted Elkin's statement' with '[l]etters of utter astonishment at his apparent defection [filling] his mail'. Two missionary organisations with which Elkin had long been associated, the Australian Board of Missions (ABM) and the National Missionary Council (NMC), expressed strong reservations, each claiming that their stand in defence of the reserve was supported 'by anthropological teachings in the past', namely Elkin's. In June 1947, the NMC released its own statement on the rocket range which, according to Elkin, did 'not agree with [his] and to some extent contradict[ed] it'. With the NMC's statement, Bishop Cranswick, Chairman of the ABM, circulated a memo which he hoped Elkin would regard 'as defining in greater detail the specific Christian opinion on [the rocket range] in a way that ... [Elkin may] not have felt [himself] free to do in [his] capacity as a member' of

194 Elkin to Dedman, 4 March 1947, NAA: A5954, 1656/2.
196 Elkin, 'Guided Projectiles and the Welfare of the Aborigines'.
197 Elkin to Dedman, 4 March 1947.
199 Ibid.
200 Elkin to Mr Dovey, Honorary Secretary National Missionary Council, 17 July 1947, Elkin Papers, Box 55, File 1/12/6.
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the AGPC. Unable to abide Cranswick’s insinuation that he was ‘a coward with regard to [his] fundamental views’, and finding himself in ‘a serious state of duplicity’ over the NMC’s statement, Elkin resigned his membership of both organisations, thereby cementing his and Duguid’s polarised positions. In April 1947, Duguid resigned his membership of the South Australian APB, citing the South Australian government’s support for the rocket range and Penhall’s duplicitous agreement as his reasons. Neither man, it seems, could work within an organisation that effectively supported the other.

In Duguid’s opinion, Elkin’s close ties with the federal government had reduced the anthropologist to a state ‘of complete subservience’, the proof of which was Elkin’s apparent preparedness to ‘back any proposition the Federal Government puts up, even to the extent of a rocket range through a Reserve’. In his own defence, Elkin maintained that his support for the rocket range was based on a set of ‘facts’ that Duguid refused to face. Duguid, for example, talked about the reserve as if it was ‘where the people [were]’, yet Elkin insisted that this was only ‘sometimes’. Duguid gave the ‘impression as though the whole area [was] filled with ... mountains and rock holes and Pitjantjatjara people’, yet ‘a tremendous portion of the reserve [was] useless desert’. Duguid based most of his arguments ‘on hearsay’, ‘rhetoric and emotionalism’, yet the ‘facts’ of the matter were plain: the rocket range was the decided policy of the British and Australian governments; Aborigines would not be harmed in any way; and their sacred sites would not be interfered with. Rather than continue to protest ‘against what was not happening and what [was] not likely to happen’ as a consequence of the rocket range, Elkin urged Duguid and his fellow Presbyterians to help in other ways by keeping ‘the natives away from contact which they fear almost needlessly by making their Ernabella Mission more attractive’; by now an uncomfortably familiar argument.

Nearly everyone involved in the rocket range controversy saw the ‘facts’ differently. The Australian government saw a vast ‘empty’ wasteland that was ideal for testing Britain’s rockets. Elkin saw a government that was willing and able to manage an accelerated

201 Elkin Cranswick, 18 July 1947.
202 Elkin to Dovey, 17 July 1947; Elkin to Cranswick 18 July 1947.
203 Duguid to McIntosh, 28 April 1947, Duguid Papers: 2, Series 2.
204 Duguid to Doris Blackburn, 12 February 1947 and Duguid to Margaret Corden, honorary secretary Australian Student Christian Movement, 11 March 1947, Duguid Papers: 2, Series 1.
205 Wise, in an attempt to discredit Duguid’s attack on her subject’s integrity, has argued that Duguid was ‘[u]naware that Elkin, since the war, had changed his views completely about the effect of sudden contact between whites and Aborigines’. This, however, was not the case; according to Duguid, Elkin told him about his changed views at the AGPC meeting. Instead, for various reasons, including his belief that Elkin had ‘sold-out’ to government, Duguid was simply unconvinced by Elkin’s new theory. Wise, The Self-Made Anthropologist, p. 200; Duguid, ‘The Rocket Range and the Aborigines’, unpublished address, 24 August 1947, Duguid Papers: 2, Series 1.
206 Elkin to Cranswick, 18 July 1947.
207 Ibid.
detribalisation, and a government that was prepared to do everything, even 'to the point of inconvenience', to ensure Aborigines' safety.\textsuperscript{209} Having long since lost faith in government's ability, let alone desire, to protect Aborigines, Duguid and Thomson saw the rocket range as government's 'deliberate attempt to exterminate them'. Theirs was not the winning argument. While Duguid remained 'utterly and uncompromisingly opposed to the rocket project', the Presbyterian Board of Missions took Elkin's advice.\textsuperscript{210} Its new secretary, V.W. Coombes, having met with Elkin to discuss Ernabella's future several months before the AGPC meeting, was resigned to seeing 'a rapid acceleration in the tempo of the natives' change over to more Western ways'.\textsuperscript{211}

By the end of 1947, the rocket range controversy was over. In many ways, it was over before it began. In fighting against the rocket range, Duguid was fighting for an ideal at Ernabella that no longer existed, and perhaps never had; a sanctuary of preservation and elevation where 'tribal' Aborigines could learn about white civilisation without losing their identity as 'tribal' Aborigines. Likewise, Duguid was fighting for rights to land that Aborigines did not have, and for rights to a culture and 'way of life' that was increasingly viewed as incompatible with Aboriginal advancement and assimilation. Yet Duguid fought on regardless. It was the same fight he had been waging since the mid 1930s, and it was the same fight he would continue to wage in the coming decades. Having taken on government, the military and Elkin in a year-long sustained battle to save the Central Aborigines Reserve and its inhabitants from the rocket range, Duguid achieved notoriety, and a more positive fame in some quarters, as an uncompromising campaigner. While of little comfort to the Aborigines whose ancestral home became the Guided Projectiles Range—cruefully named Woomera, an Aboriginal word meaning throwing stick—Duguid's moral victory stood him, and his cause, in good stead for the battles yet to come.\textsuperscript{212}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{209} Elkin to Dovey, 17 July 1947.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 253; 'Resigns from abo boards as rocket protest', Argus, 10 May 1947.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Victor W. Coombes, general secretary Presbyterian Board of Missions, to Chifley, 21 November 1946, NAA: A816/1, 3/301/435 Part 1. By the end of 1948, Coombes had completely revised Ernabella's policy. The mission's primary purpose—to build up a self-supporting, self-respecting, healthy, industrious, Native community of truly Christian people—remained unaltered, but a bigger enterprise with capacity for expansion was now provided for. See Ernabella News Letter, December 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10.
\end{itemize}
PLATE 3a. This was the original Ernabella station homestead, known as 'the Manse'. This photograph was taken by J.R.B. Love, superintendent at Ernabella mission, in 1943.

Source: Ara Irititja Archive.


Source: Ara Irititja Archive
PLATE 4. Artist's impression of Mt Eba region.

Original caption: 'THE "DEAD HEART" OF AUSTRALIA, WHICH WILL BE THE SCENE OF FORTHCOMING ROCKET BOMB TESTS: An artist's impression of the lonely Mount Eba region, in North-eastern South Australia, which has been chosen by a British Mission, under Lieut-General Evetts, as the most suitable place for establishing a testing station for British rocket bombs, some of which may be charged with atomic explosives. The area selected is described by those who know it as "a wilderness of saltbush and bluebush, and a haunt of dingoes, dotted with stagnant water-holes."'

Artist: Alfred Morris

Source: Sphere (London), 6 July 1946, p. 12.
PLATE 5. Charles Duguid's rocket range map.

'BEHIND EVERY GREAT MAN'

Part 2: Introduction

'BETWEEN EVERY GREAT MAN ...'

In 1951, a reporter for People magazine described a day in the life of Charles Duguid thus:

[He] is probably Adelaide's busiest man ... His work in the neat surgery on North Terrace accounts for only part of his day. When he leaves there he motors to his large Magill home to the start of another day's work. A half-caste girl answers the door, greets him cheerfully, and gives him any messages. He goes to the study at the back of the house to tackle his correspondence.

At night, when all work is finished, the big Scot will sit in the huge living-room with his wife and munch toast. He will report the doings of the day, the promises and the plans, the victories and the set-backs. Mrs Duguid will listen, debate, criticise and advise. After 16 years of activity she knows the Aboriginal question backwards. For that 16 years she has stood resolutely at her husband's side tasting his every failure, contributing to his every success. Says Duguid, "I could not have done it without her".1

Charles Duguid lived his cause: at work and at home, in the mornings and at night, on weekends and on holidays, his passionate concern for the welfare of Australia's Aborigines was all consuming. At the Duguid house 'it was Aborigines for breakfast, dinner and tea, and for supper too if you were around for supper', Nancy Barnes, the 'half-caste girl' referred to above, has recalled.2 Duguid did more than bring his work for Aborigines home: he turned his home into his work, transforming it over time into a place where Aborigines were welcome to visit and to stay, where a sympathetic ear was guaranteed, and where it was known that action against discrimination would be taken.

For Duguid, bringing Aborigines into his home was a matter of practising what he preached and leading by example; a task made infinitely less onerous by Phyllis' love and support.3 'Behind every great man is a great woman', or so it is often said. It would be equally true to say that 'behind every great person are other great people' for no-one works

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1 'Dr Duguid—champion of the dark skinned underdog', People, 14 February 1951, p. 45.
2 Nancy Barnes, Munyi's daughter: A spirited Brumby, Seaview Press, Henley Beach, 2000, p. 93.
3 In 1954, Charles Duguid explained that: 'For many years my wife and I have proclaimed that the mental potential of the Aborigines of Australia is no whit behind that of the white race, and that when the natives are given full respect and opportunity their practice will not be behind. After a time we both felt we should take the lead in according that respect and providing the opportunity. So for ten years we have had Aborigines living in our home as full members'. C. Duguid, The Aborigines of Australia (an address to the Annual Meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, June 1954), Anti-Slavery Society, London, 1966, p. 10.
entirely alone, however, in Charles Duguid's case the cliche holds true. As well as helping with Charles' campaigns—drafting letters, editing articles and debating ideas—Phyllis Duguid acted as 'temporary mother' to the Aboriginal children who stayed in their home, 'mistress' to the Aboriginal servants they employed, and 'confidant/friend' to the numerous Aborigines who passed through their home, some staying for days, weeks, months and even years. But Phyllis was much more than Charles' helper. Drawing on her experiences in the home, she became a leading advocate on behalf of Aboriginal and mixed-descent women, and a leading proponent of Aboriginal 'advancement' during the second world war. After the war, Phyllis turned her attention to mothering a six year old Aboriginal boy, Sydney James Cook, who lived with the Duguids for six years between 1944 and 1950.

Companion to the previous section, this section examines the Duguids' domestic and working arrangements in the period 1938-1950. The home and all things pertaining to the home—cooking, cleaning and the raising of children—was typically the domain of women, otherwise known as the 'private sphere'. The 'public sphere'—work, politics and finance—was the domain of men. The Duguids' combined efforts on behalf of Aborigines blurred this distinction: the public became the private and the private became the public, but the sex-role stereotyping that underpinned the ideology of separate spheres remained. Thus, when Phyllis Duguid entered the public sphere, she entered as 'Mrs C. Duguid ... the wife of Dr C. Duguid whose interest in the welfare of Aborigines is well known'. Likewise, her work for Aborigines was directed mainly, although not exclusively, at helping Aboriginal women and children, considered by men and women alike as the proper preserve of the female reformer.

Whether luxury or burden, the social and sexual conventions that bound European men and women to separate spheres did not apply to Aborigines. Every aspect of their lives from birth to death was public: they were studied, sorted into categories and administered by the state; their work, their movements and their relationships were regulated; their children were removed. What were Charles and Phyllis Duguids' views on the increasingly interventionist policies and practices of the state? How did they feel about Aboriginal child removal? To what extent were their views shaped by contemporary racial theories, as opposed to lived realities as experienced in their home? Their 'adopted' Aboriginal son was a 'full-blood', and therefore an anomaly in white society. What difference did this make? By focussing on these lesser known aspects of the Duguids'

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4 See Barnes, *Munyi's daughter*, pp. 65-72.
behind every great man

activism, centred largely around the home, this section seeks to broaden historical understandings of both Charles and Phyllis Duguids’ campaigning. theirs was not a popular cause. what drove them to act? what did they hope to achieve? with the controversy surrounding the ‘stolen generations’ still raging, the Duguids’ views on Aboriginal child removal remain problematic today, although for very different reasons. how should their efforts to ‘rescue’ Aboriginal children be understood? in asking and answering such questions, this section sets the scene for Part 3: Assimilation—a topic about which unanswered (and unasked) questions abound.
Chapter 3

PHYLLIS DUGUID

'Even might itself has not the power of gentleness'

In 1987, one year after Charles Duguid's death, Phyllis Duguid received a Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to Aboriginal welfare.1 Upon her death in 1992, her ashes were scattered over Charles' grave at Ernabella mission. Phyllis' headstone, placed directly below and at a right angle to Charles', looks up at his, symbolically supporting and reflecting him in death as in life. It reads, 'Even might itself has not the power of gentleness', a fitting epitaph for both of them, for where Charles was 'courageous', 'arrogant' and often 'impossible', Phyllis was 'dignified', 'gracious', and 'calm'.2 She was the 'gentleness' to his 'might': the 'calm centre around which the turbulent whirlwind of [his] activities revolved, and were held together'.3 And Phyllis Duguid was also an important campaigner for Aborigines in her own right.

Phyllis Duguid's work for Aborigines is much less well known than her husband's.4 While partly a reflection of the smaller scale of her activities—Phyllis wrote less and published less than her husband, hence fewer records remain—the lack of interest in her activism can also be attributed to her own reticence to acknowledge it. Phyllis saw herself, and represented herself, as helping with her husband's cause. Although, as this chapter will show, Phyllis was much more than Charles' helper, her support was essential. This chapter begins, therefore, with a study of Charles and Phyllis Duguids' working relationship. Did Charles support his wife's endeavours? How was their collaboration expressed? It then examines Phyllis' efforts to help Aboriginal and mixed-descent women, before addressing the issue of Aboriginal child removal; a topic about which Phyllis had surprisingly little to say, especially in contrast to Charles whose (now controversial) views will also be examined.

2 These impressions were gained through talking to people who knew Charles and Phyllis Duguid. Personal communication with Andrew Duguid, 1 February 2000; Rosemary Douglas, 24 August 1999; Nancy Sheppard, 6 and 17 January 2000; Dr Basil Hetzel, 27 January 2000; Nancy Barnes, 6 and 15 January 2000; Bill Edwards, 6 January 2000; Dr Barbara Bray, 13 January 2000; Helen Burns, 14 January 2000.
4 While there has been much scholarship on the role of white women in Aboriginal politics, it has tended to focus on the inter-war period. A notable exception is Alison Holland, 'Post-War Women Reformers and Aboriginal Citizenship: Rehearsing an Old Campaign?' in Joy Damousi and Katherine Ellinghaus (eds.), Citizenship, Women and Social Justice: International Historical Perspectives, the Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1999, pp. 20-29. Phyllis Duguid is also mentioned in Heather Radi, 'A Note on Jessie Street's Interest in Aboriginal Welfare', in H. Radi (ed.), Jessie Street: Documents and Essays, Women's Redress Press, Marrickville, 1990, pp. 257-258.
I. Partners in the cause

Phyllis Evelyn Lade (1904-1992) came from a prominent Adelaide family. Her father, a noted scholar and Methodist minister, was principal of the Wesley Theological College, while her mother, a home-maker, came from a wealthy Melbourne family. Both her parents had strong views on the importance of education for girls. Phyllis attended Miss Henderson's school for girls—'a very fine little private school'—before finishing her secondary education at the Methodist Ladies College in Adelaide. In 1922 she won a bursary to attend the University of Adelaide where she studied classics, English language and literature. On completion of her four-year honours degree, Phyllis worked as a tutor in the School of English, before accepting a full-time position at the Presbyterian Girls College in Adelaide where she taught senior English for three years before marrying Charles in 1930. 'In those days', Phyllis reflected, 'you would need to have been extremely keen about your career to have postponed marriage, or put it aside altogether.' Believing that she had to choose between marriage and a career, Phyllis chose the former, although in her eyes 'marriage [was] a career'.

Looking back on her life, Phyllis felt that perhaps she should have made better use of her degree. Despite feeling 'quite confident that [she] was doing what [she] was supposed to be doing' by getting married and having children, Phyllis nevertheless wondered whether she should have been more 'responsible'. 'Except in [her] own personal life, of course', Phyllis felt that she had not made sufficient use of her degree. This, however, was to seriously underestimate the importance of her 'personal life'. Phyllis' personal life revolved around helping others. In addition to her work for Aborigines, she was a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Women's Non-Party Political Association—an organisation devoted 'to equal status for women'—and was a long serving member of the South Australian government's Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board. In 1944, Phyllis wrote and published a booklet entitled The Economic Status of the Homemaker in which she put the case for paying homemakers a regular wage, thereby joining a long line of distinguished Australian and international feminists who had called for the for the same reform. Equal representation

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5 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 66.
7 Mackinnon, The New Women, p. 165-73.
for women in parliament was another of Phyllis' causes: how can Australia be 'truly democratic', she asked in 1940, 'when one half of our population is not thoroughly represented'?9 In her later years, Phyllis fought against the legalisation of prostitution, seeing it—and the 1970s women's movement that supported it—as 'incompatible with human dignity'.10

Phyllis' feminist ideals, so important in her work for white women, were less so in relation to her work for Aborigines.11 As a woman, Phyllis believed that she had a 'duty' to help Aboriginal women, but it was a duty motivated by gender affinity, Christian morality and guilt more than feminism, although feminism was also important. In one of her many radio broadcasts for the WCTU, for example, Phyllis described the Aboriginal woman's plight as 'an abiding reproach to us as women, [for] instead of helping the Aboriginal woman to develop and attain a status akin to our own, we have remained indifferent or at least voiceless while she has been degraded'.12 Phyllis felt similarly responsible for the deplorable state of Aborigines in general. In the same broadcast she argued that:

If they are a dying race it is because in past days we actually encouraged their extermination and in present days are indifferent to it. We have been told that their passing is inevitable. It is not. If they die we are their murderers.13

Although, like Charles, Phyllis cautioned against dwelling 'too long on [Australia's] unhappy past', it being 'one for which we, as individuals, [could] hardly feel direct responsibility', her words told a different story.14 Phyllis felt a deep, almost overwhelming, sense of shame at Australia's 'tragic' and continuing error. In taking up the cause of Aborigines—men, women and children alike—Phyllis sought to 'make amends': she wanted 'to atone for the past and bring about better times for the Aborigines'.15 Feminism, and the feminist movement of which Phyllis was a part, gave her a forum in which to voice her concerns about Aborigines, but Phyllis was not a 'feminist activist'. She was a feminist and an activist on behalf of Aborigines. This distinction is important and necessary for several reasons.

In Getting Equal: The history of Australian feminism (1999), Marilyn Lake has acknowledged that 'feminism has its limits as a politics of emancipation'. In a

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12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
contemporary context, Lake observes that 'Indigenous women ... might find other issues more pressing [than feminism]: for example, land rights and the reconstitution of family, culture, languages and community life'.\textsuperscript{16} Transposed to the inter-war period, these concerns of Aboriginal women—or non-feminist issues—remain remarkably pertinent, yet Lake represents as 'feminist activists' white women who campaigned on these and other non-gender specific issues.\textsuperscript{17} While presumably it was their focus on the rights of Aboriginal women that made their wider concerns 'feminist' in Lake's view, issues such as Aboriginal health, education and citizenship were also tackled by white men and women who were not feminists. In \textit{Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919-1939}, Fiona Paisley has argued that white women's campaigns during the inter-war period were not 'inherently feminist', or, more precisely, that it is not 'adequate' to claim that they were.\textsuperscript{18} However, it is feminism that distinguishes the 'pro-indigenous' women activists in her book from the (largely absent) humanitarian men. According to Paisley, women's politics and humanitarian (men's) politics were different: although they 'existed alongside' each other and shared some features and some members, the humanitarian lobby 'lacked the women activists' focus on the right of Aboriginal women to independent lives'.\textsuperscript{19}

While acknowledging that many 'key white women reformers', including Phyllis Duguid, were 'deeply committed' to feminist ideals, Alison Holland has argued that much of what they campaigned on 'was part of a broader, well-established humanitarian critique'; a critique dominated by male campaigners, hence the vital importance of 'recovering women's contribution' to it.\textsuperscript{20} For Paisley, however, this is not enough. In her view, studies which incorporate women's campaigns into 'existing humanitarian frameworks' run the risk of 'subsuming their agenda under that of pro-indigenous men', thereby obscuring 'the distinctiveness of their self-consciously women's voice on Aboriginal policy'.\textsuperscript{21} Without denying the importance of women's voices, Holland's thesis—"Saving the Aborigines'. The White Woman's Crusade"—points out the limitations of studying humanitarianism from a purely female (or male) perspective. To 'reveal the connections between women and men reformers' is to recognise the high degree of 'productive collaboration' between them, she has argued, thereby necessitating a broader approach to the study of both.\textsuperscript{22} For not only were white women reformers 'generally supported and encouraged by the leading male humanitarians', many prominent women activists 'were [the] wives of ... leading scientific

\textsuperscript{16} Lake, \textit{Getting Equal}, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, pp. 110-135.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{21} Paisley, \textit{Loving Protection?}, p. 144.
\textsuperscript{22} Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 16.
PHYLLIS DUGUID

men', Holland has observed, citing by way of example 'Constance Cooke, Mrs Harvey Johnston, Mrs Strehlow, Mrs C. P. Mountford and Mrs Duguid'; all of whom utilised the work of male anthropologists, scientists and campaigners, including their husbands, in their work for Aborigines.23

Rather than claim for women reformers a (false) 'distinctiveness' based on feminism, Holland sought to locate their work 'within the context of both feminist politics and humanitarianism', thereby expanding on, and departing from, the work of Paisley and Lake. Finding Paisley and Lake's claim for a 'distinctive feminist response' to Aboriginal welfare reform too heavily reliant on the Western Australian campaigner, Mary Bennett's significant contribution, Holland has argued that it was only by dissolving 'Bennett's distinctive, even radical humanitarian agenda into that of the feminist reformer' that Paisley and Lake could demonstrate their claim.24 That Mary Bennett was, as Paisley has observed, 'a key figure in ... the political lives of other activist women', and that she 'corresponded with many activist women' is undeniable.25 However, Bennett was also important in the political lives of many activist men, including Charles Duguid, with whom she corresponded regularly from the mid 1930s. Indeed, with the exception of one letter addressed to the Duguids and one to Phyllis herself, all Bennett's remaining correspondence with the Duguids is addressed to Charles, with 'kindest remembrances and best wishes' to Phyllis expressed at the end.26

Unless feminism is defined so broadly as to be meaningless, its usefulness as an analytical tool—or descriptive political agenda—is limited, and limiting, with regard to Phyllis Duguid's work for Aborigines. To focus on her self-consciously feminist activities, namely her work for Aboriginal women, would be to misrepresent the full depth and breadth of her concerns. Like most women activists, Phyllis did not confine herself to helping Aboriginal women. Instead, in articles such as 'The Responsibility of Nation Building' (1941), 'The Future of the Aboriginal' (1942) and 'The Atlantic Charter and the Aborigines' (1944), all published in The White Ribbon Signal, official organ of the WCTU of Australia, Phyllis sought to educate white women about their responsibilities towards Aborigines.27 Of all her published articles on Aborigines, only one dealt mainly with

23 Ibid., pp. 10, 44.
24 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
26 See Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 1), Series 11; Mary M. Bennett to P. Duguid, 9 October 1948, Phyllis Duguid Papers. In bringing Charles Duguid to the notice of the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) in London, Bennett stated that: 'He and his very able wife ... are friends of mine and among the most valiant champions the Aborigines have'. Bennett to Miss Allen, general secretary NCCL, 20 August 1946, Records of the NCCL, National Library of Australia, Australian Joint Copying Project, M 2659.
Aboriginal women. Entitled 'The Australian Aborigines—III: A Woman's View', it was part three in a series of articles published by The Australian Intercollegian in 1940, the first two of which were written by Charles. In part two, Charles indicated that his wife would deal with 'matters cognate to native women in a subsequent article', and she did, although not before 're-emphasis[ing] certain truths about the people as a whole'.28 These 'truths' were about Aborigines' culture, intelligence and adaptability; they were about Aboriginal men and were based on the 'unchallengeable' authority of two white men, her husband and Professor A.P. Elkin. Thus, while it was feminism—or Phyllis' belief in equality—that encouraged her to voice her concerns about Aborigines and to believe that her 'woman's view' mattered, Phyllis' 'woman's view' was not necessarily a 'feminist view'. For the most part, Phyllis' views were the same as Charles'—and Charles' the same as Phyllis'.

Of the collaboration between Charles and Phyllis Duguid, Holland has described 'theirs [as] a partnership of which the humanitarian movement had many examples'.29 Following Holland, I argue that Phyllis' work for Aborigines cannot be understood without reference to Charles', and vice versa. Charles' frank admission that he 'could not have managed without her' is no exaggeration.30 When he returned home from his trips to Central Australia, brimming with anger, frustration and idealism, it was Phyllis in whom he confided: she was there to listen, counsel and console. When Charles learned of the Australian Inland Mission's misappropriation of the Smith of Dunesk Bequest, it was Phyllis who undertook the laborious task of writing the Bequest's history, trawling through the archives in support of her husband's claim.31 When the controversy regarding John Flynn's alleged anti-Aboriginal remarks erupted, Phyllis' declaration of support—'I was never more behind you in anything you have done since I married you than in this'—strengthened Charles' resolve.32 Likewise over the rocket range, Phyllis' support, and her active participation in campaigns against the project through the WCTU, was essential.

The following poem, lovingly and skilfully crafted at Phyllis' hand, provides otherwise unobtainable—and therefore precious—insights into the nature of her relationship with Charles. Simply entitled 'To Charles', Phyllis wrote:

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29 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 361.
30 See 'Dr Duguid—champion of the dark-skinned underdog', People, 14 February 1951, p. 45.
31 According to Charles, 'The task of going through so many volumes was beyond me, unless I gave up my work, so my wife generously took the task in hand'. C. Duguid, address entitled 'I wish to speak to the Smith of Dunesk Report', March 1941, p. 2, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6. The result was P. Duguid, A Brief Account of the "Smith of Dunesk Bequest", [1937], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 9.
32 C. Duguid to John MacKenzie, Moderator General Presbyterian Church, 11 February 1937, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
You might have sought a milder wife
Who never would have caused you strife
You might have wed a clinging vine
You would have loved her—man of mine!
But she who travels by your side
Has sometimes sought to be a guide
And this perhaps is only fair
As she will all your burdens share.33

Phyllis was a talented wordsmith, she loved language, words and poetry. To bring light relief, laughter and happiness through comical verse was her great joy. Family and friends looked forward to receiving her personalised poems on birthdays and other special occasions.34 Charles was in the throes of writing *No Dying Race* when Phyllis delivered this next one:

Though you're attached with dismal rage
And long to tear each written page—
Your cameras, slides and films to hurl
And watch them in the furnace curl
And shrivel in the ghastly flame—
Yet may I hope your wrath to tame
To lead you gently by the ear
And love you through another year.35

Was Phyllis Charles' guide? Did she lead him 'by the ear'? Or were these satirical devices meant to imply the opposite? Phyllis was certainly no 'clinging vine', but nor was she as self-assured as a literal interpretation of her verse would suggest. Perhaps it is unfair or unwise to read too much into Phyllis' poems? However, when read in conjunction with the testimony of family and friends who knew her best, it would seem foolish not to consider their deeper meaning.

Andrew Duguid, Charles and Phyllis' son born in 1931, told me that his father 'had a drive and intensity, plus a serious commitment to social issues' that his mother 'lacked', but it was not a lack he regretted. Phyllis, Andrew explained, was 'more balanced', 'more critical minded' and 'more cautious' than Charles. As her 'family poems' attest, Phyllis was 'very much a family person', according to Andrew, whose 'light fun side ... nicely balanced her deep seriousness'.36 Rosemary Douglas, the Duguids' daughter born in 1934, made

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33 P. Duguid, untitled and undated poem, Phyllis Duguid Papers.
34 Personal communication with Nancy Sheppard, 17 January 2000.
35 P. Duguid, untitled poem, [1961], Phyllis Duguid Papers.
36 Personal communication with Andrew Duguid, 1 February 2000.
similar observations of her parents. 'Mum had an amazing mind', Rosemary told me: she was 'thoughtful and caring' where Charles was 'spontaneous and brash'. Rosemary recalled having disliked Aborigines as a child because of the time her father spent with them. That she expressed no such (understandable) resentment on account of her mother's work for Aborigines is suggestive of Phyllis' lesser involvement. But not so, according to Rosemary, who insisted that Phyllis was 'equally as involved and passionate about the cause' as Charles. However, 'it was his cause', Rosemary stressed: Charles assumed public prominence while Phyllis stayed 'more or less on the sidelines'.

Dr Barbara Bray, a friend of the Duguids' and member of the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL) from the late 1960s, believed that Phyllis 'kept herself deliberately back', while Nancy Sheppard, a former teacher at Emabella and close friend of Charles and Phyllis in their later years, doubted Phyllis' 'authority to speak her mind'. Both agreed that Phyllis 'was an extremely intelligent woman' with 'a great mind' and 'well integrated personality'. Bray even went so far as to claim that Phyllis was 'the brains behind Charles' campaign'; a claim often heard of the wives of famous men. So why did Phyllis hold herself back, if indeed she did? Bray attributed this to Phyllis being 'very proper'. When speaking and writing of her husband, Phyllis 'always referred to Charles as the "Doctor"', Bray explained; even in casual conversation she would call him 'Doctor', thus reinforcing his superior public role. At SA AAL meetings, Bray continued, 'the women wore hats and gloves and called each Mrs so and so—never first names—while they spouted revolutionary ideas'. Bray's image of Phyllis—"most proper but also radical"—embodied this duality, for although Phyllis was 'very forward looking', Bray discerned a limit, set by Phyllis' own sense of propriety, as to how far she could go.

Phyllis may indeed have kept herself back, and she was doubtless 'very proper', but it would be a mistake to assume, on the basis of this, that she was any less effective or committed a campaigner. Phyllis gave as much time and energy to the Aboriginal cause as she felt she could, and should, without sacrificing time with her family. Charles, in contrast, sacrificed almost everything; 'he lost patients, money and family time'. Thus, if it is only in contrast to Charles' high public profile that Phyllis' seems low, and if it is only when measured against his efforts to help Aborigines that hers seem less, then the problem lies with the comparison. Whether consciously drawn or not, it is the comparison with Charles that gives rise to the notion of Phyllis' lesser role. His passion was so great, his commitment so boundless and his efforts so highly regarded, that when considered alongside Charles, Phyllis pales in comparison. For the 'greater good', which included the good of her family, Phyllis assumed a lesser role in the fight for justice for Aborigines:

38 Personal communication with Dr Barbara Bray, 13 January 2000 and Sheppard, 17 January 2000.
39 Ibid.
40 Personal communication with Bray, 13 January 2000.
41 Personal communication with Sheppard, 6 January 2000.
she moulded herself to suit her husband's needs without any expectation of reciprocity, but it was a sacrifice willingly and consciously made. It did not diminish her capacity to fight, nor does it diminish her importance as a campaigner, or the importance of the battles she fought. Rather than set Charles and Phyllis against each other, it is far more beneficial, and appropriate, to see the differences between them as enabling the cause.

On a basic, yet fundamental level, Phyllis' role as wife and mother, her place in the home, care of the children and supervision of household tasks facilitated Charles' campaigning by freeing his time. But Phyllis was much more than a home-maker. With an honours degree in English literature, Phyllis was also 'chief-editor' of Charles' writing. According to Andrew, Phyllis was largely responsible for 'cleaning up' if not writing much of his father's work on Aborigines.42 Nancy Barnes, an Aboriginal woman who lived with the Duguids for five years, has recalled many an instance of Phyllis checking Charles' impulsive outbursts:

"Now Charles, are you sure? Would it not be more accurate to state it so?" she would say to him. He might protest that he had the matter in substance, while she held out for the most accurate recall possible.43

By the consistency of depictions alone, it seems clear that Phyllis tempered Charles' fiery spirit, making him a better and more effective campaigner. No doubt Phyllis was, as Dr Basil Hetzel, a colleague and friend has attested, 'a remarkable wife and woman', all the more so for having 'coped with Charles amazingly'.44 However, rather than Phyllis leading Charles 'by the ear', or Charles leading Phyllis, they need to be understood as a partnership, working together to achieve their aims, the personalities, skills and temperaments of each complementing the other.

Phyllis travelled by Charles' side; that she 'sometimes sought to be a guide' she saw as 'only fair' for all his burdens did she share. They 'sparked off each other', Rosemary has recalled of her parents, discussing ideas and solving problems together.45 Neither Charles nor Phyllis doubted, however, that the cause was 'his'. According to Phyllis, she joined the WCTU because 'they were one of the few groups that were the least bit interested in justice for the Aborigines', and this appealed to her, she explained, 'because of [her] husband's interest'.46 In 1938 Phyllis journeyed to Alice Springs with M.E. Eaton, president of the South Australian branch of the WCTU, to investigate the condition of Aboriginal and mixed-descent women. That Phyllis wanted to 'see the situation for herself' Charles later acknowledged in Doctor and the Aborigines (1972), but at the time found it more fruitful to reconcile Phyllis' solo trip with the telling explanation that 'my wife did my

42 Personal communication with Andrew Duguid, 4 November 1999.
43 Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, p. 66.
44 Personal communication with Dr Basil Hetzel, 27 January 2000.
Phyllis Duguid

trip this year'. 47 In Doctor and the Aborigines, Charles recorded Phyllis' interest in Aboriginal issues thus:

Phyllis was to identify herself completely with my cause, "speaking out" to many groups and above all creating in our home a centre of mutual respect between Aborigines and ourselves. 48

As the parenthesis on 'speaking out' suggests, Charles likely saw this aspect of his wife's campaigning as something novel, perhaps even something quite daring. Although he supported her endeavours and, by all accounts, was immensely proud of her achievements, Charles would perhaps have preferred his wife to confine her efforts to helping him from home, for it was in the home, according to him, that Phyllis' greatest impact was felt.

Along with many other male humanitarians, Charles Duguid believed that women were best suited to help other women. 49 As Holland has observed, this demarcation of roles 'was symptomatic of the lingering Victorian sexual ideology concerning the 'separate spheres' that underpinned white gender relations, and women's involvement in public life at this time'. 50 Thus, according to Charles, the best way for white women to 'help raise' Aboriginal women was to do as Phyllis did in the home. Her 'handling of half-white girls' employed by them was a lesson to all, he claimed, for rather than 'din into them with deprecating tone and looks that they mustn't speak to boys', Phyllis faced 'reality'. She invited the 'half-caste girls' in their employ 'to bring their boyfriends to the home rather than to walk the streets' with the following heartening results:

Invariably at first the invitation causes amazement and the lads, to begin with, are more shy than the girls, but a fire and a supper prepared by themselves, with no interference beyond one's presence in a nearby room, soon creates a healthier outlook. 51

By demonstrating the 'proper' way to entertain, and by demonstrating trust, Phyllis sought to foster 'self-respect' in her young domestics, and 'mutual respect' in the couple. Other than Phyllis, however, and the WCTU of Adelaide which Charles 'commended for the work of this nature it [was] doing through its Aboriginal Girls' Club', Charles was

47 C. Duguid to Sir John Harris, secretary Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, 28 November 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1 (emphasis added).
48 C. Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, Rigby, Adelaide, p. 94 (emphasis added).
49 During his 1936 patrol through Central Australia, Charles found it 'difficult to get near the women ... of the far out-bush'. Finding it less difficult to approach 'missionised' Aboriginal women, he praised 'Christianity [for having] given woman her status', and made note in his diary of 'a great field of work for the women of the South'. C. Duguid, 1936 Patrol Diary, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 2.
50 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 10.
'astonished at the number of Christian women who [did] not care to be associated with Aboriginal women'. Did this mean, he wondered, that women were 'more susceptible to colour prejudice than men'? Certainly not, Charles hoped, but the apparent indifference, even antipathy, of white women towards Aboriginal women could not be ignored.

II. 'Essentially women's work': The League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women

To reach the women of Australia, Phyllis Duguid had to venture beyond the home. Her journey to Alice Springs with WCTU president, M.E. Eaton, in July 1938 marked the beginning of this. After a very 'watery parting' in Adelaide, for which Phyllis later apologised—'I never used to be like that', she told Charles, '[its] sickening'—the journey by train to Alice Springs was like stepping 'into a different world', according to Phyllis, one in which only those going 'right through' were seen as living 'close to the raw'. With its 'miles of flat stony country', 'red dust' and 'awful ... lack of trees', the Interior was a masculine, alien world. For the final two weeks of their month-long sojourn, the two women visited Emabella mission, a gruelling two day journey by car which sorely tested Eaton's strength and Phyllis' resolve: 'I should never have brought [Eaton] out here at all', Phyllis complained. In her letters home to Charles from Emabella, Phyllis expressed a deep sense of unease at 'being so shut off from civilisation: 'I get horribly panicky' and 'I get all sorts of fears', she admitted. It was Emabella's beauty that finally settled Phyllis' nerves. Everywhere she looked, Phyllis saw beauty: the Aborigines were 'quite naked and so beautiful', she marvelled, while the countryside with its 'masses of lavender pea shaped flowers' was 'perfectly beautiful'. Despite its isolation, or perhaps because of it, Emabella's beauty stood in marked contrast to the ugliness Phyllis witnessed in Alice Springs.

Alice Springs was to help Phyllis 'grow a thicker skin'. Although it was 'strenuous going', by the end of her first week away Phyllis 'began to see daylight': '[I] have set some tiny wheels going this week', she told Charles, 'there is so much to be done up here—surely my coming will accomplish something'. Phyllis' main purpose in visiting Alice Springs was to investigate the living conditions and 'future prospects' of Aboriginal and mixed-descent women and girls. Her first stop was the Alice Springs Police Station.

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52 Ibid.
53 P. Duguid to C. Duguid, 7 July 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
55 In fact, Phyllis was so desperate 'to come home' that she considered leaving Eaton behind. See P. Duguid to C. Duguid, 24 July 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
57 P. Duguid to C. Duguid, 7 July 1938; P. Duguid to C. Duguid, undated (from Alice Springs), Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
where a young woman, Ann Smith, formerly of the 'half-caste' home at Quorn, was being held awaiting trial for forgery. Before leaving Alice Springs, Phyllis learned that Smith was pregnant; 'a pitiful complication' that might 'save her from gaol', Phyllis reflected, 'but [would] probably mean life for some years in the half-caste home and after that what?' Phyllis believed that girls like Smith desperately needed 'some deep interest in life'. However, her suggestion of a social club—a place where half-caste and native girls could spend their spare time under proper care—found little support among Alice Springs residents. It came as something of a shock to Phyllis to learn that even members of the Country Women's Association—otherwise 'quite good people'—had 'strong anti-half-caste feeling[s]'. Following talks with sympathetic residents, Phyllis concluded that:

The antipathy of so many white women of the district is rooted in the unpleasant knowledge that fathers, uncles and even husbands have bestowed their names on half-caste off-spring. Thus Mrs John Smith has her charming baby Mary-Jane in the [AIM] hostel, while half-caste Ann Smith carries her unborn infant in Alice Springs lock up.

The prevailing attitude, 'give them an outside room and shut your eyes', encapsulated the problem for Phyllis. Clearly it was no secret what was going on and yet 'nothing was being done—even by the Churches—to provide for [the 'half-castes'] happy acceptance into the society of which they had become a part'.

Immediately upon her return to Adelaide, Phyllis set about interesting 'women's organisations in the future of the half-caste girls'. She wanted 'the women of Australia [to] take the cause of the half-caste girl to heart, and [to] provide her with a place in the national life'. While by no means ideal, Phyllis believed that the 'half-caste boy' posed less of a problem, for he 'found his natural place in station life, and fitted in much more easily'. The 'half-caste girl', in contrast, had no such place; a place for her had to be found. The obvious choice was in the home, for as Phyllis herself had proved, 'half-caste girls were excellent in the house'. Unfortunately, however, 'bringing them to the city as domestic helpers produced all sorts of problems', according to Phyllis, 'they needed to be taught the

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58 To protect the privacy of this woman and her descendants, her name has been changed. Charles and Phyllis Duguid were anxious 'to help the girl up'. Following Phyllis' visit, they sought leave to 'sponsor' Smith in Adelaide for 'such period as might be fixed' to save her from gaol. C. Duguid to Judge Wells of the Supreme Court, 8 August 1938 and J.W. Nichols, Clerk of Court, to C. Duguid, 2 September 1938, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.


60 Ibid., p. 32. All names in this passage have been changed. The surnames Phyllis gave for the white woman and the Aboriginal woman were the same.


64 'Making Places for Half-Caste Girls', Advertiser, 5 August 1938.
use of money and to be given proper recreation and interests if they were to lead good
lives'.

It was through having 'half-caste girls working in her home' that Phyllis became
interested in their problems; problems which she saw as peculiar to them, and which she
sought to solve first by changing white society's attitude towards them, and second by
changing them. Phyllis firmly believed that 'proper recreation', such as her proposed
social club, 'would help greatly in providing them with interests and keeping them [away]
from bad influences', namely bad white men. While in Alice Springs, Phyllis learned that
'not one illegitimate baby [had] been born' to a particular group of 'half-caste girls' who
had been warned of the dangers of contact with white men. In her mind, therefore, it was
not just the attitude and behaviour of white men that needed to change, it was also the
attitude of the 'girls' they exploited. 'Half-caste girls' needed to be shown a better way,
according to Phyllis, they needed 'to be given a real understanding of themselves with the
self-respect which would follow. They [needed] adequate education, cultural opportunities,
and above all an ideal'. Although no elaboration on 'ideal' was offered, none was
required. The life that Phyllis enjoyed was the 'ideal'. In order to find 'a place in our
civilisation'—a place that Phyllis was adamant they deserved—'half-castes girls' needed to
become more like white women; educated, aware, self-respecting and chaste.

Phyllis' call to the women of Australia resulted in the formation of a women's
lobby group that was dedicated to securing 'an honourable status for Aboriginal and half-
caste women'. Provisionally called the Council for the Welfare of Half-Caste and
Aboriginal Girls, by the end of November 1938 the group's name had been changed to the
League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women.
Comprised of representatives from various women's, church and humanitarian groups in
Adelaide, the League for Aboriginal Women boasted several high profile campaigners.
Among these two names stand out, Constance Tement Cooke and Ada Bromham, both
because of the wealth of experience they brought to Phyllis' new League—Cooke was
convenor of the Aboriginals' Welfare Committee of the Women's Non-Party Association,
while Bromham was secretary of the WCTU and had strong links to the Women's Service

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66 Ibid.
68 P. Duguid, 'Diary of journey', p. 27.
70 Minutes of the League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women
(hereafter League for Aboriginal Women Minutes), 4 November 1938, Papers of the Aborigines
Advancement League (hereafter League Papers), State Library of South Australia, Mortlock
Collection, SRG 250, Series 2/1.
71 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 21 October 1938, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/1;
League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 24 November 1938, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
Guilds in Western Australia—and because their executive membership of this League has been largely overlooked by historians.72

As influential feminists and Aboriginal rights activists, Cooke and Bromham feature prominently in Marilyn Lake's *Getting Equal* and in Fiona Paisley's *Loving Protection*, yet neither historian mentions their involvement in Phyllis' League.73 From Lake we learn that Bromham and Cooke were 'friends and political allies' of Mary Bennett, and that Bromham 'was smart, good looking and articulate. With her shingled hair, simple dress and Oakland car, purchased in 1916, she presented the image of a thoroughly modern woman'. Cooke, we are told, was a Justice of the Peace and a founding member of the Aborigines Protection League, but no mention is made of either her or Bromham's involvement in the League for Aboriginal Women, or of the League itself, in Lake's book.74 To the best of my knowledge, Alison Holland is the only historian to have written, in any detail, about the League for Aboriginal Women. Demonstrating something of its importance in the Australian context, Holland likened the League for Aboriginal Women to the North American Women's National Indian Association, suggesting that it represented a first attempt to unify Australian women's Aboriginal campaigns.75 Although short-lived—in 1946 the League for Aboriginal Women merged with the Aborigines Protection League and became the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League, thereafter opening its membership to men and women—its eight year existence as a 'women's only' lobby group raises certain questions. What did the League for Aboriginal Women stand for? How successful was it? Did its methods differ from other organisations? Why has its existence been overlooked by feminist and other historians?

Initiated and presided over by Phyllis Duguid, the League for Aboriginal Women was primarily called into existence to make her goal of a social club for 'half-caste and native girls' in Alice Springs a reality.76 Immediately, the League faced criticism from the Reverend J.H. Sexton, secretary of the Aborigines' Friends' Association (AFA), who argued that there was already a surplus of organisations working for the Aborigines in Alice Springs. In addition to the three churches and the Salvation Army, Sexton's Association funded a travelling missionary, E.E. Kramer, who worked out of Alice Springs. Moreover, as there were already several groups working for the Aborigines in Adelaide, Sexton saw no need for another group. Defending her initiative, Phyllis argued

72 For a short biography of Constance Tement Cooke, see Paisley *Loving Protection?*, pp. 21-22.
74 Given Paisley's focus on the inter-war years, it is possible that Cooke and Bromham's involvement in the League for Aboriginal Women simply fell outside her purview. However, as one of only two white women appointed to the South Australian government's Aborigines Advisory Council, Cooke's membership of that Council until 1940 is mentioned, as is her retirement from public affairs in 1963. See Paisley, *Loving Protection?*, pp. 21-22.
75 Lake, *Getting Equal*, pp. 53-54, 111.
76 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', pp. 10-11.
that 'no definite welfare work' such as the League for Aboriginal Women contemplated was being done in Alice Springs, while Cooke maintained that the other Adelaide based organisations, including the Aborigines Protection League (APL), were not interested in 'this kind of work at all'.\textsuperscript{77} Under Charles Duguid's Presidency, the APL focussed its efforts on 'protecting the myall Aborigines, leaving the detribalised natives to other societies, but helping them whenever possible', while the AFA's practice of making small grants to missions and societies 'working for the native people' inspired little confidence.\textsuperscript{78}

More importantly, according to Phyllis, the kind of work she proposed was 'essentially women's work'; it was work for women by women.\textsuperscript{79} Her colleagues agreed, pointing out that their League was:

for native \textit{women} and \textit{girls}, that its service in this regard was the sole aim of this group and not one of many activities, [and] that matters had been left too long to those who had not recognised the rights of Aboriginal women.\textsuperscript{80}

The League for Aboriginal Women's constitution, finalised in November 1938, reflected these aims:

\textbf{Purpose:} A society to secure an honourable status for Aboriginal and half-caste women and girls.

(1) By insisting on adequate protection for the sanctity of their person.
   i. The appointment of Women Protectors.
   ii. Enforcement of Protective Legislation.
   iii. By maintaining that the Law shall in all particulars give at least the same protection to Aboriginal women as to white women.

(2) By securing facilities for their gradual development through:-
   i. Suitable Education.
   ii. Adequate medical care.
   iii. Provision of recreational and cultural opportunities.

(3) By ensuring economic security for the race through:-
   i. Provision of suitable land.
   ii. Just remuneration for work.\textsuperscript{81}

What made the League for Aboriginal Women different from other groups was its exclusive focus on Aboriginal women, and its inclusion of all Aboriginal women and girls.

\textsuperscript{77} League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 21 October 1938.
\textsuperscript{78} Minutes of the Aborigines Protection League, 14 February 1940, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 1/1; Reverend W. Morley to J.H. Sexton, 19 February 1937, Duguid Papers, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{79} League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 21 October 1938.
\textsuperscript{80} League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 24 November 1938 (original emphasis).
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Ibid.}
whether 'tribal', 'detribalised' or 'half-caste', within its purview. From the outset, members hoped that with an awakening conscience among women of other states' the League would spread nation-wide, enabling the group to express a 'united voice on the question of the treatment of Aboriginal and half-caste women and girls'.82

In its first year of operation, the League for Aboriginal Women attracted 205 members, each paying 1/- a year in fees. However, most of the League's work was undertaken by 'a keen executive of about twenty women' who met monthly to discuss ideas, draft resolutions, deal with correspondence and plan 'educational events'.83 In 1942, it was decided to regulate these executive meetings by the phases of the moon; henceforth they were held 'in the evening two nights before the full moon'. Larger meetings to which all members were invited were held once a year. At the League's first annual meeting in November 1939, Phyllis Duguid stated that:

the executive had met ten times during the year; that although nothing spectacular had been done, she believed [that] the League had justified its existence by a great deal of educational work, and by its contact with our own and federal governments.

The educational work to which Phyllis referred included asking the Council of Churches to set apart 'one Sunday a year ... as Aboriginal Sunday'.84 This was not a new idea, for as Bain Attwood has observed, 'a day of this nature seems to have been first suggested by humanitarians at a conference of government, missionary and other organisations in 1929'. According to Attwood, it was the Aboriginal activist, William Cooper's call for an 'Aborigines' Day', to be held every year on the Sunday closest to Australia Day that ultimately came to be known as 'Aboriginal Sunday'.85 However, whereas Cooper saw Aboriginal Sunday as a day of protest, the League for Aboriginal Women embraced it as an 'educational day', seeing it as an ideal opportunity to show-case 'a constructive policy for natives and half-castes'.86

The League for Aboriginal Women believed that their 'first duty [was] to save the race by compensating them for the means of subsistence' white society had 'taken from them'.87 As well as attempting to secure the same maternity, invalid and old-age benefits for Aboriginal women as for white women, the League sought a more long-term solution in the training of Aboriginal women as teachers and nurses 'who could attend to their own

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82 Ibid.
84 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 16 June 1939, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
85 Bain Attwood, Rights for Aborigines, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, 2003, pp. 70, 359 (see footnote 42).
86 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 16 June 1939.
87 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 2 November 1939, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
The League found the attitude of the Education Department and the Nurses Board most discouraging in this regard, for although '[no] real objection' was made to their suggestion, they were 'left in some doubt as to whether [the] girls would be really welcome as trainees'. Phyllis put this down to 'groundless prejudice', a problem whose only solution lay in 'further education of the white race'. Towards this end, League members addressed mother's clubs, women's organisations and church guilds 'on the subject of the Aboriginal race'. The League also hosted large public meetings, such as the one in 1939 at which an illustrated lecture on 'The Aboriginal Woman of Australia' was given by Professor Harvey Johnston (see Plate 6). According to Holland, four hundred women attended this meeting, and Lady Muriel Barclay-Harvey was 'presented with a rug made by Aboriginal women at the Mt. Margaret Mission, donated by Mary M. Bennett'. In the following year, Bennett herself addressed the group, treating the League's executive to a 'vivid word-picture of conditions' in Western Australia.

Apart from its educational work, the League for Aboriginal Women enjoyed little in the way of success. Its two main goals—the 'provision of recreational and cultural opportunities' via the establishment of a social club in Alice Springs, and the appointment of women protectors—were hampered by the onset of war. According to Phyllis, the executive put a great deal of time and thought into plans for the social club, only to have their proposal dashed by the 'intervention of war'. Having initially requested a grant of five hundred pounds from the federal government towards the purchase of such a facility, and appreciating the 'difficulties rising out of the war situation', the League proposed renting a club room instead, but to no avail. Despite finding favour among leading bureaucrats, including the Federal Director of Native Affairs, E.W.P Chinnery, funding for such a project was simply unavailable. Accepting that certain sacrifices were inevitable during war-time, the League agreed to leave this project in abeyance, but not so the appointment of women protectors. As far as the League was concerned, the increased military presence in Alice Springs and Darwin made the appointment of women protectors essential. Following reports that the 'half-caste' girls compound in Darwin had been broken into by the military, resulting in high number of pregnancies, the League for Aboriginal Women called on the federal government to 'appoint without delay suitable

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88 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 22 May 1939 and 2 November 1939, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
90 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 184.
91 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 6 October 1939 and 2 November 1939, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
93 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', pp. 184-85.
women protectors of Aborigines with police powers—two at Alice Springs and two at Darwin'.

The League for Aboriginal Women was not alone in their push for war-time women protectors. The Association for the Protection of Native Races in Sydney, the APL in Adelaide and women's groups throughout the nation lobbied government on this issue. Phyllis was acutely aware that many 'national organisations' had been appealing for women protectors 'for years, but so far without effect'. To her, it seemed 'so obvious a reform that it [was] difficult to understand the government's reluctance to grant it'. Particularly since many Aboriginal women—with good reason—distrust[ed] all white men', Phyllis argued that it was 'impossible for a man to do the best work, however good his intentions'.

Chinnery, however, could not be persuaded. According to Holland, Chinnery was wary of granting direct power and responsibility to women, preferring instead to see women 'acting in wifely, facilitatory roles'. Ideally, and somewhat ironically, Chinnery believed that the most suitable women protectors would be those experienced in running hostels for Aborigines and 'half-castes'. He therefore declined to recommend the appointment of women protectors until money was available for the establishment of hostels in Alice Springs and Darwin, pointing instead to the adequate and praiseworthy work already being performed by missionary women and the wives of certain protectors.

It was perhaps with this in mind that the League for Aboriginal Women petitioned to have one of their members, Bertha Strehlow, wife of patrol officer T.G.H. Strehlow and resident of Jay Creek (near Alice Springs), appointed a woman protector. In October 1941, the League requested that Bertha be granted the status of protector with just remuneration for her work, only to receive the terse reply that 'Mrs Strehlow [herself] would not consider her appointment in this capacity'. Whereas the League assumed that Bertha would relish such an opportunity and so failed to ask her before approaching government, it seems that Bertha had no such desire. Quite the contrary, in fact, for far from wanting to be made an official protector, Bertha wished to be relieved of all such duties. Claiming to speak on his wife's behalf, T.G.H. Strehlow informed Chinnery that the sort of voluntary work Bertha did while he was away from Jay Creek, such as issuing rations and attending to the sick, caused her great worry. If being an official protector meant supervising Aboriginal and 'half-caste' women at Alice Springs, then Bertha was definitely not interested.

96 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 4 November 1940.
98 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 192.
99 Ibid., p. 195.
100 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 24 October 1941 and 14 March 1942, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
Soon after making its failed bid to have Bertha Strehlow appointed a woman protector, the League turned its attention to the plight of two 'half-caste' girls, Lena and Biddy, whom they deemed in urgent need of removal. In April 1942 Phyllis Duguid reported that:

\[ \text{two girls [Lena and Biddy] were living with their mother and stepfather in the district of Cooperpedy [sic]. The latter was acting as the girls' stepfather and was a most undesirable person. It was felt that in the interests of the girls steps should be taken to remove them.}\]

Subsequently, Ada Bramham moved that:

\[ \text{a letter be written to the Aborigines Department asking that some arrangements be made to remove these children and that a woman police officer be employed to convey the children to another more congenial locality.}\]

In June 1942 the League received a reply from the South Australian Aborigines Protection Board (APB) 'stating that the children [were] living in unsatisfactory conditions [but] that their removal [could] only be effected if it [was] possible to place them in a home'. Owing to the 'extremely serious nature of the case', the League deemed 'it advisable to have the children removed from their present environment immediately'. Having received no further word on this matter by November 1942, and believing the 'stumbling block' to be the lack of a suitable home, League members resolved 'to provide a home' for the girls themselves.

Whether Lena and Biddy were removed is unknown: there being no further mention of them in the League's minutes it seems unlikely. However, whether they were removed or not bears little impact on the League's intentions. The League for Aboriginal Women was so determined to have Lena and Biddy removed that members were prepared to provide a home for the girls themselves. This is the crucial and telling point, for if Lena and Biddy's case was as serious as the League feared, then what about the mother? Having subjected her daughters to an 'undesirable' man and 'unsatisfactory' living conditions, was her cause considered lost? Was she even considered? The League's priority, it seems, was to save the girls, not the mother and certainly not the family. Could the case of Lena and Biddy explain the lack of interest that feminist and other historians have shown in the League for Aboriginal Women? A more likely explanation is that historians have not

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102 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 30 April 1942, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
103 Ibid.
104 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 26 June 1942, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
105 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 19 November 1942, League Papers, SRG 250, Series 2/2.
known about the League for Aboriginal Women's existence. Knowing about it means re-think-
ing certain ideas about white women activists' views on the removal of Aboriginal
children.

III. 'Rescuing' Aboriginal children

There has been much scholarship of late on the question of white women's role in the
'stealing' of Aboriginal children.106 That many white women were involved in, or
responsible for, the removal of Aboriginal children from their families is undeniable.
However, that some also fought against this policy cannot now be disputed. Thanks to the
work of Paisley and Lake among others, compelling narratives of white women activists' struggle
against Aboriginal child removal have emerged. To know that this policy was
contested by earlier generations of white Australians, including women, shows as 'palpably
false' the conservative political rhetoric of past acceptance which emerged in the wake of
Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families.107 However, there is nothing to
be gained by ignoring the complexity of views and approaches on this issue.

Not all white women activists who campaigned against Aboriginal child removal
were constant in their opposition. In 1934, for example, Ada Bromham addressed a Royal
Commission conducted by Henry Moseley on the condition and treatment of Aborigines
in Western Australia. Against the practice of removing Aboriginal children from their
mothers, Bromham argued that Aboriginal mothers should be granted custody rights over
their children for 'under the law the mother has no right over the child'.108 According to
Lake, 'Bromham was a champion of mothers' rights and women's equality of status as
mothers and certainly saw the removal of Aboriginal children as a denial of their mothers'
natural rights'.109 Yet, less than ten years after the Moseley Royal Commission, Bromham
was the person who initiated the League for Aboriginal Women's motion to have Lena and
Biddy removed to a 'more congenial locality'. Seemingly a direct reversal of Bromham's
earlier views, what did this change mean? Was Lena and Biddy's case exceptional, or were
only some Aboriginal mothers deserving of custody rights?

As evidence of white women's opposition to the policy of Aboriginal child removal,
Paisley and Lake cite the testimony of 'feminist' reformers, including Bromham, at the

106 See, for example, Holland, 'Wives and Mother Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's
Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920s-1940s', Australian Historical Studies, No. 117,
October 2001, pp. 292-310; Ann Curthoys, 'Refiguring Histories of Women and Children',
Australian Historical Studies, No. 117, October 2001, pp. 334-337; Lake, 'Women and
Whiteness', Australian Historical Studies, No. 117, October 2001, pp. 338-342; Holland, 'Mary
Bennett and the Feminists: A Response', Australian Historical Studies, No. 120, October 2002,
pp. 398-400.

107 See Anna Haebich, Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000, Fremantle


Moseley Royal Commission. The problem with this, according to Holland, is that concern over the removal of Aboriginal children was raised only 'in response to specific questions being asked of them by the Commissioner ... It was not germane to their concerns'. With the exception of Mary Bennett whose passionate advocacy of the rights of Aboriginal mothers set her apart, Holland has argued that other white women reformers were more interested in the status of 'half-caste' children than their mothers: they saw the 'half-caste problem' as a matter of dealing with the increasing number of 'illegitimate half-caste' children, not custody rights. Thus, Ada Bramham could observe the shocking truth that Aboriginal mothers were denied custody rights in 1934, and effectively sanction the lack of this right by calling for Lena and Biddy to be removed in 1942.

In *Loving Protection?* Paisley has argued that Mary Bennett 'was one of the few critics of Aboriginal policy in Australia to insist upon the extreme cruelty of child removal'. Yet this telling observation is overshadowed by Paisley's greater claim for inclusivity: white women's campaigns 'remain remarkably pertinent', according to Paisley, 'perhaps most powerfully so because members of their network articulated arguments against the removal of Aboriginal children which have been reiterated in *Bringing Them Home*'. Similarly, Lake has argued that 'feminists were the first organised political group to oppose the removal of Aboriginal children from their mothers'. Certainly some opposition was expressed, however Bennett's insistence that 'no department in the world [could] take the place of a child's mother', and that 'no valid justification' existed 'for the official smashing of native family life and community life' brought about by child removal, was not matched by other testimony at the Moseley Royal Commission.

In her 1930 publication, *The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being*, Bennett argued that 'half-castes' needed 'to be given back what they [had] lost—human ties':

> They need *fellowship*, and they will get it only among the mother's people, the Aboriginal tribes, or, if these no longer exist, among other half-castes in Missions which *do* hold up an ideal of love and service. They need *their* homes, *their* families, and not to be interfered with.

Where it was possible to leave 'half-caste' children with their mothers, Bennett saw this as the best possible outcome for all concerned. Against the assumption that Aboriginal

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110 Holland, 'Wives and Mother Like Ourselves? Exploring White Women's Intervention in the Politics of Race, 1920s-1940s', in Martin Crotty et al. (eds.), *A Race for a Place: Eugenics, Darwinism and Social Thought and Practice in Australia* (Proceedings of the History and Sociology of Eugenics Conference, University of Newcastle, 27-28 April 2000), Faculty of Arts and Social Science, the University of Newcastle, 2000, p. 202; See also the revised version of this article in *Australian Historical Studies*, No. 117, October 2001, pp. 292-310.
111 Holland, 'Wives and Mother Like Ourselves?', *A Race for a Place*, p. 204.
mothers suffered little from the loss of their children, Bennett argued that they were 'utterly wrapped up in their children'. Indeed, she claimed to know Aboriginal mothers who lived in constant fear of their children being removed, and whose 'agony of fear' was replicated in the suffering of their children. Despite Bennett's passionate appeals, Holland's research suggests that few white women reformers fully understood or agreed with her position.

Phyllis Duguid listened to and respected much of what Bennett had to say. She was particularly taken with Bennett's book and, like many other campaigners, male and female, she borrowed certain of Bennett's ideas, but not all. Following Bennett, Phyllis argued that Aboriginal women had 'the same human affection as ourselves, the same joy of motherhood, and the same power of suffering'. Unlike Bennett, however, Phyllis did not link this to child removal. Instead, her purpose was to show as false the idea that Aboriginal women "don't feel things as we do". Never believe it', she declared. Because the idea of Aborigines as "little better than animals" ... [had] been devastating for the women', Phyllis hoped that emphasising their humanity would aid in their 'social uplift'. Reading her work on Aboriginal women (and men), one could be forgiven for (momentarily) forgetting current concerns over the 'stolen generations', for the question of Aboriginal child removal, so important an issue today, is almost entirely absent in Phyllis Duguid's writings.

During a 'round-table talk' for Aboriginal Sunday, broadcast on local Adelaide radio-station 5DN, an Aboriginal woman, Ivy Mitchell, bemoaned the loss of Aboriginal culture among children separated from their parents. Around the table with Mitchell were League for Aboriginal Women members, Mrs Herbert, Burnard and Duguid. Immediately following Mitchell's sad declaration that 'too many' Aboriginal myths and legends had been lost because 'too many little Aboriginal children [had] been separated from their own mothers and so [had] never heard the age-old fairy-tales of our race', Herbert asked Mitchell if she thought 'detribalised' Aborigines should become full citizens, to which Mitchell answered 'yes'. Thus missed, the opportunity to discuss the implications of Aboriginal child removal did not reappear during the broadcast. No more conspicuous than her fellow League members reticence, Phyllis Duguid's silence on this issue was complete. Aboriginal child removal was not something Phyllis spoke about. It was not something she wrote about. It was certainly not something she campaigned against. There being no evidence to suggest otherwise, it seems likely that Phyllis Duguid agreed with her husbands' views on this matter.

115 Cited Paisley, Loving Protection, pp. 81-82.
117 Ibid.
118 'Round Table talk for Aboriginal Sunday', broadcast on 5DN, [early 1940s], Phyllis Duguid Papers.
119 Ibid.
Until the early 1950s, Charles Duguid strongly supported the removal of 'half-caste' children. In newspaper articles such as the 'Future of Half-Caste Children' and the 'Lot of the Half-Caste in Service', he made his thinking clear. Charles wanted 'as far as possible, to prevent half-castes from coming into the world', but in the meantime argued that it was 'essential to do what we [could] for the children already born'. Since 'half-castes' were 'half-white', this meant sending them 'in for education' so as to fit them for their proper place in white society. Charles was proud of the role he played in 'rescuing' such children. In a letter to the editor of the Adelaide Advertiser in 1936, he recalled a family of three 'half-caste' girls he had met in the north of South Australia the previous year. One was now 'with the rescued children at the Colebrook home', while the other two were 'living far apart in different camps, separated from father and mother and one another'. As a consequence of Charles' campaigning, in 1937 the two remaining girls, aged eight and five, were 'rescued' and reunited with their sister at Colebrook. According to Charles, the mother, found to have given birth to another child, 'begged that the baby'—a girl aged under 2 years—'should not be taken from her and, even after giving her consent, broke down and wept bitterly'. He was, however, 'glad' to report that all three children had been successfully 'brought in'. No longer 'destined to work for the rest of their lives for food and a dress', under the 'happier conditions ... prevailing at Colebrook', they would be 'trained to lead a useful life'.

As objectionable as Charles Duguid's views on the removal of 'half-caste' children may appear today, it is important to realise that during the 1930s and 1940s they went largely uncontested. What criticism Charles faced came mainly from white settlers, prospectors and doggers who resented his vilification of them—and his naming of them—as the exploiters of Aboriginal women, and the fathers of 'half-caste' children. In 1936, a concerned friend warned Charles never to 'go into the Musgrave country again. If you do ... you'll never leave it alive'. Such threats only confirmed Charles' fears for the safety and welfare of the children left behind. Charles sincerely believed that 'half-castes' belonged in white society: he also believed that they were 'happier' there. His uncharacteristically dispassionate description of the wretched unhappiness Aboriginal mothers suffered at the loss of their children suggests, however, that happiness was not his
only concern. 'Rescuing' Aborigines of mixed-descent was not only for their own benefit, according to Charles, it also kept the 'far north ... solely for the unspoilt native'.126 By cutting 'down the production of the these unfortunates [half-castes'] to a minimum', and by 'totally' discouraging 'the marriage of half-castes with blacks', Charles sought to preserve the 'racial purity' of Aborigines of full-descent.127 Whatever unhappiness 'full-blood' Aboriginal mothers suffered at the loss of their 'half-caste' children was clearly outweighed, in his mind, by the greater need to ensure the continued existence of an 'unspoilt'-meaning uncontaminated by 'white-blood'-Aboriginal race.

In the early 1950s, Charles Duguid reversed this opinion. After seeing 'half-caste babies in their cots' at the Aborigines Inland Mission in Darwin in 1951, he found himself torn: 'I am not satisfied we are right in taking such young babies from their mother', he wrote, for 'it leaves the mothers broken hearted and it cannot be in the interests of the children to become institutionalised so soon'.128 In a rare moment of contrition, Charles acknowledged that he had been wrong:

There was a time when I considered it in the interests of the half-caste children to bring them into our civilisation under mission care and I voted that way in a Mission Board decision. The tribal mother of that child was inconsolable and although she has had full-blood children since, she still sorrows for the loss of that child. ... Never again has any half-caste child been removed from its full-blood mother in that part of the country.129

Charles Duguid's changed views on the removal of Aboriginal children will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five. For now it is sufficient to note that despite his changed views, Charles continued to believe it unwise to start 'a run of part-Aborigines in a tribal area' such as at Ernabella. He continued to believe, in other words, that Aborigines of mixed-descent belonged in white society.130

Other than Lena and Biddy, Phyllis Duguid did not actively advocate Aboriginal child removal. Nor did she speak out against it. Given her husband's strong views and boastful style of campaigning, Phyllis certainly knew about the practice. Did her silence signify complicity? By not opposing the practice, did she lend it her support? Part of the answer lies in the contrast between Phyllis' attitude towards Lena and Biddy, two 'half-caste' girls, and her attitude towards Nganyintja, a 'full-blood tribal' girl, who spent three

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126 C. Duguid to Hudd, 14 August 1936.
127 C. Duguid, Future of Half-caste Children'; C. Duguid to W.H. Kitson, Chief Secretary, Western Australia, 19 September 1938, Duguid Papers: I, Series 11.
129 Ibid.
130 C. Duguid to Ronald Trudinger, superintendent Ernabella Mission, 9 February 1954, Records of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, South Australian Assembly, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, SRG 123/300.
weeks with the Duguids in Adelaide after being 'rescued' and before being returned to her family in 1943.\textsuperscript{131} Coming so soon after the attempted removal of Lena and Biddy, Nganyintja's case demonstrates the importance of 'race' in Charles and Phyllis Duguid's thinking about Aboriginal child removal. According to Charles, 'full-blood tribal Aborigines [were] happier with their own people and should never be taken from them'.\textsuperscript{132} Phyllis agreed. In describing Nganyintja's triumphant return to 'her own people—back to the glowing camp fires, the nights under the stars and the days filled with hunting and play', Phyllis made it clear that Nganyintja was back where she belonged.\textsuperscript{133} Unlike Lena and Biddy, Nganyintja had a recognised 'people' and 'way of life' to return to. It was not from them that she was 'rescued'. Instead, Nganyintja was 'rescued' from a certain fate that needed no explanation once the circumstances of her predicament were known.

Emabella mission was Nganyintja's home. In June 1943, a 'tribal sister' who worked for a white man, F. Quinn, offered to take Nganyintja, aged 13, for a 'short journey' in Quinn's car, and then to bring her back again. According to a reporter who covered Nganyintja's story for the Adelaide \textit{Mail}, she was taken instead 'to an outstation near Coober Pedy, 400 miles from her own home and in a country where her own language was not spoken'. As an 'unprotected black girl on the outskirts of a white settlement', Nganyintja's future looked bleak. 'Even if she met some friendly white person, she could not have appealed for help', the reporter explained, 'for she knew no English'. However, having spent a year learning to read and write her own language under Ronald Trudinger's tutelage at the Ernabella school, Nganyintja took matters into her own hands.\textsuperscript{134} She obtained paper and pen and 'wrote in her language to her teacher, telling him of her trouble'.\textsuperscript{135} Accompanied by a covering letter which explained where Nganyintja could be found, her letter was sent first to Ernabella, and from there to Adelaide where Trudinger was undertaking a refresher course.

As translated by Trudinger, Nganyintja's letter read in part:

\begin{quote}
My elder tribal sister took me away to Coober Pedy ...  
When we first arrived, we two, we stood outside, and then we went into the house, where the man slept.  
The man—I don't know his name—I cannot understand him, so I am writing this letter ...
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{131} The spelling of Nganyintja's name has changed. In the 1940s, Charles and Phyllis Duguid spelled it Nganyintjanya. The shorter version has been used since the 1960s and is probably more accurate.  
\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 3-5.  
\textsuperscript{135} C. Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I Have Met', p. 31.
[I] have been crying, day in and day out, I cut my hair off and I am sad all the time ...

I sleep by myself in a bed in the house ...

I have been weeping for my best friend and for my elder tribal brother ... and I have been weeping for my mother and father.

What are you going to do?136

Upon receiving Nganyintja's letter, Trudinger immediately sought and was granted leave to travel north and 'rescue' her. With him he carried a letter from the APB to Quinn expressing the Board's displeasure. Since there were no circumstances under which Quinn could have 'custody [of] a full blood female Aboriginal child', the Board regarded his 'conduct in agreeing to such a removal as extremely foolish'. In directing Quinn's attention to Section 34A of the Aborigines Act, 1939 which made it an offence for 'any male person, other than an Aborigine ... [to] habitually [consort] with a female Aboriginal; [keep] a female Aboriginal as his mistress; or [have] carnal knowledge of a female Aboriginal' if not legally married to her, the APB left no doubt as to its impression of Quinn's character and intentions.137

Trudinger's mission was successful, and Nganyintja was brought to the Duguids' house in Adelaide until arrangements could be made for her safe return to Emabella. There was never any thought of keeping Nganyintja in white society. As W.R. Penhall, secretary of the APB explained, 'all [his] thought was centred on returning the child to Emabella unharmed'.138 It was to Aboriginal children of mixed-descent, not those of full-descent, that administrators of Aboriginal policy increasingly looked to solve the 'Aboriginal problem'. Nowhere was this more evident than in Western Australia where the goal was to 'breed-out' Aboriginal colour and identity through controlled miscegenation (or the promotion of marriages between Aboriginal women of mixed-descent and white men), otherwise known as biological absorption.139 In 1937, A.O. Neville, Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia, explained that his government's policy was:

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137 Aborigines Protection Board to Quinn, 21 June 1943 and 30 July 1943, State Records of South Australia (hereafter SRSA) GRG 52/1/1943/16. According to the APB, to Trudinger and to Charles and Phyllis Duguid, Nganyintja was 'rescued' from certain danger, but not so according to J.R.B. Love, superintendent at Ernabella mission. Had anyone bothered to consult him on the matter, Love claimed that he could easily have 'given the information that would have obviated all the publicity connected with this incident'. According to Love, Nganyintja had willingly accompanied her 'tribal sister' and Quinn 'on a holiday, expecting to return [to Ernabella] for the shearing'. At the beginning of September 1943, Quinn and Nganyintja's 'tribal sister' returned to the mission as planned, and would have brought Nganyintja with them had she not been removed to Adelaide. Conceding no reason for Nganyintja's 'rescue', Love maintained that the 'aspersions' cast on Quinn's character were quite unwarranted. J.R.B. Love to W.R Penhall, 6 September 1943, SRSA GRG 52/1/1943/16.
138 Penhall to Love, 15 September 1943, SRSA GRG 52/1/1943/16.
139 Holland, 'Wives and Mothers', Race for a Place, p. 201.
to send them ['half-caste girls'] out into the community and if a girl comes back pregnant our rule is to keep her for two years. The child is then taken away from the mother and sometimes never sees her again. At the expiration of two years the mother goes back into service so it really does not matter if she has half a dozen children.\textsuperscript{140}

Despite supporting the removal of 'half-caste' children himself, Charles Duguid described Neville as 'strangely unmoved by the human appeal of the family—husband to wife and parents to children and vice versa'. In Charles' view, 'breeding the dark colour of the natives out of the state population' seemed to be Neville's only 'guiding motive'.\textsuperscript{141} Phyllis Duguid was equally incensed. That Neville's government 'actually allow[ed] and encourage[d]' such 'appalling conditions' left her incredulous. 'Surely', she declared, 'Western Australian policy as outlined by Mr Neville is not considered a worthy one for the whole of Australia'.\textsuperscript{142} Yet it was not the taking of the children that alarmed Phyllis, it was the means of their production.

That 'a very great many ... half-castes [were] children without legal parents, children who [were] cared for in government institutions until old enough to work on stations or in private homes', worried Phyllis, but it was their lack of 'protection or supervision' once employed that most concerned her. In particular, the 'difficulties and dangers' which lay in the path of 'the half-caste girl [sent] out to work for strangers who may or may not treat her with respect'.\textsuperscript{143} In 'The Australian Aborigines—III: A Woman's View', Phyllis described the average life of a 'half-caste girl' thus:

Brought up in a government institution or on the outskirts of station or township she generally goes to work as a domestic at the age of sixteen or so. Her conditions of work are not supervised and her nearest neighbours are rarely within walking distance, so if she should find herself amongst people who do not treat her with respect her plight is pitiable.\textsuperscript{144}

By way of example, Phyllis relayed the fate of six such girls who, 'during the first nine months of 1936, [were] returned to the Alice Springs Institution either pregnant or with disease or both'. It was to stop the sexual exploitation of 'half-caste girls' and the 'ever increasing number of illegitimate half-caste children' that Phyllis advocated the appointment of women protectors and the provision of recreational opportunities. What

\textsuperscript{140} Quoted in P. Duguid, untitled radio broadcast, 2 April 1939; 'Aboriginal Welfare—Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities, Held at Canberra, 21 to 23 April, 1937', Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1937.

\textsuperscript{141} C. Duguid to Kitson, 19 September 1938.

\textsuperscript{142} P. Duguid, untitled radio broadcast, 2 April 1939.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{144} P. Duguid, The Australian Aborigines—III: A Woman's View', p. 127.
happened to 'illegitimate half-caste' children concerned her only in so far as the 'unhappy social environment which we [made] for them' fostered the means of their production, for unless something was done to quell the tide, they too would grow up to produce 'illegitimate half-caste' children.\(^{145}\)

While in Alice Springs in 1938, Phyllis visited the Bungalow, a home for 'half-caste' children. Originally consisting of three iron sheds situated behind a hotel in town, the Bungalow was moved to the Old Telegraph Station, five kilometres from Alice Springs in 1932. By 1939, one year after Phyllis' visit, conditions there were so appalling that one official was moved to write: 'I went very carefully through this building this week and to use entirely unofficial language, the whole place stinks and is in an exceedingly bad condition'.\(^{146}\) Phyllis made no such observation. Instead, she recorded meeting the matron, Mrs McCoy, and seeing 'one of the premature twins who [made] up 15 of a family' then housed at the Bungalow.\(^{147}\) Later, Phyllis reflected on the circumstances that had produced these 'fifteen half-white children':

> The first children were born on a station and the little family was well cared for till the advent of a white wife meant that the Aboriginal woman must go. This particular native woman was to some extent provided for—but nothing could alter the fact that she was turned adrift from the home and affection to which she had responded. And what has been the result? Ten or eleven children more with different fathers. The old code gone forever, she sees no code in the white man's treatment of her. How must she feel?\(^{148}\)

The 'old code' to which Phyllis referred was the Aboriginal code, a code of 'tribal customs' and beliefs which, while 'hard indeed' on Aboriginal women, was 'at least [one] she knew and understood'. The new code, 'our code', 'should have given her greater protection', according to Phyllis, but 'instead we have degraded her life still further'. The fate of the Aboriginal woman with 'fifteen half-white children' was the fate of every Aboriginal woman 'taken away from her tribe [only] to be flung aside later when she no longer pleases': had Nganyintja not been 'rescued', it would have been her fate too.\(^{149}\) Whether such women suffered as a consequence of having their children removed was not something Phyllis wrote about. In her view, their suffering was wrought through cruelty and exploitation at the hands of white men, and was manifest in the form of 'half-white'

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\(^{145}\) Ibid.


\(^{149}\) Ibid.
children. Viewed as the product of Aboriginal women's suffering, 'half-white' children had little right or recourse to their mother's 'human affection'.

Although fundamentally opposed to biological absorption, Charles and Phyllis Duguid shared many of the assumptions on which this policy was based. At the very cornerstone of arguments in favour of biological absorption was the theory of racial relatedness. Based in large part on the observation that the descendants of unions between Aborigines and whites did not 'throw back' to the Aboriginal colour, but became lighter skinned with each successive generation, the idea that Aborigines and whites hailed from the 'same root stock' became widely accepted in scientific circles during the 1920s. It was this theory of racial relatedness, or proto-Caucasian theory, that underpinned Neville's absorption proposal.150 As will be discussed in chapter four, proto-Caucasian theory also figured large in Charles Duguid's arguments in favour of social advancement. To him, however, it was proof of Aborigines' capacity to 'rise' to the same level of civilisation enjoyed by white Australians, not to become white Australians.

Also central to Neville's promotion of absorption was his belief that the 'white blood' in 'half-castes' would facilitate their mergence into white society, both by making them less physically different to white people, and by reducing the incidence of racially or biologically inherited Aboriginal traits. While Phyllis agreed with Neville's assertion that the 'white blood' in 'half-castes' made them more amenable to assimilation, she fundamentally opposed his policy of 'breeding-out' the colour and thus the identity of Aborigines. Colour prejudice was not a problem to be solved by ridding Aborigines of colour, according to Phyllis, but by ridding white Australians of their prejudice. Finding colour prejudice 'at the root of much suffering', she argued that the 'social stigma' of being descended from Aborigines imprinted itself indelibly upon the half-caste mind with the result that they are inclined to despise the Aboriginal blood instead of being encouraged to preserve the best that that race has to give.151 Where others saw 'Aboriginal blood' as the curse that held 'half-castes' back, Phyllis' belief in the extraordinary 'powers', 'gifts', 'graces' and 'intelligence' of 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines led her to argue otherwise. Phyllis may not have opposed the removal of 'half-caste' children, but she was definitely opposed to their being encouraged to forget, or forced to forgo, their Aboriginal identity.

As for the view that 'half-castes' inherited the worst traits of both races, Phyllis argued that this was 'simply a myth'. Her contrary view, that half-castes 'often [had] gifts from both races', aimed to overturn this negative stereotype. However, rather than deny the transmission of character traits through blood, she inverted this phenomenon.152 Like

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151 League for Aboriginal Women Minutes, 2 November 1939 and 26 June 1942, League Papers, Series 2/2.

Charles, Phyllis believed that 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines '[became] mixed bloods' through the process of 'detribalisation'. In her mind, the problems of 'detribalised' Aborigines and 'half-castes' were linked; their imagined difference in terms of 'blood' or visible difference in terms of 'colour' being less important than what she saw as their shared 'loss' or 'lack' of Aboriginal culture. Yet Phyllis also maintained that life overall was 'worse' for 'mixed-bloods' than for 'detribalised' Aborigines. Her reasoning—that Aborigines of mixed-descent had 'lost the moral standards and strict training of their Aboriginal forefathers, [and had] never been properly trained and educated in the best traditions of their white ancestors'—contained it own cure. Descended from 'ourselves and the free happy Aborigines of less than 200 years ago', Phyllis believed that Aborigines of mixed-descent had the unique potential to harness the best of both races. The actual parents of 'half-castes' mattered little in her equation, being merely the vehicles through which this potential was transmitted.

In taking up the cause of Aborigines, Charles and Phyllis Duguid had two main goals. Beyond saving 'the race from extinction', they wanted white Australians to 'learn to appreciate its gifts and use those gifts to enrich our nation's life'. With the exception of a few missions, namely Ernabella and Hermannsburg, Phyllis lamented the fact that 'no attempt [had] ever been made to encourage the Aborigine in the development of his own powers—to accept the real contribution of his race and weave it into the stuff of our nation'. During the 1930s and 1940s, this was how Charles and Phyllis Duguid understood Aboriginal 'advancement'. To them, 'advancement' meant helping Aborigines and 'half-castes' to develop their own unique skills for life in a modern world. As the nation's principle agents of socialisation, Phyllis urged the women of Australia to 'grasp the situation, fraught with difficulties as it is, believing that the Aboriginal race has a future and that the nature of that future lies with us'. For Phyllis, 'with' meant social, political, legal and economic equality between Aborigines and whites: it did not mean biological sameness. This qualification notwithstanding, a more assimilatory statement would be difficult to imagine, yet Holland has argued that Charles and Phyllis Duguid 'repudiated an assimilationist or absorptionist framework because it was understood to hasten detribalisation'.

While the problems associated with detribalisation—rapid or otherwise—certainly caused the Duguids alarm, Holland's conflation of absorption and assimilation is misleading; the former sought an end to the 'Aboriginal problem' through biological means, while the latter was more often social in emphasis. The Duguids definitely

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155 P. Duguid, 'The Responsibility of Nation Building' (emphasis added).
157 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 333.
repudiated absorption, but they were strong supporters of assimilation. In the 1930s and 1940s, however, it was not assimilation they called for but 'advancement'. Holland has argued that Charles and Phyllis Duguids' 'promotion of advancement was a direct ideological challenge to the view of inevitable loss and decline' encouraged by supporters of segregation. It was, however the same can be said of Paul Hasluck's promotion of assimilation. Introducing the concept of assimilation to the House of Representatives in 1951, Hasluck described a radical departure from the policy of segregation. Whereas previously it had been accepted that Aborigines would 'live a low and primitive life until his race died out', with assimilation it was 'expected that all persons of Aboriginal blood or mixed blood in Australia will live like white Australians do'. Echoing Phyllis' words from a decade prior, Hasluck declared: 'Their future lies in association with us'.

Historians grappling with the complexities and often uncomfortable realities of assimilation appear too eager to label their subjects 'critics of assimilation'. Assimilation became a 'dirty word' in the mid 1960s and has remained so ever since. To have supported assimilation (we now think) was to have condoned the disappearance of Aborigines as a distinct cultural and racial group, the forced removal of Aboriginal children and (cultural) genocide. In this context, finding critics of assimilation is comforting for it means that not all white Australians wanted to be rid of Aborigines. But were the critics of assimilation really its critics, or did they mean by assimilation something other than what we now assume it to mean? In *Loving Protection?* Fiona Paisley has argued that white women reformers 'sought their own version of assimilationist outcomes'. However, as revealed by the title of her first chapter, she also maintains that they were 'Critics of Assimilation'. This label is misleading, for like Charles and Phyllis Duguid, they were critics of biological absorption and critics of government, not critics of assimilation; what they wanted was their own version of social assimilation for Aborigines. If Phyllis Duguid did not see herself as a critic of assimilation, if she did not intend to criticise the policy, then what is to be gained by labelling her thus? More necessary than the search for assimilation's critics is the search for its different and shifting meanings, for only then can we begin to understand 'the profoundly problematic nature of Australia's experience of assimilation'.

Building on this chapter's main themes, the following chapter examines Charles and Phyllis Duguid's efforts to help their 'adopted' Aboriginal son, Sydney James Cook, find a place within white society. It tests how successful they were in practising what they

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161 *Age*, 13 February 1965.  
preached, while also demonstrating the vital importance of 'race' and environment to the assimilation process. Assimilation/advancement was a two-way street. It could only work if Aborigines wanted to 'advance' and, more importantly, if white society was prepared to accept them as 'equals'. The lessons that Charles and Phyllis learned through having Cook—an Aboriginal child of full-descent—in their home were many. Cook was something of an anomaly: he was a 'full-blood' but not 'tribal'; he had never been 'tribal' and so could not really be considered 'detribalised'; he was not a 'half-caste'. In defying the Duguids' typology, Cook challenged all that Charles and Phyllis knew—or thought they knew—about Aborigines.
Chapter 4

SYDNEY JAMES COOK/DUGUID

and (the problem with) social advancement

In June 1950, the newly elected Liberal member for Curtin, Paul Hasluck, delivered a speech in the Commonwealth House of Representatives in which he called for a 'new era' in Aboriginal welfare. The key to Hasluck's plan was 'social advancement'. According to administrative data, there were 72,000 persons classified as Aborigines in Australia in 1944, 'at least two-thirds' of whom, Hasluck explained, had 'already come so closely in touch with the ways of European life that their future [could] not be considered any longer as that of a primitive people'. Rather, Hasluck declared, their 'future lies in association with us':

We must either work for the social advancement of the Aborigines or be content to witness their continued social degradation. There is no possibility now of our being able to put at least two-thirds of the Aborigines back into bush life ... [T]hey must either associate with us on standards that will give them full opportunity to live worthily and happily or be reduced to the social status of pariahs and outcasts living without a firm place in the community.\(^1\)

In May 1950, Charles and Phyllis Duguid sent their 'adopted' Aboriginal son, Sydney James Cook, a 'full-blood' aged twelve, to live with Aborigines at a remote Christian mission in the Northern Territory. In doing so, they did precisely what Hasluck, less than a month later, said could not be done. Having only ever lived with white people, Cook belonged with the two-thirds of Aborigines and 'half-castes' whose future, according to Hasluck, lay 'with the white community'.\(^2\) This notwithstanding, Charles Duguid found Hasluck's speech in June 1950 particularly resonant with his own work published a decade prior: 'I was struck', he informed Hasluck, 'with the similarity of your words to mine as expressed in my address November 1941 on the 'Future of the Aborigines".\(^3\) Duguid, of course, was referring to Hasluck's views on social advancement. He was not referring to Cook's relocation. Yet, as this chapter will show, Duguid viewed sending Cook to live with Aborigines as essential to Cook's social advancement. He believed that Cook needed to learn how to 'be Aboriginal' in order to live in white society.

This chapter begins with a brief biographical and scene-setting sketch; its purpose to underline the circumstances surrounding Cook's placement in the Duguid home in

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\(^3\) Charles Duguid to Hasluck, Minister for the Territories, 23 May 1951, Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 1), Series 1.
1944, aged six. It then examines Charles and Phyllis Duguids' understanding of what it meant to 'be Aboriginal'—in particular the similarities and differences they observed between Aborigines and whites, and between Aborigines and other Aborigines—before examining Cook's life with the Duguids until 1950. Ultimately, this chapter seeks to explain how (and why) Charles and Phyllis Duguid—both strong supporters of Aboriginal advancement, and later assimilation—came to send Cook to live with Aborigines and, perhaps more importantly, why they did not find in that action the repudiation of their own and Hasluck's assimilationism.

I. 'Small black child of God'

On, or around, the 30 October 1937, an Aboriginal woman gave birth to a male child near a township called Cook on the west coast of South Australia. What happened next remains something of a mystery. According to the Reverend Tom Jones, organising missioner of the Bush Church Aid Society of Australia (BCA), the child was 'rescued ... from death from starvation when only a few hours old'. Abandoned by his mother, 'the tiny black mite was picked up on the Nullarbor Plain' by a BCA worker and taken to the BCA hospital at Cook. The child was named for the Society's Bishop, Sydney James Kirkby, and the township of Cook; Sydney James Cook. Charles Duguid's account of Cook's separation from his parents was quite different. According to him, Cook was 'actually found ... in a sack on the kitchen floor of the Cook hospital and his navel cord had not been tied'. In 1946, in an article entitled 'Aboriginal children I have met', Duguid described the circumstances of Cook's abandonment thus:

Eight years ago a tribe of Aborigines was forcibly chased from the neighbourhood of a town on the Transcontinental line ... During the upset a terror-stricken mother gave birth to a baby boy. Some hours later a sack was left in the kitchen of the local Mission hospital. A weak cry came from the sack, and inside was found a newly-born Aboriginal child—cold and nearly lifeless; and the mother's life must have been endangered too.

That Cook was found 'in a sugar bag on the floor of a Bush Aid Hospital', Charles and Phyllis Duguid repeated in statements to the Northern Territory Welfare Branch in 1960;
Phyllis adding that 'perhaps his mother died [in] childbirth' as the reason for Cook's abandonment.9 According to the journalist Douglas Lockwood who met Cook in the Northern Territory in 1965, Cook's mother 'bundled him in a sugar bag and gave him away'.10 Cook's own version, as told to the adventurer and writer Frank O'Neill in the early 1960s, was different again:

I was born into tribal life near Cook in South Australia ... I was only a few months old when my mother left me in the sand. She saw a group of white people and ran. She must have been frightened.11

According to Cook, one of the white people who frightened his mother was the Reverend Eric Constable, a Church of England Minister and BCA worker, who took him to the BCA hospital at Cook where he lived for the next four years.12

Was the BCA worker who 'rescued' Cook also responsible for chasing his mother away? Was Cook found in the sand or on the kitchen floor? Was he a few hours old, a few days old or a few months old? Did Cook's mother survive childbirth? Was there a sugar bag? Although ultimately unresolvable, the different answers to these questions suggest something of the respondent's agenda. Having 'rescued' Cook from certain death when only a few hours old, the BCA saw itself—and represented its workers—as the heroes of the piece. Cook, in contrast, blamed the BCA for his abandonment. In claiming that he was a few months old at the time, Cook created a narrative in which his mother both survived childbirth and loved him; it was not her intention to leave him behind. Charles and Phyllis Duguid portrayed Cook and his mother as victims of frontier violence. Although, like Cook, they blamed white society for his abandonment, the Duguids also sought to make it clear that the 'separation of [Cook] from his own folk was not [their] responsibility'.13 Out for the most sensational story possible, Lockwood (and several other journalists who covered Cook's story in the mid 1960s) portrayed Cook as a 'foundling waif' who triumphed in the face of the greatest adversity—abandonment by his mother at birth.14 The sugar bag, whether it existed or not, can be seen as a symbol of white society's corruption of Aboriginal culture. Emptied of its original sickness inducing contents and

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10 Lockwood, 'He grew up in a white world'.
11 Frank O'Neill, 'A native with a college accent', undated and unsourced newspaper clipping, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Folder 3.
12 Ibid.
13 C. Duguid to Pastor Samuels, secretary United Aborigines Mission, 5 December [1949], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
14 In 1965, Cook was appointed the first 'full-blood' Aboriginal union organiser for the North Australian Workers Union. See 'Foundling Aboriginal New NAWU Organiser', News (Northern Territory), 11 January 1965; 'Foundling Aboriginal Gain Union Post', Sydney Morning Herald, 12 January 1965; Lockwood, 'He grew up in a white world'.
returned with a baby 'in a pitiful condition', the sugar bag was (and is) a metaphor for Aboriginal dispossession (see Plate 7).\textsuperscript{15}

The 'true' story of Cook's abandonment will probably never be known. What is known is that Cook spent the first four years of his life in the BCA's care at hospitals at Cook and Penong. Regular articles in *The Real Australian*, official organ of the BCA, kept members informed of Cook's progress. With smiling face, neatly combed hair and starched white clothes, Cook's image regularly adorned the front page of the Society's newsletter (see Plates 8 and 9). Captions like 'Our Baby' left readers in no doubt as to the BCA's proprietorial feelings: Cook was their 'small black child of God' and members were asked to 'Pray earnestly for him as he climbs life's ladder.'\textsuperscript{16} Under the BCA's care, Cook was lavished with attention and affection. As he grew older, however, it became increasingly difficult to care for him at the hospital. In 1941 it was suggested that Cook be adopted by an Aboriginal family, but, believing that 'God had given him to [them] for some special purpose', the BCA favoured a white family instead. After 'due consideration and prayer', the Reverend Eric Constable and his wife offered to provide a home for Cook 'until he was old enough to go to school'.\textsuperscript{17} Cook lived with the Constables in Adelaide for two years before being transferred to Colebrook, an institution for Aboriginal children run by the United Aborigines Mission (UAM), in 1944. Anxious for the BCA to maintain its 'connection with the child', Jones arranged for Cook to remain at Colebrook at the BCA's expense.\textsuperscript{18} Such an arrangement, however, was not Jones' to make. As an Aboriginal ward, all decisions regarding Cook's future resided with the South Australian Aborigines Protection Board (APB).

A year earlier, in June 1943, the APB had approved Cook's admission to King's College—a prestigious Adelaide school—noting at the time that it 'was intended to fit the boy ... for a professional career or any other for which he may show aptitude'.\textsuperscript{19} Jones, in requesting that Cook be allowed to stay at Colebrook, advised the APB that 'the Kings school experiment [had] not worked out'. 'Kings College was tried ... with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, it was not successful', Jones reported.\textsuperscript{20} The secretary of the APB, W.R. Penhall, thought otherwise. Having received a 'distinctly favourable' report

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\textsuperscript{15} A recent entry in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, 'Hand, Christian and Her Son', painted by the artist Adam Hill, depicts the hand of God passing a bag of sugar to an Aboriginal child. *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award* (Exhibition Catalogue), Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 2004, pp. 68-69.


\textsuperscript{17} Cook had spent several weeks with the Constables over the previous summer. See 'Sydney James Comes to Town', *The Real Australian*, 24 February 1941, p. 14.

\textsuperscript{18} Jones to Penhall, 1 May 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.

\textsuperscript{19} Jones to Penhall, 1 May 1944; Jones to Penhall, 24 May 1944.

\textsuperscript{20} Minutes of the Meeting of the Aborigines Protection Board, 30 June 1943, Papers of Dr Charles Duguid, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 387 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 2), Series 2. If Cook boarded at Kings College, he did not board for long. His school report for term one, 1944, described 'a great change in Sydney's behaviour since he has been at home'. SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.
from the headmaster at Kings College, A.M. Oats, Penhall was at a loss to understand Jones' impression of failure. Cook's school report for term one, 1944, showed grades of C or better for each of his classes and was accompanied by the following words of encouragement from Oats:

I and my staff consider that there has been a very great improvement in Sydney this year—an improvement in attitude and general behaviour. We are therefore anxious that his undoubted ability be given a chance to develop in sympathetic surroundings.

 Needless to say, Penhall was very keen for Cook to continue his studies at Kings College. In practical terms, this meant that rather than Colebrook another white family would have to be found. Penhall already had a family in mind—the Duguids.

From their holiday house on Kangaroo Island, Phyllis Duguid wrote to Penhall regarding the 'difficult question of Sydney's future' on 15 May 1944. She had, she explained, 'given the whole matter a great deal of thought' and had decided that if it was 'in the interests of Sydney's development and future happiness to continue as he [was] at Kings College' then her family's home would be open to him. Phyllis made it clear, however, that neither she nor Charles could regard themselves as 'foster parents for other people'. 'We could only do our best for the child if we had complete responsibility for his future', she advised. By complete responsibility, Phyllis meant complete adoption, an action which would require Cook's exemption from the Aborigines Act. Penhall readily agreed to Phyllis' conditions. On 17 May 1944, the APB unanimously resolved That Dr Charles and Mrs Duguid be authorised to legally adopt and have charge of Sydney James Cook. On learning of this decision, Jones expressed his Society's deep regret. The implications hurt the BCA considerably, Jones argued, for not only was their care of Cook—past, present and future—implicitly criticised by such a decision, they were to be denied continued access to him. Jones' protestations at the end of May 1944 came too late. At Penhall's direction, Phyllis met Cook at the Adelaide Railway Station soon after the Board's ruling, and he was immediately put into her care.

As a member of the APB, Charles Duguid was ideally situated to negotiate the matter of Cook's placement, yet his sole contribution seems to have been a post-script in the bottom corner of Phyllis' letter to Penhall in which he stated, 'I am entirely with Mrs

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21 Penhall to Jones, 29 May 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.
22 Kings College report on Sydney Cook, Term 1 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.
23 P. Duguid to Penhall, 15 May 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80. In this letter, Phyllis indicated that she and Charles would 'consider being [Cook's] foster parents for the Board' if the Board was unwilling to grant Cook's exemption. In other words, the 'other people' the Duguids refused to be foster parents for was the BCA.
24 Penhall to C. Duguid, 17 May 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.
25 Jones to Penhall, 24 May 1944.
26 C. Duguid to Samuels, 5 December [1949].
Duguid in what she has written’. The weight of evidence suggests otherwise. Although legally authorised to adopt Cook, the Duguids never did. Particularly since Phyllis seemed so keen, and given Charles’ uncharacteristic taciturnity, one has to wonder whether he was the reluctant party. If Charles’ later accounts are to be believed, it would seem that he had serious reservations about Cook’s place in his home, and in white society more generally, from the outset. By outside observers, Cook was viewed as a kind of experiment, a chance for Charles and Phyllis to prove their long standing argument that Aborigines of full-descent were capable of advancement. In 1949, Pastor Samuels, secretary of the UAM, criticised the Duguids for using Cook in this way, an accusation Charles vehemently denied: ‘At no time was the question of experiment in our minds’, he declared. According to Duguid, ‘it was only after the deepest consideration and prayer that [they] agreed to take [Cook] in and then only because of his need’. Over the years, Duguid repeatedly named Cook’s need, and Cook’s need alone, as the factor that had decided the matter of Cook’s place in their home. For example: ‘Sydney was taken into our home ... because of his need; ’Until we took him in at the age of 6 for his need he had been moved around from pillar to post without training or guidance for the future’. Cook’s need aside, Duguid’s need to make this point is in itself significant. By emphasising Cook’s need for stability and for the ‘affection and discipline of family life’, Duguid implied that Cook’s need for a home was greater than his desire to provide it.

What about Phyllis? Did she share her husband’s reservations? Penhall believed that Cook needed ‘a definite home’ and the ‘individual care of a good mother’. In assuring Jones that Cook would be ‘happy’ and well cared for with the Duguids, Penhall explained that Cook was ‘very much attached to Mrs Duguid’. Mrs Duguid, it seems, was similarly attached to Cook: she was also attached to the idea of Cook. Cook was not the first Aboriginal child to stay with the Duguids. A year earlier, in 1943, Charles and Phyllis had opened their home—and their hearts—to Nganyintja, a thirteen year old girl from Ernabella mission. Although, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Nganyintja spent barely three weeks with the Duguids, it was time enough for strong feelings to develop. With Charles at work and the Duguids’ children, Andrew and Rosemary, at school, Nganyintja’s days were spent with Phyllis, helping around the house, playing in the garden and teaching Phyllis her language. According to Charles, a special ‘understanding between the child and my wife’ developed which revealed that Nganyintja’s ‘love for [Phyllis] ... was very manifest’. Phyllis’ love for Nganyintja was equally apparent, yet her actions were at

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27 P. Duguid to Penhall, 15 May 1944. Charles Duguid was a member of the APB from 1940-47. See chapter two.
28 C. Duguid to Samuels, 5 December [1949].
29 C. Duguid to Giese, 22 May 1960.
30 C. Duguid to Samuels, 5 December [1949]; C. Duguid to Giese, 22 May 1960 (emphasis added).
31 C. Duguid to Samuels, 5 December [1949].
32 Penhall to Jones, 29 May 1944.
all times tempered by the knowledge that she was Nganyintja's 'temporary mother' only.\(^{34}\) In Cook, Phyllis saw a way to make this most unique and rewarding of experiences more permanent.

With the burden attendant upon receiving an Aboriginal child into their home lightened by Phyllis' enthusiasm—she was, after all, the primary care-giver—this alone was not the cause of Charles' reservations. Instead, what worried him was Cook's anomalous status as an Aboriginal child of full-descent in white society; according to Charles, 'full-bloods' belonged elsewhere.

II. Being Aboriginal

Before examining Charles and Phyllis Duguid's relationship with Cook, it is necessary to consider how they might have viewed him: what they knew—or thought they knew—about Aborigines in general, and Aborigines of full-descent in particular. Charles Duguid prided himself on 'knowing' Aborigines. In his view, it was 'not the white man who live[ed] alongside the native who necessarily [understood] him best', for it was 'only when one [could] see with the native eye, hear with native ear and speak in the native tongue that one [could] fully appreciate the deep intelligence of the Australian Aboriginal'.\(^{35}\) Is this how Duguid saw himself? Duguid's investigations into Aboriginal life took him to remote regions of South and Central Australia, to government settlements and missions, to cattle stations, railway sidings, dogging camps and townships in the interior. In the early 1940s, Duguid boldly asserted that 'there [was] no side of Aboriginal life that [he had] not investigated', and by the late 1940s he claimed unequivocally to 'know our native people'.\(^{36}\)

What did 'knowing' Aborigines mean? What did Duguid 'know' about Aborigines? How did this 'knowledge' affect his understanding of, and relationship with, Sydney James Cook—an Aboriginal child of full-descent who knew virtually nothing about 'being Aboriginal'?

As part of his efforts to persuade the Australian government, the Presbyterian Church and the public in general to concern themselves with the 'plight of the Aborigines', Charles Duguid journeyed to the Haast Bluff region west of Alice Springs in 1936. This was only the second time that Duguid had witnessed—or, as he later put it 'experienced'—Aborigines living in tribal conditions; the first time being his trip to the Musgrave Ranges the year before.\(^{37}\) During his three-weeks stay in the Haast Bluff country, Duguid pondered the vexed question of what made Aborigines and whites different. 'The natives, among whom we are, have some very crude ways', he noted in his

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\(^{34}\) Ibid., pp. 9-11.


travel diary, 'but how can they change unless they see something better? How can they learn without a teacher?' It seemed to Duguid that 'in essentials there was no difference between the two peoples':

They have the same sense of humour, the same fundamental joys and sorrows, they laugh and cry just as we do, the children play and gambol as our children do ... And the men are similar to ourselves—the active man and the lazy fellow who for some reason or other prefers to stay in the camp. The women, however, are mostly workers, going off early with their digging sticks to bring in the days supply of yelka, yams, seeds and rabbits.

A day later, having given the matter more thought but still unsure about the exact wording, Duguid hesitantly wrote: 'The great difference between the natives and ourselves is the conditions under which we live way of life. We have all the comforts and amenities of Christian European civilisation: they have heat and flies and no amenities'.

Could it be that simple? While in the Haast Bluff country, Duguid met an eleven year old Aboriginal boy named Tjaruru. With great admiration, Duguid described how Tjaruru captured his attention through mimicry and held it through his 'thirst for knowledge'. When Tjaruru's family moved away from Duguid's camp, Tjaruru stayed behind. 'He can't bear to miss anything', Duguid exclaimed: 'How is he going to find his people? He knows his father's footprints and he will follow them'. According to Duguid, Tjaruru showed 'leadership and ability ... in his every action'. He was inquisitive—he wants to know about everything new, its names and its uses—'mentally alert', 'lithe of limb [and] exuberant with life'. It was with deep despair that Duguid imagined what would happen to this 'amazing boy' if and/or when his country was taken over by white men and cattle:

This is his country ... [He] will be brought into a sullen submission, or as is more likely, poor Tjaruru will rebel—he is too great to be an underdog—and he will be sent to gaol. The whole thing is utterly damnable.

Duguid was fearful for Tjaruru's future. So fearful, in fact, that he wrote in his diary, 'I wish I could have the oversight of this boy for the next five years'. Duguid's desire to

38 C. Duguid, 1936 Patrol Diary, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 2, p. 6. Duguid was probably influenced by Mary Bennett who argued that 'in essentials' the Aborigines were 'in no way inferior' to whites. See Mary M. Bennett, The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being, Alston River, London, 1930, p. 75.
39 C. Duguid, 1936 Patrol Diary, p. 6.
40 Ibid., p. 8 (original emphasis).
41 C. Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I Have Met', p. 31.
42 C. Duguid, 1936 Patrol Diary, p. 16; C. Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I Have Met', p. 31.
43 Duguid, 1936 Patrol Diary, p. 16.
provide Tjaruru with better prospects for the future notwithstanding, he would never have removed Tjaruru from his people or his country, for despite the hardships—the 'heat and flies and no amenities'—as well as the dangers of an encroaching white civilisation, Duguid firmly believed that 'full-blood tribal Aborigines [were] happier with their own people and should never be taken from them'.

For Duguid, Tjaruru epitomised all that was good in Aboriginal society and all that was bad in white society's treatment of the Aborigines. In a series of radio broadcasts to Adelaide schools in the early 1940s, Duguid used Tjaruru's case to highlight the inequalities and perversities of contact. In doing so, he revealed how confused—and confusing—his thinking had become. After describing the myriad ways in which Tjaruru had proved his intelligence in his own culture and environment, Duguid claimed that if Tjaruru 'had had the least chance of education he would have proved his ability in our culture' as well. According to Duguid, 'brighter Aborigines' like Tjaruru needed to be given the chance 'of developing their brains so that they [could] raise their people to a higher level of civilisation'. However, since Duguid also argued against removing such Aborigines from their people, how was this brain development to be achieved? Was it a matter of taking education to them, such as at Emabella mission? To what end? If Tjaruru could 'prove his ability' in white society, was this where Duguid imagined he belonged?

Like many white campaigners, Duguid was torn between a romantic idealisation of 'tribal' Aboriginal life and a desire for something more—something better—for his Aboriginal 'friends'. Underscored by fear, this tension (some might say paradox) lay at the heart of both Charles and Phyllis Duguid's campaigning. They feared that if something was not done to save the Aborigines they would die out, and yet they argued that the Aborigines were 'no dying race'; white society was to blame. They had (or appeared to have) a deep and abiding respect for Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal people, and yet they wanted 'to change their ways by showing them a better life'. They had (or claimed to have) no interest in turning Aborigines into white people, either biologically, socially or culturally, and yet nearly everything they did in the name of Aboriginal advancement drew attention to the biological, emotional and intellectual similarities—even sameness—of Aborigines and whites.

During the late 1930s and into the 1940s, Charles Duguid liked to open his articles and addresses with an origin story, either the story of how he became involved in Aboriginal politics (see Part 1: Introduction) or the story of how the Aborigines came to Australia, sometimes both. When combined, these stories served to reinforce Duguid's
point that 'the more one learns of the Aborigines the more one comes to the conclusion that in the past they have been more maligned and misrepresented than any race on earth', and were thus contrived to persuade white Australians to become involved in Aboriginal politics as Duguid himself had done. Of greater significance here, however, is Duguid's understanding of the origins of the Aboriginal race for it formed the basis of his mind-set concerning the Aborigines' ability to 'advance'. Following Frederic Wood Jones, Professor of Anatomy at the University of Melbourne, Duguid asserted that the Aborigines were 'specialised as a race in the south of central India and migrated in very early days to the North-West of Australia by way of the islands that lie between'. As to when this migration occurred, 'no one [could] really say', according to Duguid, 'but as the ordinary mortal measures time it was in the long ago'. For Duguid, establishing the 'coming into being of the Aborigines as a definite race in Southern India, and the migration therefrom' paved the way for his principle arguments in favour of Aboriginal advancement: the Aborigines' ability to survive and prosper in 'the most inhospitable land on earth'; their equal but different intelligence; and their close racial (meaning blood) relationship to white Australians.

On the Aborigines' prosperous life in Australia prior to the arrival of Europeans, Duguid had much to say, and most of what he said came directly from the writings of Mary M. Bennett and Wood Jones. In her 1930 publication, *The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being*, Bennett observed that in Australia there are no indigenous animals than can be domesticated, and there are no indigenous plants that men can cultivate for food. You cannot "herd" kangaroos nor plough with them ... Under these limitations it was impossible for people to be pastoralists, agriculturists or city builders, but it is a mistake to assume that they did not make the best of their surroundings, or that they are not able to learn all that we can.

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50 C. Duguid 'Our Natives and Their Future', *The Link*, 2 May 1938, p. 172. See also Frederic Wood Jones, *Australia's Vanishing Race*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1934, p. 11. Wood Jones offered a much more detailed explanation of the Aborigines' origins than used by Duguid, however, it is clear that Duguid based his argument on Wood Jones' account.
51 C. Duguid, 'Natives of the Interior: A Doctor's impression'.
52 C. Duguid, 'An Advocate for the Aborigines in England', *Aborigines Protector*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1939, p. 6; C. Duguid, 'The Tribal Natives and Their Customs', in C. Duguid, *The Aborigines of Australia: Broadcasts and an Address*, p. 6. Duguid believed that the Aborigines were a 'definite race', not because they differed biologically from white Australians, but because their history and 'way of life' made them different to white Australians.
53 Bennett was expanding on S.D. Porteous' observation (1929) that 'only a highly civilised race could have survived' in a country such as Australia, 'probably the most inhospitable continent in the world'. Bennett, *The Australian Aboriginal as a Human Being*, pp. 13-14.
In *Australia's Vanishing Race*, published in 1934, Wood Jones likewise blamed 'the very nature of his new home' for the Aborigines' inability to 'progress' beyond the 'stage of culture of a stone-age hunter':

> Australia possessed no animals that could be domesticated and brought into the service of man as beasts of draught or burden; or even any that could be bred and conserved as a source of food. It possessed no native plants that were readily taken into cultivation for the benefit of the primitive agriculturalist ... We need not, therefore, place it to the demerit of the Aboriginal that he did not become a settled agriculturist and so take on an altogether different phase of culture from that in which he arrived upon Australian shores.54

Paraphrasing Bennett and Wood Jones, Duguid argued that when the Aborigines arrived in Australia there 'was no beast of burden, no animal that could give milk for human use, and no plant that could be coaxed into a fruit tree or a vegetable': 'You can't harness a kangaroo nor milk a wombat', he mused.55 On a more serious note, Duguid pointed out that white Australians, even with their 'advanced scientific knowledge', had made no better use of the country's natural resources: 'We have to import all our needs', he reproached.56 And yet, Duguid continued, 'in spite of the disabilities of the country these primitive people from India struck a balance with nature, increased in numbers and spread all over the continent'.57 More importantly, they 'were healthy, happy and contented under an elaborate social organisation of their own until we came'.58

According to the Aboriginal activist and writer Joe McGinness, Bennett and Wood Jones' acknowledgment that Aborigines were hunters and nomads by necessity rather than disability marked an 'important step in the mental liberation of white Australians': it 'exploded' the myth of white superiority and signalled 'recognition by a few non-Aborigines that Aborigines were equal but different'.59 Proving the 'potential equality of the Aboriginal race' through their equal but different intelligence was an important theme in both Charles and Phyllis Duguid's writings. At different times, each borrowed Mary Bennett's story of an Aboriginal boy who secured a fresh meal of honey by catching a bee, 

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56 'Think for a minute', Duguid suggested, 'and you will realise that everything we white people have in the pantry has been brought into Australia from overseas - meat, milk, vegetables, fruit'. C. Duguid, *The Tribal Natives and Their Customs*, p. 6; C. Duguid, *The Australian Aborigines*, *The Australian Intercollegian*, 1 May 1940, p. 46.
57 C. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', *The Australian Intercollegian*, 1 May 1940, p. 46.
fastening a piece of down to its body and following the sluggish creature to its hive.\textsuperscript{60} To Phyllis this was proof that Aborigines had 'learned to read and understand nature as no other people [had] ever done', while to Charles the story illustrated the 'resourcefulness of the native child'.\textsuperscript{61} In his version of the story, Charles had the child take the honey back to his family, for in Aboriginal society, unlike in white society, '[o]bedience to the laws of the tribe is learned very early in life, and selfishness is unknown'.\textsuperscript{62} For Charles and Phyllis Duguid then, raising the status of the Aborigines and bringing 'the white population of Australia to recognise their worth' often meant portraying Aborigines in their own environment as more than equal, or superior, to whites.\textsuperscript{63} To balance the scales of (in)justice, the Duguids tended to tip them in favour of the Aborigines; a conscious political act made 'real' by their deep admiration of Aboriginal people, their culture and society.

According to Charles Duguid, the Aborigines of Australia were 'a people ... full of intelligence', and this was especially evident when the 'native [was] judged in his own field of knowledge'; meaning in his or her own culture and environment.\textsuperscript{64} 'To witness day by day their routine in the bush—all ordered and arranged—[was] to stand aside and marvel', Charles exclaimed: 'Their powers of observation', their 'ability to learn a foreign language' and their 'aptitude for drawing, writing and painting' was not only 'amazing', it was also 'far greater than the Anglo-Saxon's'.\textsuperscript{65} Phyllis Duguid, while expressing similar sentiments, went further than her husband, suggesting that white society 'might do well to emulate' certain of the Aborigines 'gifts and graces'.\textsuperscript{66}

For instance, can we claim as a race to have achieved the high degree of endurance and self-discipline which are so important a feature in the training of the young Aborigine? Have we anything like the same grace of subordinating the wishes of the individual to well-being of the community? As linguists and students of nature they leave us far behind, while their powers of telepathy or thought transference is to us baffling.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{60} According to Bennett, this story was told to her by her father. See Bennett, \textit{The Australian Aboriginal as Human Being}, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{61} P. Duguid, 'The Educational Needs of Our Aborigines', typescript of radio broadcast, [1940s], Phyllis Duguid Papers, Private Collection, Adelaide (hereafter Phyllis Duguid Papers); C. Duguid, 'The Tribal Natives and Their Customs', pp. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{62} C. Duguid, 'The Tribal Natives and Their Customs', p. 6.
\textsuperscript{63} C. Duguid to Hasluck, August 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{64} C. Duguid, 'An advocate for the Aborigines in England', p. 7.
\textsuperscript{65} C. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', \textit{The Australian Intercollegian}, 1 May 1940, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{66} P. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(III): A Woman's View', \textit{The Australian Intercollegian}, 2 September 1940, p. 125. Like Charles, Phyllis argued that to observe the Aborigines in their 'untouched state' was to 'realise their real intelligence and the way in which they [had] successfully brought it to bear on their environment'. P. Duguid, 'The Educational Needs of Our Aborigines'.
\textsuperscript{67} P. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(III): A Woman's View', p. 125.
Far ‘from being the lowest of human races’, Phyllis insisted that the Aborigines’ ‘innate intelligence [was] in no way less than our[s]’. Instead, ‘their minds [had] been trained differently from infancy’.68 Unlike white children, the Aboriginal child’s ‘education [was] intimately related to his tribe’s struggle for existence’, a point Charles delighted in explaining:69

From the age of twelve onwards the boys are associated with the men of the tribe [and] are taught to recognise the footprints of animals and birds, and are shown how to track down their quarry ... In a year or so the boys go through their first initiation. From then on to full membership of the tribe the lads go through a series of tests of endurance that few, if any, white youths could suffer. The young people of both sexes are taught to endure loneliness, hunger and pain, and are trained in self-control far beyond anything we expect of our children.70

These cultural differences aside, Phyllis had ‘no doubt whatever about the ability of the average Aborigine or half-caste to assimilate education and training’.71 Nor did Charles: ‘The truth is, there is nothing the Australian native cannot learn if given time, provided he is handled with some degree of sympathy and understanding’.72 Thus, rather than continue to condemn Aborigines as unintelligent—or worse ‘inherently inferior’—what was needed, Phyllis maintained, was more ‘research into Aboriginal ways of thought’.73

The Duguids’ desire to have the Aborigines’ ‘innate intelligence’ recognised and appreciated by white Australians was just the beginning. Their greater goal was to transform the Australian nation by encouraging Aborigines to ‘bring their gifts to the common pool of Australia’s enrichment’.74 The advocates of biological assimilation, or absorption, also sought to transform the Australian nation. However, whereas the Duguids imagined a hybrid culture blended of Aboriginal and European traditions, the advocates of absorption imagined a hybrid people bleached white through the process of miscegenation. The idea that Aborigines and whites hailed from the ‘same root-stock’, or proto-Caucasian theory, informed both of these imaginings to a greater and lesser extent. As Warwick Anderson has shown, this idea became widely accepted in scientific circles

68 P. Duguid, untitled transcript of radio broadcast, 2 April 1939, Phyllis Duguid Papers.
70 C. Duguid, The Tribal Natives and Their Customs’, p. 5.
74 C. Duguid, handwritten notes on ‘Assimilation’, [1961], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6. Likewise, Phyllis Duguid argued that it was ‘chiefly due to our very limited knowledge of the [Aborigines] gifts and graces ... that we have almost lost the opportunity to weave their life into the stuff of our nation and thus greatly enrich ourselves’. See P. Duguid, ‘Neglected Opportunity’, transcript of radio broadcast, 29 January 1945, Phyllis Duguid Papers.
during the 1920s and 1930s. Blood tests, intelligence tests, physical and physiological tests 'demonstrated that the 'uncontaminated' nomads were fine physical specimens, Caucasian in type and not degenerate'. Supported by anecdotal evidence that atavism—or 'throw-backs' to the Aboriginal colour—did not occur in the descendants of unions between Aborigines and whites, the theory of racial relatedness was used by A.O. Neville and C.E. Cook, the Chief Protectors of Aborigines in Western Australia and the Northern Territory respectively, to justify their policy of 'breeding out the colour' of the Aboriginal race. But it was not just scientists and administrators who made use of this theory. As Russell McGregor has observed, 'the propaganda value of a scientifically-validated racial kinship was not lost on contemporary humanitarian lobbyists', many of whom 'used the notion of blood-kinship as a means of fostering public interest in the plight of the Aboriginals, and of justifying their right to a fuller participation in the social, economic and political life of the nation'. Charles Duguid was one of these. Phyllis Duguid was not. Neither was Australia's leading anthropologist and committed lobbyist on the Aborigines' behalf, Professor A.P. Elkin.

Charles Duguid used the theory of racial relatedness to infer Aborigines' potential to advance to the same level of civilisation enjoyed by white Australians. In 1936, in an article published in The Aborigines Protector, he described the Aborigines as 'the earliest living examples, as we are the latest, of the same root stock'. The following year, in an article published in The Ladder, Duguid stated that '[t]he Aborigines are far more akin to the Caucasian group to which we ourselves belong'. In 1938, he informed readers of The Link that '[t]he native of Australia is a stone-age man, akin to our own stock in the dawn of time but unrelated to the Negro or Mongol'. In 1940, in an article written for Venture, Duguid lamented the fact that 'very few white people in Australia have any idea that the natives are far closer in blood to ourselves than to either the Mongol or the Negro race'. Clearly, this lack of understanding was not through want of effort on his part. His wife, on the other hand, made no such effort. With one or two equivocal exceptions, Phyllis Duguid completely avoided the issue of Aborigines' and whites' racial relatedness. While it may simply have been a matter of not repeating each others arguments, the obvious importance Charles

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81 In 1941, Phyllis mentioned that 'blood tests ... [had] shown the real kinship of the two races'. In 1954, she stated that there was 'little doubt' that Aborigines and whites belonged 'to the same branch of the human family'. See P. Duguid, 'The Responsibility of Nation Building', p. 73; P. Duguid, 'Brown and White Down Under', unpublished address, [1954], Phyllis Duguid Papers.
placed on spreading the word of Aborigines' and whites' exclusive blood relationship suggests otherwise. Phyllis' silence, as well as her equivocation, spoke volumes. Rather than disagree with Charles, or suggest an alternative theory, Phyllis encouraged her readers to consult Professor Elkin's book *The Australian Aborigines: How to Understand Them*.

First published in 1938, Elkin's monograph made 'ignorance ... inexcusable', according to Phyllis. In her view, 'the whole book [was] an expression of deep human understanding'. Yet Elkin totally rejected the idea that Aborigines and whites shared a common racial ancestry. According to Elkin, the argument for viewing Aborigines as primitive Caucasians was, for the most part, 'negative in character'. Since there were assumed to be three main divisions of human beings, and since the Aborigines were not Mongoloid or Negroid, the only other option was Caucasian. Not so, according to Elkin, who argued that the Australian Aborigines belonged in a fourth division, 'a special group' he called 'Australoid'. Other members of the Australoid group could be found 'in the lands from Australia to southern India', Elkin explained:

"Evidence suggests that there have been some Australoid folk in New Guinea and the Celebes, and archaeology points to their former presence in Java. The Sakai of the Malay Peninsula, the Veddas of Ceylon and the aboriginal hill-tribes of southern India belong to this division."

Although Wood Jones and others, including Charles Duguid, named these same peoples as evidence of the Australian Aborigines' Caucasian ancestry, Elkin was adamant that they were 'rightly classed ... in a special human division'. McGregor has suggested that Elkin's insistence on this point 'perhaps ... stemmed from his antipathy towards schemes of 'breeding out the colour', which drew their scientific sustenance from the Caucasian theory'. However, it could also have stemmed from Elkin's antipathy towards physical anthropology and physical anthropologists like Wood Jones who advocated the absolute segregation of 'uncontaminated' Aborigines on large inviolable reserves.

Either way, Elkin's Australoid category left Phyllis Duguid in an awkward position. 'Professor Elkin's authority [was] unchallengeable', according to her, and yet to use his argument would be to contradict, and thus undermine, her husband's. Phyllis circumvented this dilemma by emphasising the Aborigines' essential humanity rather than their racial classification. 'The Aborigine', she argued, 'has his share of what is in all of us—the desire for development, and the ability to develop'; a human characteristic rather

than a purely Caucasian one.\textsuperscript{87} Charles did not disagree with this, however, in stressing the point that the Aborigines were 'without Mongol or Negro blood' he effectively, if unintentionally, privileged the Caucasian group.\textsuperscript{88} Sometimes he was more explicit. According to Charles, the 'word nigger as applied to the natives of Australia [was] a complete misnomer and should be dropped', not (just) because of its derogatory connotation, but because the Aborigines had 'no link with the Negro division ... of peoples'.\textsuperscript{89} Did this mean that the word 'nigger' was applicable to people of African descent, long oppressed, enslaved and treated as less than human? Probably not, however Charles was adamant that the Aborigines of Australia were 'not black fellows'. Instead, they ranged in colour from 'dark chocolate' to 'very fair' and their 'babies at first [were] pinkish, not unlike our own babies'.\textsuperscript{90} Tjaruru, the Aboriginal boy mentioned above, was 'one of the light coloured full-bloods of whom there [were] many among our Aborigines', according to Charles: he was also 'one of the most mentally alert boys [Charles had] ever met'.\textsuperscript{91} By contrast, Tjaruru's friend, Warungulla, 'was very dark': he was also 'slower', 'quieter' and 'shyer than Tjaruru'.\textsuperscript{92} Was there a link between skin colour and mental ability? Did Tjaruru's lighter colour suggest a higher stage of evolution? What about Aborigines of mixed-descent? Did their 'white blood' make them more intelligent than Aborigines of full-descent?

Charles Duguid, the defender of Aborigines as human beings, did not ask of himself, or his readers, questions such as these. Charles Duguid, the man bombarded by competing racial theories, lived experiences, hopes, fears and fantasies, could not help but wonder whether lightness (sometimes) equalled brightness. If there was a hierarchy of races—and Duguid would never have admitted to subscribing to such a view—the implication of his observations suggest Caucasian superiority, and since the Aborigines were 'akin to the Caucasian group', this likely placed them ahead of other non-white peoples in Duguid's mind. When it came to differentiating between different 'types' of Aborigines, Duguid employed a reverse hierarchy: he placed 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines at the top. There were three main types of Aborigines, according to Duguid: (a) Those as yet hardly touched by us; (b) Those around cattle stations and mining camps; (c) Those in our own civilisation'.\textsuperscript{93} When speaking or writing about Aborigines, Duguid insisted upon the importance of differentiating between these 'aspects of Aboriginal life', shortened for ease of explanation to 'full-blood [tribal], detrivialised [and] half-caste'.\textsuperscript{94} Reflecting his
belief that 'way of life' was the greatest difference between Aborigines and whites, Duguid distinguished between Aborigines on the basis of location and degree of interaction with white society, not blood—although blood played a role—and he measured them against an ideal of pre-contact Aboriginal life.

The Aborigines in the first category—'those as yet hardly touched by us', or 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines—were the people Duguid most admired for they most resembled his imagined ideal of Aboriginal life in Australia prior to the arrival of white civilisation. They were 'natural natives—people of amazing initiative and ability and fineness of character'. The Aborigines in the second category—'those around cattle stations' or detribalised Aborigines—Duguid described as 'ill-clad, ill-fed [and] subservient'. Having lost the land on which their 'tribal' life revolved, Duguid viewed detribalised Aborigines as people without culture—dispossessed, degraded and deprived of reason to live:

These are the relics of the tribe or moiety who for centuries occupied the country now carrying the white man's bullocks. These natives are dressed in cast-off clothing, are almost invariably under-nourished, and for the most part are broken in spirit.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Phyllis Duguid viewed Aborigines of mixed-descent in much the same way. In fact, she believed that 'mixed-bloods' often fared worse than detribalised Aborigines, for while they had 'lost the moral standards and strict of their Aboriginal forefathers they [had] never been properly trained and educated in the best traditions of their white ancestors'. Charles disagreed. In his view, 'half-castes' were so far removed from 'full-blood tribal' Aborigines, both culturally and physically, as to be virtually indistinct from white people.

In keeping with his location-based typology, however, Charles Duguid included under the heading 'half-caste' Aborigines of full-descent who lived in white society, declaring in 1940 that '[w]ith the half-caste we can consider the full-blood in our civilisation'. Behind this curiously worded statement was another chance meeting borne of Duguid's trip to Central Australia in 1936. Before leaving Alice Springs for Haast's Bluff, Duguid met a young Aboriginal man who, like Tjaruru, left a lasting impression.

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95 C. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II)', p. 88.
97 C. Duguid, The Australian Aborigines—(II)', p. 88.
99 In Charles Duguid's view, most Aborigines of mixed-descent 'differ[ed] from white people only in tint of skin'. C. Duguid, 'Voices from overseas', transcript of radio broadcast, May 1954, Charles Duguid Papers, Private Collection, since deposited with the National Library of Australia (hereafter Duguid Papers: 3).
100 C. Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines —(II)', p. 89.
The man was Duguid's 'friend', Micky Dow Dow's grandson. In his travel diary, Duguid wrote:

The young [man] is 24, tall and well built, but he had a very sad expression. He, although a full-blood, was dressed like any work-man, but no work is available. The law, however, provides rations only for the sick, aged and the infirm. This young man, although most anxious for work, cannot get either work or rations because he is neither white, sick, aged or infirm.

According to Duguid, Micky Dow Dow's grandson had to keep his 'body and soul together with scraps from his grandfather'. This intolerable situation prompted Duguid to argue that all Aborigines who lived in white society, be they 'half-caste' or 'full-blood', should have access to the same benefits of civilisation as white Australians. However, Duguid's inclusion of a few 'full-bloods' in the same category as 'half-castes' did not necessarily mean that he believed such Aborigines belonged in white society. In my view, it was merely a reflection of reality; it meant that such Aborigines were living in white society. In line with his views on detribalisation, Duguid sought to stop Aborigines of full-descent from 'drifting' towards white society, insisting that those who congregated around railway lines and small townships 'should be led back to their own country ... for their own sakes'. This was not a matter of intelligence, for Duguid was adamant that 'the intelligence of the full-blood Aborigines [was] in no sense inferior to that of the half-castes'. Rather, it was a matter of place. Only in their own place—meaning in their own culture and environment—were Aborigines of full-descent capable of real advancement.

Where did this leave Sydney James Cook, a displaced child of 'tribal full-blood' parents? By Duguid's definition, Cook was the same as a 'half-caste'; that is, hardly Aboriginal at all. However, belonging in the same category as the 'half-caste' did not mean that Cook belonged in white society. It just meant that he was domiciled there. For how long and to what end remained to be seen.

III. Just like a white boy?

Sydney James Cook lived as a full and ostensibly equal member of the Duguid family for six years, from 1944 to 1950. During that time he was shown the same love and affection as the Duguids' own children and, although not legally adopted, assumed the
Duguid name. Sydney Duguid was a 'lad'; occasionally wilful and often disruptive, a prankster who loved the limelight, a young boy desirous of attention. According to Charles, 'Sydney [was] little different, if at all, from a stirring white boy of his own years', and yet, in 1950, the Duguids sent him to live with Aborigines at Roper River, a remote Christian mission in the Northern Territory. Why? What precipitated this undeniably drastic move? What, if anything, had changed?

In contrast to the expansive files kept by the Northern Territory administration following Cook's relocation to Roper River, few records of Cook's time with the Duguids remain. Of those that Charles Duguid chose to keep, their type as well as their content are revealing of Duguid's frustrated efforts to understand his young charge, and to help Cook cope with the prejudices of white society: psychological reports, school reports and correspondence pertaining to Cook's expulsion from Kings College in 1948. Added to this, two short entries in two published works—'Aboriginal children I have met' and Ernabella Revisited—comprise the full-extent of Duguid's personal and public records regarding Cook's life in Adelaide. Although further insights can be gleaned from the records of the South Australian Aborigines Protection Board, the fact that Duguid, an activist who built his reputation on 'knowing' Aborigines, chose not to make Cook, or his relationship with Cook, a topic for wider public consumption requires explanation.

The general public were definitely interested in Cook's story. In October 1946, in the midst of the rocket range controversy, Duguid presented himself at the Adelaide office of Smith's Weekly, a large bundle of maps under his arm. Duguid wanted the magazine to publicise his protest against the rocket range, and they did, but Smith's editors were also interested in Duguid himself—a man who had 'spent a small private fortune in pushing the black man's cause', had helped to establish Ernabella mission and had even 'adopted a full-blood boy'. Anticipating their reader's interest, Smith's explained:

The lad is now nine years old, goes to King's College (Adelaide) and is equal of his fellow students. He has been reared with [the] white man's pride of his own race and is unashamed of his colour.

The question of Cook's racial pride and/or colour consciousness will be examined below. Such comments aside, it is clear that Duguid's association with Cook enhanced his public reputation as an activist. In 1951, less than a year after Cook's relocation to Roper River,
People magazine devoted four pages to Duguid's work on behalf of Aborigines, beginning with an exaggerated account of his efforts to help Aboriginal children:

[Duguid's] first step was to take several Aboriginal children—tribal full-bloods—into his home. Most of them stayed weeks and months at a time. One, a boy of six, stayed for many years. They came timid, suspicious creatures wondering what to expect in the white man's house. But their fears were soon allayed. They became part of the home. They ate at the family table with the Duguids' own children, had their own rooms, were sent to school.\footnote{111}

This 'experiment astonished Adelaide', according to People, 'but it proved Duguid's point. Given equal opportunities, the Aboriginal children were well-mannered, intelligent and in every way the equal of white children'.\footnote{112} And it was not just Adelaide society that found Duguid's so called 'experiment' so astonishing. In 1954, Duguid's 'daily experiment'—his willingness 'to go the limit and bring the Aborigine into [his] home'—saw him praised in the Church of Scotland's newsletter Life and Work.\footnote{113} Ten years later, in 1964, the Newcastle Morning Herald described Duguid's determination to prove the Aborigines' equal intelligence by bringing 'full-blooded children into his home' as a 'magnificently successful ... experiment':

The full-bloods grew up with Dr Duguid's own two children, knowing them as brother and sister, living a normal suburban life, attending school and college. They became responsible adults, took responsible positions in life. Dr and Mrs Duguid were very proud of them.\footnote{114}

Apart from Nganyintja who spent less than three-weeks with the Duguids, the only other Aboriginal child of full-descent the Duguids brought into their home was Cook, and the Duguids sent him to live with Aborigines.

As mentioned earlier, Charles Duguid was adamant that Cook was not an experiment. Clearly, the general public thought otherwise. So did the Adelaide anthropologist and medical scientist, J.B. Cleland. In 1964, Cleland wrote to Charles and Phyllis Duguid requesting 'a full record of Sydney Cook's ... behaviour as a child'.\footnote{115} Since Cook's 'nurture was strictly European till late childhood', Cleland wanted to know 'whether he behaved exactly as a white child would or differed significantly or slightly in

\footnotesize{\footnoteref{111}} 'Dr Duguid - champion of the dark skinned underdog', People, 14 February 1951, p. 43.
\footnotesize{\footnoteref{112}} Ibid.
\footnotesize{\footnoteref{113}} 'Champion of a Primitive People', Life and Work (the Record of the Church of Scotland), September 1954, p. 239.
\footnotesize{\footnoteref{114}} W.H. Fenwick, 'A Scalpel That Cut to Size', Newcastle Morning Herald, 30 June 1962.
\footnotesize{\footnoteref{115}} J.B. Cleland to C. Duguid, 7 January 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
any way'. Demonstrating the pervasiveness of racially or biologically deterministic ideas, what Cleland really wanted to know was whether Cook had 'inherited any trait not likely to be shown by a white child'. Despite Cleland's insistence that such a record would be 'most valuable', Charles Duguid did not acquiesce. Nor did Phyllis. Perhaps inspired by Cleland's interest, however, Phyllis penned a long poem entitled 'To an Aboriginal boy' in the months following Cleland's request. Reproduced in full at the end of this chapter, Phyllis' poem—sixty lines of lament—was not what Cleland had in mind. It was (and is) an expression of deep regret over white society's failure to understand, let alone appreciate, Aboriginal people and their culture. As the final few lines attest, it was also a message of hope and a call for forgiveness:

Ignore the judgement and forget the lie.
They said your race was doomed—its heritage
Feeble and useless in the march of time.
And, if you can, forgive the bitter wrong
Your fathers suffered at our fathers' hands.
Share with our sons your ancient disciplines
And what remains to you of native lore,
While they redeem the past and share with you
The endless riches of our common land.

If, as seems likely, Phyllis' poem was written for Cook, then her message was clear: as an Aboriginal man conscious of his own and his people's self-worth, Cook had much to contribute to the Australian nation. But what of Cook, the Aboriginal child who was just like a white boy? How did he get to be that man?

According to Rosemary Douglas, the Duguids' daughter, life was hard for Cook in Adelaide. There were very few 'full-bloods' in the city, she recalled, and so Cook 'stood out'. It did not matter that Cook had only ever known the company of white people, his skin colour and physical appearance marked him as Aboriginal, and therefore out of place in white society. Even those aware of Cook's circumstances found it difficult to look beyond his colour. Cook's psychologist, for example, reported that Cook, aged eight, found it difficult to 'adjust to complicated civilised standards' because he '[did] not understand their necessity', and that Cook, aged ten, found school work 'boring' because it

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116 Ibid; Cleland to C. Duguid, 11 February 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
117 Cleland to C. Duguid, 11 February 1964.
118 Phyllis Duguid applied for the copyright of her poem 'To an Aboriginal Boy' in March 1966. This was granted in June 1966. In her application Phyllis stated that the poem was written in January 1964. See P. Duguid, 'To an Aboriginal boy', NAA: A1336/1, 67922.
119 P. Duguid, 'To an Aboriginal boy'. A copy of Phyllis' poem can also be found in Barnes, Munyi's daughter, pp. 70-71.
120 Personal communication with Rosemary Douglas, 24 August 1999.
was 'against his natural bent'. The fact that 'civilised standards' were all that Cook had ever known was apparently irrelevant in the face of his 'natural bent'—meaning his Aboriginal inheritance. Cook's teachers were similarly predisposed to judge him according to his colour, consistently drawing attention to his carelessness, lack of concentration, unreliability and roughness in play. In terms of his academic ability, Cook's grades in standard subjects such as reading, writing and arithmetic decreased each year that he was at Kings College, while his marks in subjects such as art, sport and music increased. Although Cook may simply have been better at certain things than others, it is no coincidence that the areas in which he did well—art, sport and music—were also the areas in which Aborigines were commonly thought to excel.

Most people's reactions to Cook, as well as their expectations of him, were determined by his skin colour. In 'Aboriginal children I have met', Charles Duguid sought to minimise the visibility of Cook's difference by highlighting the numerous ways in which Cook was the same as a white boy his age, a tactic which had the opposite effect of reinforcing the dual nature of Cook's difference. First broadcast as an address to Adelaide schools in 1946, the article featured three 'full-blood' Aboriginal children, Tjaruru, Nganyintja and Cook—two 'tribal' Aborigines and one from the 'white world'. Unlike Tjaruru and Nganyintja, Cook was not named in the article. Nor was the nature of his relationship to Duguid specified. Instead, Cook was referred to as 'the third child', 'the baby from the sack', 'that child' and 'he'; an abandoned Aboriginal infant who 'had to be kept in white society' and was 'now living in an Adelaide home'. A photograph of Cook in a tailored suit—white shirt and tie, double-breasted jacket and short pants with knee-high white socks completing the ensemble—accompanied the article. Instructively, if somewhat unimaginatively captioned 'Full-blood, Aged 7, Adelaide', it showed the very model of an assimilated Aborigine (see Plate 10). But there was a catch. To his readers, should they ever meet this boy, or others like him, Duguid instructed:

Don't draw attention to his brown skin, don't laugh at him, but just as important don't spoil him. Don't single him out with lollies and toys. Treat him exactly as you would your own white friend or brother.

121 Lois Allen, Confidential Report on Sydney Duguid, Aged 8 years, 0 months, November 1945, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Lois Allen, Psychological Report on Sydney Duguid, Aged 10 years, 4 months, February 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
122 According to his teachers, Cook lacked 'self-confidence' and was 'easily led to excitable and negative behaviour'; he was 'lip lazy' and sat 'badly'; he was 'rather erratic' and needed 'constant supervision'. See Sydney Duguid's school reports 1944-48, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
123 Cook's teachers reported that he was 'often clumsy indoors' but he was very 'good at games outdoors'; he was 'quick to understand' music and had a 'particular interest' in drawing; he was also good at telling stories and loved 'to hold audience'. See Sydney Duguid's school reports 1944-48, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
124 C. Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I Have Met', pp. 33-34.
125 Ibid, p. 34.
By withholding Cook's name and asking others to ignore his colour, Duguid showed how tenuous Cook's hold on sameness really was. Unlike white children, Cook was black. Unlike Tjaruru and Nganyintja, Cook had no special skills or 'tribal' qualities for Duguid to admire. Having been raised in white society, the best that Cook could be, it seems, was the same as a white boy his age. Thus, Duguid reported that Cook could 'swim and dive, play games with vigour ... [and] throw a ball much further than any of his school mates'. He was 'a wizard on a scooter, [could] ride a bicycle with abandon' and he had even 'joined the Cubs', an important rite-of-passage for white boys his age. However, since there was nothing especially significant about a young boy joining the Cubs or riding a bicycle, what made Cook's achievements noteworthy was that he was a 'full-blood' Aboriginal. This simple truth lay at the heart of Duguid's unease about Cook.

In May 1946, the entire Duguid family, Cook included, holidayed at Emabella mission (see Plate 11). On their return to Adelaide, the question 'How did Sydney react to the natives' was asked so often that Duguid took the opportunity of answering it in *Ernabella Revisited*, a booklet issued by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. According to Duguid, the trip had a profound effect on Cook's behaviour. He returned to Adelaide 'less aggressive than he was and much more helpful in the home'. Duguid attributed this change to Cook's new-found awareness that he was 'not ... the only brown boy' in the world; 'he knows there are hundreds more at Emabella, on the stations ... and at Alice Springs'. The trip also had a profound effect on Duguid's understanding of Cook. In *Ernabella Revisited*, Duguid related an incident that occurred while he and Cook were visiting the sheep camps with one of the mission's workers, Walter MacDougall:

At one of the sheep camps two Aboriginal women were in charge—a woman at least in the late forties, and a younger woman in perhaps the early twenties. The older woman asked Mr MacDougall in her own language who Sydney's father and mother were and where they were. "He hasn't any father or mother," Mr MacDougall replied in Pitjantjatjara. "Dr and Mrs Duguid look after him." "No father or mother!" cried the old woman and she burst into tears. The younger woman almost reproved her. Pointing to Sydney, running happily with the native children she said in her language, "Look, he's alright, Dr and Mrs are father and mother to him. They look after him." It may only have been the mother heart that brought the tears but I think the older woman was probably conscious of the fact that Sydney was missing much knowledge and learning that no white parents could give him.

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Thus reminded of what Cook was missing, Duguid found it increasingly difficult to
convince himself, let alone others, that Cook could survive in white society, and be happy
there.

Duguid wanted Cook to take 'the usual place in the [white] community of a boy his
age—just that—no more, no less', and so he said that Cook did, but saying it did not make
it so.\textsuperscript{129} The new headmaster at Kings College, C.C. Shinkfield, required Cook to be 'one
of the rest', and Cook's school reports paint a picture of a child desperate to be just that; a
child so desperate for 'affection, attention and appreciation' that conflict often ensued.\textsuperscript{130}
According to his grade two teacher, Cook had 'a keen wish to please' and was 'always
quick to do small things to help other children or adults'. He was also very 'fond of
younger children' and a 'protector of the timid'. In his role as protector, however, Cook was
often 'very aggressive' towards other boys, and was sometimes 'very rough'.\textsuperscript{131} Cook's
grade three teacher described him as having a 'poor perception of the rights of others',
while his grade four teacher reported that Cook was 'inclined to be aggressive when he
[could] not get his own way by other means'.\textsuperscript{132} At the beginning of Cook's fifth year at
Kings College, 1947, Shinkfield sounded the following warning:

I am very concerned with this youth. Constant care and discipline are
necessary. Disobedience is still in evidence and I am viewing the future with
some concern, for Sydney is not inclined to adjust himself to the general
pattern and is a law unto himself.\textsuperscript{133}

Cook's school report for term one the following year—his final term at Kings—showed a
marked improvement in both general behaviour and academic attainments, but Shinkfield
insisted that 'much more improvement ... [was] necessary before [Cook could] be
esteemed as "according to pattern"'.\textsuperscript{134}

In May 1948, on the first day back from term break, Shinkfield asked Duguid to
'make other arrangements' for Cook's education. According to Shinkfield, the school
risked losing four students on Cook's account. None 'of the parents concerned were ...
against [Cook's] colour', Shinkfield assured Duguid, but they were all 'against the boy
himself for his influence [was] by no means wholesome'.\textsuperscript{135} Of particular concern was the
'undesirableness' of Cook's 'conduct in the lavatories': 'The lad will interfere with smaller
boys, and will not let them alone, to the extent that, in one instance, one small boy is having

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{130} Kings College report on Sydney Duguid, Term 1, 1946, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Kings
College report on Sydney Cook, Term 1, 1944, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1943/80.
\textsuperscript{131} Kings College report on Sydney Duguid, Term 1, 1945, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{132} Kings College report on Sydney Duguid, Term 3, 1946 and Term 1, 1947, Duguid Papers: 1,
Series 1.
\textsuperscript{133} Kings College report on Sydney Duguid, Term 1, 1947, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{134} Kings College report on Sydney Duguid, Term 1, 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{135} C.C. Shinkfield, headmaster Kings College to C. Duguid, 24 May 1948, Duguid Papers: 1,
Series 1.
nightmares over [him]’, Shinkfield explained. In Shinkfield's view, the school had 'done its best' for Cook and was not to blame for this 'disappointing' result: 'The boy in himself [was] the obstacle'.136 Duguid was outraged. According to him, Cook admitted his involvement in the lavatory incident—an unfortunate affair, but one that occurred 'frequently in boys schools'—and he named the other boys involved, including the ring-leader, but 'they [were] white' and Cook was not: only Cook was expelled. There was no doubt in Duguid's mind that 'colour [was] at the bottom of all this trouble'.137 More than colour, however, it was the meanings that Shinkfield and the parents involved attached to Cook's colour in light of his actions that was the problem. Colour plus sexuality—or instinct at its most untameable—invoked irrational fears of unrestrained sexual licentiousness, and since Cook was 'nearly two years older' than most of his classmates, Shinkfield feared that his 'inherently unwholesome' influence 'bid fair to widen'.138

The Northern Territory administration proffered a similar explanation. Nearly a decade later, a draft dossier of Cook's life prepared by the Director of Welfare, H.C. Giese, cited such instances of negative behaviour on Cook's part as evidence of his 'reverting to Aboriginal tendencies'.139 Although, as far as Duguid was concerned, Cook's indiscretion was typical of boys his age, not typical of Aboriginality, it was clear that Cook could not remain at Kings College.140 It will be recalled that Cook's 'distinctly favourable' association with Kings College had been one of Charles and Phyllis Duguid's main considerations in accepting Cook into their home. With this association broken, the Aborigines Protection Board felt that Cook's 'best interests' would be served 'if he were transferred to the St Francis Home for Native Boys at Semaphore'.141 This suggestion was not acted on and Cook remained with the Duguids. Towards the end of 1948, however, the situation became unmanageable, and Duguid wrote to W.R. Penhall, secretary of the APB, requesting that 'permanent' alternative arrangements be made. According to Duguid, Cook had 'had every chance that could be given him, but he [was] becoming more difficult every month' and was 'upsetting the home through defiance'. 'For his own good', Duguid suggested that Cook 'ought, if at all possible, to be with older boys of his own colour who [could] control him'. Duguid was aware that Harry Green, the superintendent at Ooldea mission, believed that he had located Cook's parents and, if this were true, Duguid reasoned that Cook 'should be allowed to return to them'.142

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136 Shinkfield to C. Duguid, 1 June 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
137 C. Duguid to Shinkfield, 11 June 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; C. Duguid, notes on 'Objections to Sydney', [June 1948], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; P. Duguid, notes on conversation with Cook, [June 1948], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
138 Shinkfield to C. Duguid, 1 June 1948.
140 C. Duguid to Shinkfield, 2 June 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
141 Penhall to C. Duguid, 2 June 1948, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
142 C. Duguid to Penhall, 16 November 1948.
Penhall 'agreed[d] entirely that [Cook] should be returned to live amongst his own people'.143 However, rather than 'thrust [the] boy back into the primitive conditions existing at Ooldea', Penhall felt that Cook would do better under A.J. Pearce's control at the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) at Finniss Springs.144 Pearce, however, was reluctant to be lumbered with such a difficult child. He had heard that Cook was 'inclined to be dishonest', and since there was no dormitory at Finniss Springs, Pearce was unwilling to take Cook into his own home.145 Undeterred and determined to avoid 'thrusting the boy back into the primitive life', Penhall approached Noel Wiley of the UAM mission at Oodnadatta.146 Unlike Finniss Springs, Oodnadatta had a dormitory and access to a school, and although word of Cook's poor behaviour had spread, Wiley agreed to the move.147 The secretary of the UAM, Pastor Samuels, strongly objected: 'If Dr D. wants to get rid of Sydney, let him send him to Emabella', he declared.148 Another approach by Penhall, again with emphasis on the undesirability of returning Cook to a primitive life, elicited the desired result. Samuels agreed to the move provided that Cook was subject to the same conditions as applied to other children at the Oodnadatta home: there was to be no special treatment, no interference by Duguid and Cook was to 'remain in the institution unless removed by the APB'.149 Although Duguid had asked for 'permanent' arrangements to be made, no-one in his family was 'willing to part with the boy on the understanding that he [would] not be allowed to return'.150 Phyllis, in particular, was 'terribly upset at the thought of [Cook] going to Oodnadatta for good'.151 Against Penhall's advice—and much to Penhall's chagrin—Duguid withdrew his request to have Cook relocated.

Despite the 'exceedingly favourable environment' provided by the Duguids, Penhall doubted whether Cook 'would ever be successful or happy living in a white community'. In his view, the longer Cook remained 'away from his true environment', the harder the inevitable transition would be.152 In an era commonly associated with the first stirrings of change towards a national policy of assimilation, Penhall's determination to see Cook 'absorbed in his true environment amongst the native people' seems oddly discordant, especially in light of Penhall's own views on assimilation.153 In February 1948, at a Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Welfare Authorities, Penhall affirmed that the object of Aboriginal policy was 'to facilitate and hasten the assimilation of [the

143 Penhall to C. Duguid, 17 November 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
144 Penhall to A.J. Pearce, 21 October 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86; Penhall to Samuels, 17 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
145 Pearce to Penhall, 1 November 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
147 Wiley to Penhall, 6 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
148 Note to Penhall of phone call from Samuels, 8 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
149 Penhall to Samuels, 17 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86; Penhall to C. Duguid, 21 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
150 C. Duguid to Penhall, 29 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
151 C. Duguid to Penhall, 19 December 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
152 Penhall to C. Duguid, 17 November 1948; Penhall to Pearce, 21 October 1948.
153 Penhall to Samuels, 17 December 1948.
Aborigines] into the general life of the community'. Yet, less than ten months later, Penhall was advocating Cook's immediate return to Aboriginal society, albeit one more advanced (less primitive) than Ooldea. What did this say about assimilation? If Cook, an Aboriginal child who was raised in white society by white people could not be happy there—if he did 'not fit into the environment of our white civilisation' as Penhall claimed—what hope did other Aborigines have? Rather than question the efficacy of assimilation, Penhall blamed Cook's inability to live in white society on 'the handicap resulting from his early years' with the Bush Church Aid Society; a condition entirely unique to Cook, and not, therefore, the failure of assimilation.

Duguid held a different view. While he agreed that the BCA's 'utter spoiling' had left Cook damaged in terms of assimilation by depriving him of the 'normal disciplines that a child learns in its earliest years', Duguid characterised Cook's greater 'tragedy' as 'what happened at his birth'. In judging [Cook]—and by implication assimilation—we must remember that he has never known his real parents and never mingled with his own race', Duguid told Penhall. This meant that Cook had been denied the opportunity to develop certain qualities that Duguid regarded as essential to his survival in white society. These were 'courage', 'self-control', 'self-reliance' and 'self-respect'—the very qualities that Duguid admired in 'tribal' Aborigines. In Duguid's view, the 'strongest argument against [Cook] or any Aboriginal child remaining in the white community [was] the undue attention they received from both adults and children': 'whether it [was] unkind contempt or undue appreciation, very few white people seem[ed] to be capable of treating the Aborigines as ordinary individuals', Duguid complained. In order to cope with this 'extra attention', Duguid believed that Aborigines in white society needed to be as conscious of their own self-worth as 'tribal' Aborigines were, secure in their own environment and living their own way of life. In his view, they needed to be like Nganyintja.

Following Nganyintja's three-week stay in Adelaide, Duguid claimed that '[n]o more adaptable, no more lovable or co-operative child [had] ever been in [his] home'. Of all Nganyintja's qualities, it was her 'naturalness' that Duguid most admired: Nganyintja 'met people naturally' and by her 'naturalness' showed 'what possibilities [lay] in ... native children'. Duguid attributed Nganyintja's ability to be her 'natural self' around whites to her having 'no sense of racial inferiority', which he attributed in turn to the respect paid

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156 Penhall to C. Duguid, 17 November 1948.
157 C. Duguid to Penhall, 16 November 1948; P. Duguid to Giese, 21 May 1960.
158 C. Duguid to Penhall, 16 November 1948.
159 C. Duguid to Penhall, 17 November 1948, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1948/86.
160 C. Duguid, 'Aboriginal Children I Have Met', pp. 32-33.
Aboriginal culture at Ernabella mission. 'Naturalness' was a compliment Duguid reserved for describing Aborigines' reaction to others. Aside from describing Cook's reaction to the Aborigines at Ernabella as 'natural', it was not a term he applied to Cook. In Ernabella Revisited, Duguid noted that Cook 'took his place naturally among the boys and girls' at the mission 'and they received him as naturally. They taught him to play their games, to throw the boy's spear, to ride horses, and to make damper'. But Cook's 'naturalness' was contingent, a quality of his response to Aboriginal company only, for unlike Nganyintja who slept 'naked ... between the fires at night', Cook 'was a member of the white community' at Ernabella and so 'had meals with us and of course slept with us'. Outside Aboriginal society Cook had no recourse to 'naturalness', no reservoir of self-respect or system of self-honour to draw upon, other than that which whites had given him. As a consequence of his mishandling by the BCA, that was not enough.

To survive in white society, Duguid believed that Aborigines, and especially Aborigines of full-descent, needed to feel as proud of their own race and be as unashamed of their colour as Smiths Weekly had, presumably on Duguid's advice, described Cook in the article mentioned above. Like Duguid's statement regarding Cook's place in the white community, Duguid's advice to Smiths Weekly reflected his ambition for Cook; an ambition that Duguid came to see as unrealisable so long as Cook remained in white society. Cook's problem was not Aboriginality, in Duguid's view, but the lack of Aboriginality. It was not race, but the lack of pride in his race. It was not colour, but the lack of a dignifying context for his colour. And these were things 'that no white parents could give him'.

In May 1950, two years after Cook's expulsion from Kings College, Charles and Phyllis Duguid sent Cook, aged twelve, to live with Aborigines. Having effectively burnt their bridges among the small community of appropriate missions in South Australia—Ernabella, being a mission for 'tribal' Aborigines, was not considered appropriate—the Duguids sent Cook to the Church of England mission at Roper River in the Northern Territory. The intervening years had seen Cook enrolled in a school that was 'particularly gifted in the handling of difficult boys', according to Phyllis, 'but he continued to play truant and please himself, eventually becoming quite out of school control'. At Roper River it was planned that Cook would 'live with [an Aboriginal] family, continue with correspondence lessons, and above all learn something of cattle work under sympathetic direction'. Sending Cook from the relative luxury of a comfortable suburban home to an Aboriginal camp was not an easy decision to make—as late as

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162 C. Duguid, Ernabella Revisited, p. 16.
164 C. Duguid, Ernabella Revisited, p. 16.
165 Penhall to C. Duguid, 14 April 1950, SRSA, GRG 52/1/1950/3.
166 P. Duguid to Giese, 21 May 1960.

October 1949, Cook's psychologist reported that 'he did not want to leave home' and that 'he seemed rather agitated at the suggestion'—but the Duguids were convinced that Cook needed 'the companionship of his own people ... [in] his adolescent years'.

It was Charles and Phyllis Duguid's particular understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginality—or what it meant to 'be Aboriginal'—that drove them to seek racial companionship for Cook. Other white parents might have acted differently, and, according to the Northern Territory administration, could hardly have acted less appropriately. Cook's relocation to Roper River was viewed by the Welfare Branch as backward in terms of assimilation and cruel. However, whether it was a retrograde step depends entirely on how assimilation is understood. Charles and Phyllis Duguid's support for assimilation was different from Paul Hasluck's, Minister for the Territories (1951-1963) and architect of the assimilation policy. Nowhere was this more apparent than in their decision to send Cook to live with Aborigines. As far as Charles and Phyllis were concerned, Cook's advancement in white society had stalled. To become an Aboriginal man conscious of his own self-worth, they believed that Cook needed to learn how to 'be Aboriginal'; to go through the rigours of tribal initiation and hopefully acquire a meaningful and dignifying context for his colour. Unlike Penhall who anticipated Cook's remaining in Aboriginal society, Charles and Phyllis saw the move as temporary: 'After a few years' with his own people, they believed that Cook would re-enter white society and 'become a very useful and happy citizen'. Although, as will become apparent in the chapter five, Cook's life at Roper River was far more difficult than the Duguids imagined, it is clear that in sending Cook to live with Aborigines, they thought that they were aiding Cook's assimilation by giving him a chance to assimilate Aboriginal culture as well.

167 L.S. Piddington, psychologist to P. Duguid, 2 October 1949, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; C. Duguid to Penhall, 16 November 1948. It will be recalled that Charles and Phyllis held strong views on the crucial role that adolescence played in the lives of 'tribal' Aborigines. See C. Duguid, 'Tribal natives and their customs', p. 5; P. Duguid, 'The Educational Needs of Our Aborigines'.


169 C. Duguid to Penhall, 17 November 1948; See also, C. Duguid to Hasluck, 21 October 1953.
League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women

PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, November 23rd at 8 p.m.
at the
Institute, North Terrace
Lady Muriel Barclay-Harvey has graciously consented to be present

An Illustrated Lecture will be given by
PROFESSOR HARVEY JOHNSTON
"The Aboriginal Woman of Australia"

VOCAL ITEMS BY ABORIGINAL GIRLS
Chair to be taken by Mrs. Chas. Duguid, B.A.

COLLECTION
The Future of the Aboriginal Women Concerns Every Australian Citizen

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PLATE 7. 'Hand, Christian and Her Son'. This picture shows the hand of God 'passing introduced toxins (flour, sugar, western medicines etc) to the unsuspecting and somewhat gullible little indigenous fella'.

Artist: Adam Hill

Source: Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award: Celebrating 20 Years, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 2004, pp. 68-69.
"Sydney James Cook is now two and a half years old. Pray earnestly for him as he climbs life's ladder."

PLATE 8. Sydney James Cook, 1940.
Source: Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068, Series 3.
Source: Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068, Series 3.
PLATE 10, Sydney James Cook, Tjaruru and Nganyintja.

Plate 11. (a) Phyllis Duguid at Ernabella mission, 1964. (b) Ernabella mission, 1946. The young boy in the white shirt facing away from the camera is probably Sydney James Cook, aged seven. The girl facing him is Rosemary Duguid, aged twelve. The boy at the far right of the photograph is Andrew Duguid, aged fifteen.


**To An Aboriginal Boy**

They told me yours was but a dying race, British and all inept for gentler ways, Sinking with meagre skills back to earth From which their toil had wrested nothing else Than food and water. Slow of mind - they said - These people cannot live with abler men, Theirs was the past, with us the future lies. How strange, how ignorant the lie they told! I found your people rich in human gifts, Strong with the mastery of a hostile land That yields its store of water grudgingly. I saw their hunting skill when, spear in hand, Sitting behind a ghost gum one would stand Deep-browed against the fiercely setting sun To wait until some curious emu ran Lightly to drink from that still water hole. I saw their tenderness as, by the fire, A father told his children merry tales Or legends sacred to their tribal life And if at night a baby waked from sleep Beneath the deep and studded central sky Crying in fear of some imagined loss, I heard its mother croon it back to rest. I know their faithfulness - for oft, unskilled And daring not to walk in that vast land I followed trustingly, my life secure In those brown hands. These things I found. Then, through the dark and intervening years When pale intruders rode into your lands Driving their herds of thundering cattle down To drink in muddy tumult at the pools From which the native game had fled in fear, I saw your race develop other skills. For they were dispossessed of sacred haunts By mountain caves or reedy water holes. Their hunting lands were over-run by beasts That made the intruders rich beyond their need For food - yet must not serve the family group Sitting in silence round the tribal fire, Hungry because the day-long hunt had failed. These things I saw with grief; but watched your race Stand up and leave their ancient tribal ways, Laying aside the spear and woomera, The piti and the woman's digging stick. They took the gun, the hammer and the knife, Changing the heavy stone for tempered steel. The throbbing engine soon became their tool, And minds that formed the winging boomerang Could meet the mystery of the aeroplane, Adaptability unrecognised, And unsurpassed in man's long history. Ignore the judgement and forget the lie. They said your race was doomed - its heritage Feeble and useless in the march of time. And, if you can, forgive the bitter wrong Your fathers suffered at our fathers' hands. Share with our sons your ancient disciplines And what remains to you of native lore, While they redeem the past and share with you The endless riches of our common land.

Phyllis Duguid, January 1964

*PART 2: PRIVATE*
PART III: ASSIMILATION
In 1979, Peter Read asked Leonie Simpson, a twenty-four year old Aboriginal woman from Cowra, 'What did you make of the Assimilation Policy?' Simpson replied:

I think it's a load of crap. If the Aboriginals want to live in their tribal ways, they should. I don't think they should be forced into the white community, and be forced to do something they don't want to do. If they want to move into town and still have their old ways, well good luck to them.¹

Assimilation was the stated objective of the federal government from 1951 to 1972 when it was replaced by a policy of self-determination.² It was, therefore, appropriate for Read to pose his question in the past tense; to ask what Simpson had thought of assimilation. For Simpson, however, assimilation was an ongoing concern. Born in 1955, Simpson grew up during the high-point of assimilationist thinking in Australia and, by the late 1970s, had witnessed no end to its influence over her people.

An inability to agree on basic questions such as when the assimilation policy began in Australia, when it ended and whether, in fact, it has ended, is emblematic of the contested nature of assimilation, and its study, today.³ Driving academic interest and debate are disputes over what assimilation means now, and had meant in the past. Under review is the issue of goals and anticipated futures. What was the assimilated Aborigine supposed to look like, think like, act like? How was this to be achieved and at what cost to Aboriginal culture and identity? Who supported assimilation and why? Who opposed it and why? Did the assimilation policy have any positive outcomes or redeeming features? However, that such questions are even asked leaves many Aboriginal people incredulous. To them, assimilation is a word whose meaning is born on the bodies and worn in the hearts and minds of those who suffered, and continue to suffer, as a consequence of its implementation. Held responsible for generations of 'stolen children' and for the loss of Aboriginal culture and identity, assimilation meant, and continues to mean, extinction to

many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and is sometimes referred to as a policy of genocide. *

Derived from the Latin *assimilare* (to liken), the word assimilation has been in the English language since the early seventeenth century. Most commonly used to denote the action of making or becoming like, from the mid seventeenth century assimilation was also used to describe the physical conversion, usually by an animal or plant, of extraneous materials into fluids and materials identical with its own. In the mid nineteenth century assimilation came to be associated with learning and interpretation and was first used to denote racial and/or cultural integration in the early twentieth century. 

During the 1950s and 1960s in Australia, 'the term assimilation ... [had] many meanings'. 

Writing in the late 1960s, Charles Rowley described Australia's 'nebulous "assimilation" goal' as a 'vaguely defined' objective that sponsored multiple interpretations. In its most benign form assimilation promised 'no more than a general equality', according to Rowley, but at its most extreme it predicated 'the disappearance of the Aboriginal'; the extreme assimilationist position involved 'the complete loss of Aboriginal identity, with the consequent disappearance of the 'problem' population'. 

In Rowley's view, much of the criticism of the assimilation policy was (and is) criticism of the extreme position, a position that Rowley saw as a legacy of the time in Australia's history when 'assimilation meant genetic absorption'.

Now a contested and controversial concept, assimilation in the early twenty-first century eludes consensual definition.

This introduction seeks to contextualise Charles Duguid's support for Paul Hasluck's policy of assimilation. In explaining why Duguid supported assimilation, it serves as a prelude to chapters five and six which examine how Duguid's support for assimilation was realised during the 1950s and 1960s in Australia.

**Enter Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories**

To Charles Duguid, Paul Hasluck's advent to the role of Minister for the Territories in May 1951, and his subsequent espousal of assimilation as the aim of government policy in the Northern Territory, represented a chance for real improvement—a chance that we have...
never had before.\footnote{Charles Duguid, Speech at the Melbourne Town Hall under the auspice of the of the Council for Aboriginal Rights (hereafter CAR Speech), 19 June 1951, Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 1), Series 6.} Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Duguid had worried over government's apparent indifference, even antipathy, towards Aborigines, regularly drawing attention to what he perceived as the federal government's disinclination to 'preserve the race'.\footnote{Duguid, 'An Advocate for the Aborigines in England', \textit{The Aborigines' Protector}, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1939, p. 4. See also Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines', \textit{The Aborigines' Protector}, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1936, p. 12.} In 1945, Duguid called for a 'revolution' in thinking 'so that all future legislation for natives [would] aim at leading them to full citizenship'.\footnote{Duguid to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 18 February 1949, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 147.} Repeating his call for 'drastic change' in 1949, Duguid described 'the present federal administration [as] ... unfitted for the task', it being 'out of sympathy with the Aborigines'.\footnote{Duguid to general secretary, United Nations Association of Australia, 30 June 1950, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.} In 1950, in a statement prepared for the United Nations Association of Australia, Duguid argued that 'No Federal Government has ever yet carried out a policy for the welfare of the Aborigines with enthusiasm. A start is usually made with each new deal but as a rule little more happens'.\footnote{'Praises move on Aborigines', \textit{News}, 10 June 1950, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 168.} Less than a year later, with Hasluck's appointment to the new Department of the Territories, Duguid believed that the 'revolution' he had been calling for had finally arrived.

Despite having been in federal politics less than two years at the time of his cabinet appointment, Hasluck had more than proved himself worthy in Duguid's eyes. In June 1950, just six months after his election as the Liberal member for the Perth electorate of Curtin, Hasluck delivered a speech in the House of Representatives which Duguid felt echoed his own words from a decade earlier (see chapter four). Interviewed by the \textit{Adelaide News} the day after Hasluck's speech, Duguid said: 'It is a grand thing that at long last we have someone in Federal Parliament willing to point out the utter inconsistency between our national and international policy on human rights'.\footnote{Duguid to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 18 February 1949, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 2, p. 147.} Even as a back-bencher, Hasluck had given Duguid and other like-minded campaigners hope. Here was someone in authority who seemed prepared to learn from the 'lessons of the past', acknowledge the failings of past administrations and speak the shocking truth about the conditions under which Aborigines lived. Speaking at the inaugural meeting of the Council for Aboriginal Rights (CAR) in Melbourne in June 1951, Duguid declared:

And Hasluck said this in the House just a year ago in June: 'When we enter into international discussions, and raise our voice as we should raise it in defence of human rights and the protection of human welfare, our very words
are mocked by the thousands of degraded and depressed people who crouch on rubbish heaps throughout the whole of this continent'.

In Duguid's opinion, this statement alone proved Hasluck's commitment to the Aboriginal cause: 'Has any man', he asked, 'ever said anything more drastic in Australia?' Duguid urged all who were interested in Aboriginal affairs 'to come in in strong support of that man'—Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories.

Writing to congratulate Hasluck on his cabinet appointment in May 1951, Duguid saw fit to 'congratulate too the Northern Territory on having [him] as Minister', for unlike the legion of past Ministers responsible for Aboriginal welfare, Hasluck's interest in Aboriginal affairs was not the result of his cabinet appointment, but the cause of it. Prior to entering politics, Hasluck had investigated the living conditions of Aborigines in Western Australia, and had published an historical study *Black Australians: A survey of native policy in Western Australia 1829-1897* in 1942. After the war, Hasluck worked for the Department of External Affairs. He assisted in formulating the Charter of United Nations and planning the first meeting of the United Nations Assembly in Geneva, an experience which alerted him to the vital importance of Australia's international reputation. Jeremy Long, a patrol officer in the Northern Territory during Hasluck's time, has argued that:

None of [Hasluck's] predecessors in the forty years since the Commonwealth assumed responsibility for the Northern Territory had come to the job as well qualified to direct the Administration in its dealings with the Aboriginal inhabitants of the Territory.

More than Hasluck's experience, however, it was his ideas (or more precisely, the apparent similarity between Hasluck's 'fine words' and Duguid's own) that led Duguid to predict 'a very great improvement in Aboriginal affairs in the [Northern] Territory' under Hasluck's leadership. It would have given Duguid great pleasure to learn that Hasluck had 'of course, been familiar for many years with [his] efforts on behalf of Aborigines and [had] read [his] booklet *The Future of the Aborigines of Australia*'.

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17 Duguid, CAR Speech.
18 Duguid to Hasluck, Minister for the Territories, 23 May 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
21 Duguid, CAR Speech; Duguid, 'comments on resolution that control of Aborigines be handed to the Commonwealth', 20 April 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
22 Hasluck to Duguid, 12 June 1950, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
With the object of bringing about closer Commonwealth and state co-operation, Hasluck invited the various Ministers responsible for Aborigines to attend a Native Welfare Conference in Canberra at the beginning of September 1951. The Conference agreed that assimilation would henceforth be 'the objective of native welfare measures' throughout Australia. Assimilation meant, Hasluck explained, 'that, in the course of time, it is expected that all persons of Aboriginal blood or mixed blood in Australia will live like white Australians do'; it meant that the old idea of 'protection' had finally yielded to the new idea of 'advancement' and that Aborigines would 'eventually find a fitting place as members of the Australian community'.

Described by Hasluck as a 'distinctively Australian' policy which would give Aborigines a 'fair go' in the 'land of opportunity', most white Australians favoured assimilation, as did many Aborigines. It was an idealistic policy which promised all Australians 'the chance of a happy and useful life' in a society without 'minorities or special classes', but it was also a 'realistic' one which acknowledged 'the stark fact that large numbers' of Aborigines were not yet 'capable of entering the general community at an acceptable level or of maintaining themselves in it'. Thus, while Hasluck 'declare[d] the same ideal for all'—namely a place for Aborigines in Australian society alongside whites—assimilation was to be a 'policy of opportunity' which recognised the 'claims of the Aboriginal as an individual'. Unlike segregation—the only alternative policy Hasluck considered and rejected on the grounds that 'it would result in the very situation in Australia which we [had] always sought to avoid, namely, the existence of a separate racial group living on its own'—assimilation gave to 'the Aboriginal and to the person of mixed blood a chance to shape his own life'. Whereas segregation opened 'the door into a peculiar and separate world for coloured people only', assimilation opened the door 'into the society in which, by force of history, [Aborigines were] bound to live', Australian society.

On 6 September 1951, just two days after the Native Welfare Conference had concluded, Hasluck forwarded the full text of the statements agreed to at the Conference to Duguid for comment. In reply, Duguid indicated that almost everything had 'been repeatedly advocated by [him]' for years. The Conference's statement on health was 'exactly what [he had] said' in 1941, Duguid observed, as were the statements on citizenship, social services, education and missions, the latter having been 'advocated by [him] since 1935'. In fact, Duguid found 'the decisions of the Conference [to be] so much in line with what [he had] said and written over the years' that he applauded Hasluck's 'leadership in the matter'. It was not just Hasluck's leadership that Duguid was applauding, however, it was also his own. Duguid believed that Hasluck's assimilation

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23 Hasluck, Native Welfare in Australia, pp. 14-16.
24 Ibid., pp. 13-19.
25 Hasluck to Duguid, 6 September 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
26 Duguid to Hasluck, 30 October 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
'THE NEBULOUS "ASSIMILATION" GOAL'

policy was precisely what he had been fighting for since the mid 1930s: it was 'advancement', 'development' and 'uplift' under a different name. It signalled official recognition that Aborigines were capable of 'rising in the human scale', and meant that Aborigines would finally receive the assistance they required during their 'transition to our way of life'. Duguid was convinced that if Hasluck failed to 'clean up the mess in the Northern Territory' it would only be because cabinet and the people of Australia failed to support him.27

The basis of Duguid's support for Hasluck was two-fold. On the one hand there was Hasluck 'the man' or 'the politician' whose 'keen interest ... in the welfare of the natives' Duguid found both impressive and refreshing; on the other hand, there was Hasluck's assimilation policy, a policy that Duguid believed was identical to his own.28 Intricately intertwined in Duguid's mind, Hasluck and his assimilation policy became one. To support Hasluck was to support assimilation; to find fault with assimilation was to find fault with Hasluck, and by implication, with himself.

'Assimilation is not absorption'

J.J. Barton, a shop-keeper in the Northern Territory and regular correspondent of Duguid, was not convinced about assimilation. Shortly after the Native Welfare Conference in 1951, Barton asked Duguid what he thought of 'Hasluck's idea of assimilation'. Expressing his opinion that 'a better word' for assimilation 'would be extermination', Barton maintained that the solution to the 'Aboriginal problem' was 'simple': 'segregation of the tribal natives and co-operative production for the detribalised, without exploitation'.29 At the same time Duguid received a letter from Gordon Sweeny, a patrol

28 Duguid to Barton, 21 November 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. Barton's view mirrored that of Tom Wright, secretary of the Sheet Metal Workers Union, vice-president of the Labor Council of New South Wales and leading member of the Communist Party of Australia. In a powerfully worded letter to the newly formed Council for Aboriginal Rights (CAR) in Melbourne, Wright condemned the 'pseudo-progressive cloak' of assimilation for hiding the real intentions of government. Rather than a new policy, Wright argued that assimilation was 'the continuation of the policy of all previous administrations and [meant] the extermination of the Australian Native Race' through 'the destruction of tribal life, employment as wage earners, and "gradual" elevation of the individual Aborigines to "citizenship"'. To prevent extermination', Wright maintained that 'a policy must be advanced not of "assimilation" but of a future for the Aborigines as a race of people similar to that of national minorities in other countries'. As Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus have observed, however, 'Wright's strictures, like those of other critics of assimilation at this time, only applied to what were called 'tribal' or 'full-blood' Aborigines. According to Attwood and Markus, 'practically everyone', including Wright, believed that the future of Aborigines of mixed-descent lay with social assimilation. Tom Wright to Henry Wardlaw, honorary secretary CAR, 20 September 1951, CAR Papers, State Library of Victoria, La Trobe Collection, MS 12913, Box 1, Series 1/1; Attwood and Markus, 'Research Essay in Aboriginal Studies', Museum of Victoria, Department of Indigenous Studies, Draft Copy, 1996, p. 51. See also Sue Taffe, 'The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. The politics of inter-racial coalition in Australia, 1958-1973', PhD Thesis, School of Historical Studies, Monash University, 2001, p. 35.
officer with the Northern Territory Department of Native Affairs, informing him that "Assimilation" [was] yet to be worked out. As Sweeny understood it, 'the policy envisaged [was] economic and social assimilation, not racial assimilation', but he warned Duguid that it would only work if the departments concerned, such as Health, Education and Housing, recognised that they [were] dealing with Aborigines and not whites. In August 1952, Sweeny wrote again, this time informing Duguid that 'Assimilation [was] interpreted to be the bringing of the Aboriginal to [a] white level economically, socially and culturally as soon as possible and removing restraints and protection such as reserves etc.' Reflecting on the practical workings of assimilation in the Northern Territory, Sweeny argued that:

It is overlooked that the only safe assimilation is that based on stable family and social life and the detribalised native at the mercy of a competitive economic society has little hope of survival, even with our idea of white 'education' we can expect to have a few isolated cases of advancement who will pass on with no follow up from their people.

Although Duguid considered Barton a 'reliable man', he did not agree with his views on assimilation. Sweeny, on the other hand, had a point. At the top of Sweeny's second letter, Duguid wrote in bold script 'KEEP'.

Following Sweeny, what criticisms Duguid made of the assimilation policy were criticisms of the way it was being carried out, not of the ideal: that 'the Aborigines [were] to become one with us', Duguid had no doubt. Other campaigners, white and black, did have doubts however, and from the mid 1950s the policy of assimilation came under increasing attack. In Victoria, Anna Vroland led the charge, arguing in 1955 that it was 'terribly important that assimilation should not in fact mean destruction'. Influenced by the anthropologist Donald Thomson who, in the same year, pronounced assimilation an 'absolute failure', Vroland decried the 'cruelty and uselessness' of a scheme that was more intent on 'trying to scrub [the] black man white' than helping Aborigines to be independent in their own right. Having spent more than a decade trying to help Aborigines of mixed-

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31 Sweeny to Duguid, 21 August 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1 (emphasis added).
32 Of Barton, Duguid wrote: 'Barton I knew first in 1934 in Alice Springs and I have met him on several occasions since. As far as I know he is a reliable man. He frequently writes to me on Aborigines'. Duguid to Hasluck, 30 October 1952, National Archives of Australia, Series A452/1, Item 1957/2566.
34 Anna Vroland to Chairman, Victorian Council for Social Services, 24 November 1955, Anton Vroland Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 3991 (hereafter Vroland Papers), Box 3, Folder 21.
35 'Aborigine Policy Needs Overhaul', Age, 23 November 1955; Vroland to Secretary, Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, 9 August 1956, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Papers, State Library of Victoria, La Trobe Collection, MS 9377 (hereafter WILPF Papers), Box 1726, Folder 14.
descent in Victoria attain a standard of living on par with white Australians, Vroland came to the conclusion that 'social acceptance by their own people still [meant] more to most [Aborigines] than [did] assimilation into the general community'. In 1957, the Western Australian campaigner, Mary Bennett joined the fray, arguing for 'integration' not 'assimilation' in her book *Human Rights for Australian Aborigines*. Following Bennett, the Aboriginal leader Douglas Nicholls argued that 'Aboriginals wanted integration, not assimilation'. 'We want to integrate, but we want to identify ourselves as a people', Nicholls declared; 'we are fighting to keep ourselves as a people'.

Hasluck had no time for such 'jargon'. In a paper presented to the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science in 1958, Hasluck criticised those who used the 'term "integration" as though it had some special value'. Having detected in it 'an idea of preserving something of the separate cultural identity of the two races', Hasluck questioned whether this was 'anything more than a romantic notion'. The likely reality, according to Hasluck, was that 'the Aboriginal people [would disappear] as a separate racial group'. 'They might 'carry a proud memory of their own ancient origin', but 'in the long run' Hasluck believed that the Aborigines would 'be biologically assimilated and become part of the general infusion that makes up the Australia of the future'. Indeed, he reflected, this 'would be integration in the exact and ancient meaning of the term—a making one'.

According to Sue Taffe, the newly formed Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (FCAA) was not prepared to accept the 'disappearance of the Aborigines as a separate cultural group', nor 'their physical absorption by the rest of the community', and so firmly rejected assimilation at its first conference held in Adelaide in 1958. By contrast, Bain Attwood has argued that the FCAA's 'criticism of assimilation was relatively muted'. Although it disavowed the 'more obviously racial dimension of assimilation', Attwood maintains that the Federal Council 'basically endorsed the programme of assimilation by adopting 'Equal citizenship rights with other Australian citizens for Aborigines' as its leading principle'. What the FCAA wanted, according to Attwood, was social (but not racial) assimilation. The Aboriginal leader and FCAA delegate Bert Groves, representing the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, made this clear when he asked: 'What

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38 Hasluck, 'The Future of the Australian Aborigines', Paper read to Section F (Anthropology) of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, 22 August 1958, WILPF Papers, Box 1747, Folder 5.
does assimilation imply? Certainly, citizenship and equal status—so far so good'. The problem with assimilation, Groves told the conference, was that it also implied, in fact 'assumed that if the Aboriginals [were] going to lead the same kind of life as other Australians, then they must disappear as a culturally distinct group'. It was largely on the basis of Groves' statement that the FCAA rejected assimilation and proffered instead 'the word "integration"' as a term that implied a 'truer definition of [its] aims and objects'. Therefore, although the FCAA's preference for integration did not amount to a rejection of assimilation per se, as far as the FCAA was concerned, integration—or equal citizenship rights—was not the same as the government's policy of assimilation which it saw as having absorptionist implications.

In recognition of Duguid's long service to the Aboriginal cause, and in the hope that he would bring respectability to the new group, Duguid was appointed president of the FCAA at its inaugural conference. Shirley Andrews, honorary secretary of the CAR and founding member of the FCAA, has recalled that 'everyone thought it was very important that [Duguid] was the ... key figure': 'he was the one person who was putting forward the ideas that left-wing people were putting forward who couldn't be accused of being that way'—being communist—'so [he] was a very important person to include', Andrews explained. However, not only did Duguid not share his fellow delegates' concerns about assimilation, he strongly defended Hasluck and assimilation against criticism such as theirs.

Since 1955 Duguid had been arguing that assimilation was not the same as absorption. Whereas absorption—'an old idea ... and not a very worthy one', according to Duguid—meant 'breeding the Aboriginal race white', assimilation—the 'only worthy policy'—meant that the Aborigines would be assisted to 'take their place on a basis of economic and social equality with white Australians'. Repeating this argument several years later, Duguid declared: 'Assimilation is not absorption'. Absorption aimed to rid Australia of its 'Aboriginal problem' by ridding Australia of its Aboriginal population, and 'such a state of affairs was never ... in the mind of the Minister for the Territories, the Hon Paul Hasluck, when he introduced the present policy of assimilation', Duguid opined, thereby showing his awareness of, and apparent disregard for, Hasluck's later statements on the likely biological outcome of social assimilation.

In defence of Hasluck and assimilation, Duguid published No Dying Race in 1963, a work which '[set] out the steps [he considered] necessary to bring [the Aborigines] into

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44 Peter Read, Interview with Shirley Andrews, 2 March 1989, Peter Read Collection, National Library of Australia, Oral History Collection, TRC 2303/33/1-2. See also Jessie Street to Shirley Andrews, 21 May 1957 and Andrews to Street, 31 August 1957, Shirley Andrews Papers, National Library of Australia (This recently acquired collection had no manuscript or series numbers at the time of viewing, September 2004).
46 Duguid, No Dying Race, p. 186 (emphasis added).
equal enjoyment of Australian life'.\textsuperscript{47} Although Hasluck 'believe[d] it [would] do good', it was too late to quell the tide of criticism.\textsuperscript{48} By then even Professor A.P. Elkin, a long-time champion of assimilation and defender of government, had come out in opposition to Hasluck. In 1959, newspapers throughout the country reported on a public disagreement between Hasluck and Elkin in which the anthropologist stated that he 'took a view on assimilation diametrically opposed to Mr Hasluck's:

'Assimilation is going, but it is just a trickle', [Elkin] said. 'The main bulk is adopting voluntary segregation or withdrawal. They do not want assimilation in the form of dispersal among the white community. They want to keep their own identity.'\textsuperscript{49}

Members of Duguid's own League, the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL), had also begun expressing doubts about assimilation in their quarterly newsletter. Following the publication of T.G.H. Strehlow's booklet \textit{Nomads in No-Man's Land} in 1960, which included 'practical suggestions' as to how Aborigines could 'take their place in our economy "without the complete loss of their racial and cultural identity"', League members began to argue that Aborigines should be 'integrated in groups', not as individuals.\textsuperscript{50} In June 1963, Iris Schultz, secretary of the SA AAL, argued that there was a 'very serious inequality of right wrapped up' in Hasluck's individualist approach to assimilation:

The right of a separate cultural group to retain its separate identity within the general community for as long as it desires is accepted by all other Australians for themselves, and this right they have to be prepared to offer to Aborigines for as long as they shall desire it.\textsuperscript{51}

The following edition of the League's newsletter carried the warning of another executive member, Jean Blackburn, that the policy of assimilation had 'irreversible consequences': 'No-one can call back into being an Aboriginal community which has ceased to exist by shattering', she observed.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Ibid.}, preface.
\textsuperscript{48} Hasluck to Duguid, 20 March 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
\textsuperscript{49} 'Minister, differ on Natives', \textit{Advertiser}, 29 August 1959, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 112; Attwood, \textit{Rights for Aborigines}, pp. 202-203.
\textsuperscript{51} 'Strains of Assimilation', \textit{Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter}, No. 18, June 1963, pp. 3-4.
\textsuperscript{52} 'Assimilation — A View', \textit{Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter}, No. 19, September 1963, p. 1.
Duguid had long been aware of the importance of group or community life among Aborigines. Interviewed on a local television news programme in 1959, he made it clear that 'one could not assimilate [Aborigines] as individuals'. However, rather than directly criticise government or Hasluck, Duguid presented his concerns as advice. In *No Dying Race* he explained that:

> In our approach to the full-bloods we must remember that the family is the basis of their lives as it is of ours. Young children should never be separated from their parents and housed in dormitories or institutions. ... Attempts at assimilation by bringing very bright individual Aborigines into the community is cruel and wrong. ... And it certainly should not be demanded that those entering our way of life should give up all contact with their full-blood relatives.

Furthermore, Duguid observed:

> If the policy of assimilation is to succeed, the purely paternal control of the past must cease, and a new approach be made through specially trained personnel who can appreciate the feelings of the Aborigines in their time of transfer from their way of life to ours. The aim must always be to enable the Aborigines to retain the self-respect and independence they had in tribal days.

Duguid reserved his strongest criticism for white Australians. Since '[s]uccessful assimilation [depended] above all on an enlightened attitude on race, and the complete elimination of colour prejudice', Duguid declared it an impossible goal unless, and 'until there [was] a radical alteration in the attitude of white people to our Aborigines'.

Despite Duguid's obvious misgivings over how the policy of assimilation was being implemented and received, Hasluck's ideal, and Hasluck himself, remained unblemished in his eyes. Hasluck was not to blame for the nation's prejudice. Quite the contrary, Duguid argued, for Hasluck had been 'vigorous in advocating [the Aborigines'] social acceptance'. It was not through want of effort on Hasluck's part, not to mention Duguid's own, that social acceptance was 'still a long way from complete realisation'.

During Hasluck's twelve years as Minister for Territories (1951-63), Duguid and Hasluck's relationship developed beyond that of advocate and politician, to a kind of...
friendship based on mutual admiration and respect. Particularly 'when there [was] so much criticism of government policy', Hasluck found Duguid's 'understand[ing] and support [of] the work that [was] being done ... very encouraging'.

When Hasluck moved to the Department of Defence in 1964, he thanked Duguid for his continued support: 'During the years in which I was Minister for the Territories it was a great help to me personally to have had the advantage, from time to time, of hearing from you', Hasluck wrote. Later that year when Duguid declined to accept life-membership of the FCAA on the grounds that the Federal Council was too heavily dominated by communists, Hasluck told him that he 'deeply respect[ed]' his stand: 'You richly deserve such an honour because of your lifelong work for the Aboriginal people', Hasluck reflected, 'but I think you might have put yourself in a false position if you had accepted'. While it may simply have been a tactical decision on Hasluck's part to allow such a relationship to develop—perhaps with the hope of forestalling criticism from Duguid—Duguid believed otherwise. His trust in Hasluck and assimilation was complete.

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58 Hasluck to Duguid, 13 January 1959, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
59 Hasluck to Duguid, 20 March 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
60 Hasluck to Duguid, 7 August 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
Chapter 5

'END OF THE TRIBES'
Assimilation in the Northern Territory and Central Australia

This chapter and the next are about assimilation in the 1950s and 1960s in Australia. The first examines Dr Charles Duguid's views on the assimilation of Aborigines of full-descent in the Northern Territory and Central Australia, and the second looks at the same process at work among Aborigines of mixed-descent in Adelaide and the settled south. The decision to separate these chapters came from Duguid: 'The needs of the part-Aborigines in the cities and larger towns of Australia are quite different from the needs of the full-bloods', he argued in 1951; hence the 'needs of the full-bloods must be considered separately from those of the part-Aborigines'.

Irrespective of their 'way of life' or 'stage of development', the 'full-bloods'—or, as Duguid put it 'in the parlance of [his] day, the first Australians'—came first in Duguid's thinking, their need for help far outweighing that of 'part-Aborigines whose assimilation he believed 'present[ed] little difficulty'.

In statements prepared for the Australian Association for the United Nations (AAUN) in 1950 and 1951, Duguid argued that Aborigines of full-descent had two options; they could either 'retain their own religion, tradition and customs' or they could 'adopt the new civilisation where that [had] grown up around them'. Either way, Duguid was adamant that 'no force of any kind must be used to change their tribal customs. Any change must be of their own free will'.

Assimilation, or adoption of the new civilisation, was thus envisaged by Duguid as a matter of choice for Aborigines of full-descent. But what choice did they really have? In the context of dispossession there was no choice, only its semblance, presented by Duguid as a concession to the 'dignity and rights of the full-bloods'; it was either choose to assimilate or choose to die out. 'We have no right to force them to change', Duguid explained in 1963, but having 'usurped their land and made their old life almost impossible', he described it as 'incumbent on us to provide the means by

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2 Duguid, CAR Speech; Duguid, 'A policy for the Future of the Aborigines', 1951.

3 Duguid to general secretary, United Nations Association of Australia, 30 June 1950, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid, 'Statement on Australian Aborigines for the Australian Association of the United Nations', 4 June 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6. Duguid's statement had much in common with Anna Vroland's 'Charter of Rights' which was loosely based on Donald Thomson's 'Native Rights Agenda'. See Anna Vroland, 'Charter of Rights for Aborigines', [1951], Anton Vroland Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 3991, Box 4, Folder 27; Donald Thomson. 'Heads of Proposals for Agenda for a Conference on Native Rights', [May 1947], Donald Thomson Papers, Department of Indigenous Studies, Museum of Victoria.


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which they [could] change to our ways if they wish(ed). If 'they' wished and if 'we' helped, Duguid was convinced that Paul Hasluck's policy of assimilation would enable the first Australians ... [to] become part of the population of Australia with all the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship.

Duguid was unquestionably a supporter of assimilation. But was he a supporter of the same kind of assimilation that Hasluck's department administered? This chapter comprises three case-studies which test Duguid's belief that his version of assimilation was the same as Hasluck's. First, Duguid's concerns over the forced removal of 'half-caste' children and the impact this had on their 'full-blood' mothers, raised in chapter three, will be examined in more detail; second, the continuing saga of Sydney James Cook, his life in the Northern Territory and Duguid's role in it; and third, Duguid's concerns over the role of government settlements in the assimilation process. As will become apparent, in each case Duguid raised vital questions about assimilation which suggest fundamental differences between his understanding of the process and purpose of assimilation and Hasluck's version. It is worth stressing, however, that in illuminating the differences between Duguid's meaning of assimilation and the official one, my intention is not to portray Duguid as a critic of assimilation, but as a supporter of a different kind of assimilation; an assimilation which celebrated rather than suppressed Aboriginality.

I. 'Cruel policy on natives babies', Darwin 1951

In 1934, when Charles Duguid first ventured north to investigate the condition of Aborigines, he had been heading to Darwin. In 1951, he eventually made it. Armed with a letter of introduction from the new Minister for the Territories, Paul Hasluck, Duguid flew to Darwin at the beginning of July that year. Although conceived by Phyllis as a 'holiday', Duguid had no time for relaxation. His three weeks in Darwin and its environs were spent 'on the job', investigating the 'life of the northern Aborigines from every angle'. In addition to seeing 'everything in the Darwin area' pertinent to Aboriginal matters, Duguid 'sailed along the coast to Croker Island, flew on to Goulburn Island, then visited the Roper Valley, staying at the Roper River Mission', and from there 'flew to Borroloola, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs'.

Soon after his return to Adelaide, Duguid sent Hasluck a report of his findings. It was a draft report, the form of which would have to be altered, Duguid informed the Minister, adding that 'if there [was] anything [Hasluck] would prefer not to be made public, [he would] eliminate it'. While awaiting Hasluck's reply, Duguid turned reporters

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7 Duguid to Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories, 23 May 1951 and [August] 1951, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Duguid, *The Aborigines of Darwin and the Tropic North*, p. 3.
away, deliberately withholding the details of his investigations until Hasluck had had an opportunity to examine his report. Having faithfully recorded 'things as [he] saw them' and included his 'considered opinion on some of the problems' in his report, Duguid felt confident of Hasluck's approval. Demonstrating (once again) his disdain of modesty in matters of such importance, Duguid attached a covering note which read in part:

You realise, I know, that my aim for the past 21 years has been to raise the status of the Aborigines and to bring the white population of Australia to recognise their worth. Consequently, I was heartened to find a definite improvement in the attitude of the white people in Darwin to the natives, and I was human enough to appreciate [patrol officer, Gordon] Sweeny's remark the day before I left, that my persistent effort over the years was a major factor in the change.\(^8\)

Perhaps underestimating Duguid's capacity (or desire) to cause trouble for government, Hasluck suggested no amendments. It was a mistake that would cost his department dearly.

On 22 October 1951, at the annual meeting of the South Australia Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL)—at which meeting Duguid was elected president of the League—Duguid criticised the federal government's 'policy of taking half-caste babies away from [their] full-blood mothers at the age of three months'.\(^9\) It was, Duguid claimed, 'the most hated task of every patrol officer'. The following day, Duguid's statement regarding government's 'cruel policy' hit the headlines, bringing public scrutiny and criticism upon Hasluck and his department.\(^10\) Having previously been a strong supporter of such a policy (see chapter three), Duguid's altered view was the result of seeing 'babies in their cots' in Darwin, and of lengthy discussions with Sweeny who told him that 'taking away the babies ... [was his] hardest job'.\(^11\) After meeting with Sweeny in Darwin, Duguid recorded the following notes in his travel diary:

They [the children] are taken away as early as 4 [months]. Breaks heart of the mothers who ardently love their children. Mothers not to blame for having the child.\(^12\)

\(^8\) Duguid to Hasluck, [August] 1951 (original emphasis).

\(^9\) Minutes of the Aborigines Advancement League of South Australia (hereafter SA AAL Minutes), 22 October 1951, Papers of the Aborigines Advancement League, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, SRG 250 (hereafter League Papers), Series 3/1.

\(^10\) 'Cruel policy' on native babies', *Herald* (Melbourne), 23 October 1951.


\(^12\) Duguid, Travel Diary, July 1951, p. 60.
Back in Adelaide, Duguid maintained regular contact with Sweeny who was willing to provide Duguid with information, but did not want his name used in connection with such. 'My views are not necessarily' those of the department, Sweeny wrote, making it clear that any information he provided regarding 'policy ... [was] confidential'.\(^{13}\) This, according to Duguid, was Sweeny's 'one fault—he [quailed] before authority and [found] it difficult to take resolute action'.\(^{14}\) Nevertheless, being 'most grateful' to Sweeny, Duguid abided his request for discretion, using his information but not mentioning his name.\(^{15}\)

On the basis of Sweeny's information, Duguid re-stated his concerns regarding the forced removal of 'half-caste babies' in an address to the National Council of Women in August 1952. Speaking only 'of the offspring of a full-blood more or less tribal woman and a white man', Duguid explained that:

The policy of the Federal Government is to collect the half-caste children of the Northern Territory whenever they are reported—be it at 3-4 months or 3-5 years—bring them to Darwin and later segregate them either in Melville Island under the Roman Catholic Church or at Croker Island under the Methodist Church. At Darwin they are in the care of the undenominational Aborigines Inland Mission—last year I saw many of the tiny babies in their cots—but at about the age of five they are drafted out to the two Islands.\(^{16}\)

'Are you and I satisfied that the best possible is being done for mother and child?', Duguid asked. According to him, the wishes of the mothers were 'hardly considered, if at all, but it was admitted frankly that [they were] utterly broken-hearted at the loss of their children'. Duguid asked his audience of predominantly middle-class white women to consider whether 'it [was] right that the native woman whose responsibility for her plight [was] negligible should have this suffering forced upon her?' While 'in no way [wishing] to embarrass the Minister responsible for the Aborigines'—namely Hasluck—Duguid made it clear that he did 'not think separation of the half-caste child from its mother [was] in the interests of either'.\(^{17}\)

By then it was too late to save Hasluck embarrassment: the damage had already been done. Duguid's initial criticism had been widely reported in the southern press, reaching as far afield as Tasmania where few, if any, Aborigines were then believed to exist.\(^{18}\) Requests for information on the 'factual basis' of Duguid's claims were received by

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\(^{13}\) Gordon Sweeny to Duguid, 25 November 1951 and 21 August 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

\(^{14}\) Duguid to Hasluck, [August] 1951.

\(^{15}\) Duguid did eventually use Sweeny's name, but not until 1963. See Duguid, *No Dying Race*, p. 185.

\(^{16}\) Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and their Half-Caste Children', address to the National Council of Women, 14 August 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6.

\(^{17}\) *Ibid*; Duguid, untitled radio broadcast, 29 November 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6.

\(^{18}\) Hasluck to secretary, Department of the Territories, 19 November 1951, National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), Series A452, Item 1961/7809.
government from organisations such as the Women's Non-Party League in Hobart and the Tasmanian division of the AAUN.\(^\text{19}\) Although unconvinced by newspaper reports which tended to 'convey the impression that this procedure [was] common and the reasons for it flimsy', the AAUN informed Hasluck that it would 'protest most strongly against' the practice 'if indeed it [did] occur'; the taking of 'half-caste' children from their mothers 'at a very tender age' being contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.\(^\text{20}\) The National Association for the Advancement of the Native Races (NAANR) in Melbourne also had doubts about the truth of Duguid's claims. Headed by A.O. Neville, former Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia, the NAANR wanted 'detailed confutation' from the Minister in order to put the matter to rest.\(^\text{21}\)

Hasluck was happy to oblige, however, having only recently assumed the responsibilities of Minister for the Territories, he knew little about the policy of removing Aboriginal children.\(^\text{22}\) Hasluck's request for information elicited the following carefully worded response from the Administrator of the Northern Territory, F.J.S. Wise:

> Aboriginals are human beings with the same basic affections that we have and the Aboriginal mother has a real love for her children, especially those of a tender age. *We cannot expect a normal Aboriginal mother to appreciate the reason why her part-Aboriginal child should be taken from her.*\(^\text{23}\)

As to how such removals were effected, Hasluck was informed that certain 'methods were employed ... to ensure that the least upset [was] caused to the mother and child'. It was the task of patrol officers to 'negotiate' the removal of the child by impressing the mother 'with the advantages to be gained'. However:

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\(^\text{19}\) E.M. Cuthbert, honorary secretary Women's Non-Party League, to Hasluck, 1 November 1951, NAA: A452, 1961/7809; Edna Rockleft, joint secretary Status of Women Council and AAUN (Tasmania), to Hasluck, 6 November 1951, NAA: A452, 1961/7809.

\(^\text{20}\) Rockleft to Hasluck, 6 November 1951.


\(^\text{22}\) In order to answer Duguid's criticisms, Hasluck requested information covering the following points:

i. The exact nature of current practice in the Northern Territory [regarding the removal of half-caste children from their mothers]

ii. Who makes the decision and in what respect does the practice differ in regard to neglected white children.

iii. Under what power is the decision carried out.

iv. How many children have in fact been removed from the care of their mothers in the Northern Territory during the past two years.

v. What has in fact happened to the children so removed, and where are they at present.

vi. What was the age and condition of the children so removed at the time of removal.

vii. Have any objections been raised by the parents of the children, and if so, in what form.

See Hasluck to secretary, Department of the Territories, 19 November 1951, NAA: A452, 1961/7809.

If the Officer is unsuccessful on his first visit and the mother does not part with the child, another attempt is made later until such time as the child is willingly handed over to the custody of the Patrol Officer.  

In other words, although 'normal' Aboriginal mothers were not expected to appreciate why their children were being removed, they were expected to 'willingly' hand their children over. That it was coercion, not negotiation, that achieved this result, mattered little it seems, for in 'most cases the mothers [were] quite willing that their children receive education and go to an institution for that purpose'. Those mothers who objected did so on the grounds that their children were 'not strong enough'. By this, it was explained, 'the native mother means ... that the baby is not old enough'; 'it would appear they prefer that the child be removed only from 5 years of age and upwards (i.e. they prefer to keep the younger children)'.

In order to refute Duguid's allegations, Hasluck needed to know how many children had been removed in the past two years, and their ages. According to departmental records, a total of 42 children had been removed since 1949. Of these, thirteen were under five years old at the time, meaning that 'the majority were removed from their parents between the ages of 5 years and 13 years'. Moreover, of the thirteen children under five, 'only' four were aged less than one year at the time of their removal; a girl aged 1 month, born in the Darwin Hospital and 'removed with the mother's consent' in April 1950; a girl aged 9 months whose 'irresponsible' and 'disinterested' mother 'raised no objection to her child's removal' in January 1951; a boy aged 6 weeks who was removed from a 'native camp ... at the request of [his] mother' at the end of July 1951; and a boy aged 2 months who was 'removed with mother's consent' in August 1951. Given that Duguid's tour of Darwin lasted three weeks from the beginning of July 1951, it seems likely that the only 'babies' he saw in their cots were the two girls, both of whom would have been over a year old at the time.

These figures, once conveyed to the NAANR, were more than enough to convince Neville's association of the 'gravely misleading' nature of Duguid's allegations. Since Duguid's claims were not 'literally true', the NAANR found 'it somewhat puzzling to understand how [his] story that all such children were removed at three months old should ever have received such currency', thereby implying that Duguid had lied. Although not adverse to exaggeration, Duguid was no liar. That he saw 'babies in their cots' is, I believe, an unquestionable truth. Duguid may only have seen one or two infants, but it was not the

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24 Ibid. (emphasis added).
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
28 C.R. Lambert, secretary Department of the Territories to Leeper, 8 February 1952, NAA: A452, 1961/7809.
numbers that mattered. It was the practice of taking 'half-caste babies ... from their full-blood mothers against their will at 3 to 4 months of age' that concerned him. Contrary to NAANR’s statement, Duguid never claimed that all children were taken at this age. Instead, having seen some who were, and having learned from Sweeny that his instructions were to take 'half-caste babies ... from their full blood mothers in the native camps as opportunity arises', Duguid argued that this practice 'require[d] re-thinking'.

In keeping with Duguid’s version of events, Reginald K. McCaffery, a former police officer and acting Director of Native Affairs in the Northern Territory in 1949-50 and 1953-54, has recalled that ‘the policy ... was you took the child from the breast of the mother and brought it in to Darwin’. Interviewed in 1980, McCaffery maintained that he thought it was wrong to take ‘the child from the breast—when the breast was finished—yes then’, but not before. The following excerpt reveals a depth of feeling on the question of child removal common among former members of the Department of Native Affairs.

Interviewer: And this was a forcible removal?
McCaffery: Forcible, yes. There were great scenes of gins screaming their lungs out. Great scenes ... They were grabbing them off the breast and just sort of molesting them into these mission stations.

Interviewer: So this would have been from Hasluck’s time on?
McCaffery: Yes.

Interviewer: In effect, this was the policy that Harry Giese was overseeing?
McCaffery: No, we oversaw that before Giese. It was still extant when Giese took over [in 1954], but it had softened down because I put the breaks on it. ... I didn’t like it from the start—it sounded inhuman to me ... I think it was wrong.

Similar concerns were raised contemporaneously by other members of the department. In 1949, patrol officer Ted Evans expressed grave misgivings over the practice of removing Aboriginal children in an internal departmental report. Having just facilitated the removal of five children from Wave Hill, Evans described a tortuous scene of departure:

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31 Duguid, untitled radio broadcast, 29 November 1952.
34 Transcript of interview with Reginald Kevin McCaffery.
The removal of the children from Wave Hill by ... aircraft was accompanied by distressing scenes the like of which I wish never to experience again. The engines of the 'plane are not stopped at Wave Hill and the noise combined with the strangeness of an aircraft only accentuated the grief and fear of the children, resulting in near-hysteria in two of them. 35

In addition to recommending that aircraft 'only be used in extreme cases', Evans suggested leaving the children 'with their mothers until they [were] at least six years of age' and that a female welfare officer be appointed 'to assist native mothers ... and to help in the gentler removal of part-Aboriginal children'. 36

Jeremy Long has argued that Evans' report 'led to a critical review of the practice [of removing Aboriginal children] and radical changes in the way it was administered'. 37 However, other than acknowledgment on the part of the government secretary that the practice seemed likely to attract 'criticism for violation of the present day conception of 'human rights'' and 'to outrage the feelings of the average observer', the only substantive change appears to have been the casual recruitment of two female welfare workers, both of whom were wives of patrol officers. 38 In the wake of Duguid's criticisms and the unwanted attention his claims drew upon government policy, procedures for removing children were revised, thereafter restricting removals 'to children who were neglected or in need of medical care or whose removal was expressly requested by the mother'. This meant that fewer children in the Northern Territory were removed after 1952; from eighteen in 1950 alone, to twenty-one between 1951 and 1953, and seven in the years 1954 to 1956. 39

Duguid's criticisms did not stop the policy of removing Aboriginal children, but then he had no desire to stop it, just reform it. Duguid's concerns were with the 'present method' employed—i.e. 'taking young babies from their mothers'—not the practice itself. 40 In Duguid's view, the obvious solution lay with the station owners; white men who paid 'no income tax, [were] provided with cheap labour, [made] adequate profits and [collected] Child Endowment for the Aboriginal children on their properties', but were not obliged to educate them. 41 Duguid wanted government to 'insist on the stations

35 Long, The Go-Betweens, pp. 82-3.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.; See also transcript of interview with Reginald Kevin McCaffery. According to McCaffery, he appointed these women, both of whom were nursing sisters and the wives of patrol officers. Anna Haebich, Broken Circles. Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000, Fremantle Arts Centre Press. Fremantle, 2000, p. 472; Long, The Go-Betweens, p. 84.
39 Duguid, untitled radio broadcast, 29 November 1952.
40 On the issue of Child Endowment, Duguid wrote: 'The Department of Social Services recognises the right of every Aboriginal child under the age of 16 years employed or living on station properties to Child Endowment, but the payment is not made to the mother or father but to the managers of the stations. The endowment has to be "claimed" by the parent presumably by a fingerprint and the station manager has to submit to the Director a statement as to how the first payment was disbursed and periodical statements regarding later payments. Tribal parents cannot

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supervising the education of the full-blood and half-caste children on their runs'. The other alternative, according to Duguid, lay with the establishment of hostels such as St Mary's at Alice Springs. Having visited St Mary's on his way home from Darwin, Duguid was convinced that it provided the only humane answer to the separation of 'half-caste' children from their families. The children, brought in with parental consent at the age of five or six, all attended the Alice Springs state school and were visited during the year by their 'parent or parents, as the case may be'. In his travel diary Duguid described St Mary's as 'by far the finest home for part-Aborigines [he had] ever seen anywhere in Australia ... This place isn't an institution—it is a home'. Confident that 'full-blood mothers ... could easily be induced to bring their children to these centres knowing that they could visit them during the year and have them home at the end it', Duguid called for 'many hostels of the St Mary's type [to be established] throughout the Territory'.

Duguid's views had changed dramatically. Where once he would have agreed with Hasluck's assertion that the 'half-caste' child left with 'the bush tribe [would] grow up to have neither the full satisfaction in life which the tribal native has nor the opportunity to advance to any other status', by the early 1950s Duguid was adamant that 'it would be an advantage to have half-castes grow up with their full-blood relatives in their own country'. Whether educated on the stations or at state schools with the help of hostels like St Mary's, or both—for instance Duguid knew of one station where 'half-caste' children were receiving lessons by correspondence before being sent to St Mary's—it took 'little imagination to see how the educated children would help their mothers towards our civilisation', Duguid claimed. He looked forward to the day when educated 'half-castes' with 'some training in teaching could start the education of the full-blood children on the stations'.

Duguid's primary concern was for the welfare of 'full-blood' Aborigines, and while he believed that maintaining family relationships would be advantageous for all concerned, including government, it was 'full-blood' Aborigines who stood to gain the most. Since they were the ones who had the most to lose in terms of culture and identity, according to Duguid, he put their needs first. Therein lay one of the principle differences between Duguid and Hasluck's approach to Aboriginal welfare; their point of departure. In seeking to reform government's policy on the removal of 'half-caste' children, Duguid's first...

42 Duguid, The Aborigines of Darwin and the Tropic North, Addendum, p. 27.
43 Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and Their Half-Caste Children'.
44 Duguid, Travel Diary, July 1931, pp. 83-4.
45 Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and Their Half-Caste Children'.
47 Duguid, The Aborigines of Darwin and the Tropic North, p. 11; Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and Their Half-Caste Children'.
48 Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and Their Half-Caste Children'.
concern lay with the suffering it caused their 'full-blood' mothers. Hasluck, in contrast, focussed solely on serving the 'interests of the children'.

Further illustrating this difference, Hasluck was pleased to inform potential detractors that, 'where possible, the mother [was] permitted to accompany the child [to Darwin] to make the separation more gradual'. While Duguid may have appreciated the sentiment behind such action, this would not have satisfied him, as the following notes from his travel diary suggest: 'They now bring the mother into Darwin and take it [the child] there. Is Darwin a good place to bring the mother?'. Rather than decrease the mother's suffering as intended, Duguid felt that bringing her to Darwin would only increase it by exposing her to a new and alien way of life. To then send her back to her old life, minus her child, would permanently disrupt her known world. Aborigines of full-descent needed time to adjust to the new civilisation, according to Duguid. They needed assistance, understanding and respect, and their children—'full-blood' and 'half-caste'—needed education. But Duguid did not advocate the removal of 'full-blood' children. Only 'half-caste' children warranted such measures, according to him, and this was because 'very few white fathers' accepted responsibility for them. Therefore, you and I—in other words, the Government—must do something about it', Duguid explained: white society was to assume the role of the absent father, but no longer at the expense of the mother.

But was it just the absence of the white father that made government intervention into the lives of mixed-descent children essential? What of the children born of two mixed-descent parents, was government still responsible for them? Duguid's answer to the latter question was a resounding 'yes'. In No Dying Race he reflected that:

> Throughout the years there has been too little recognition of our responsibility for the existence of the mixed-blood people—too little concerted effort to provide western amenities of all kinds for the children for whom our race, and our race only, is responsible.

The absent white father could have been a grandfather, a great-grandfather or someone even further removed, for as Duguid acknowledged, 'the greatest increase in their numbers [was] the result of part-Aborigines naturally marrying among themselves'. However: 'When the white race came to Australia and spread across the continent, it was white men who sought out the native women—not the reverse. Thus were brought into being people

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49 Hasluck to Cuthbert, 23 November 1951.  
50 Ibid.  
51 Duguid, Travel Diary, July 1951, p. 60.  
52 Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and Their Half-Caste Children'.  
53 Duguid, No Dying Race, p. 180 (emphasis added).  
54 Ibid.; See also, Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II), The Australian Intercollegian, 1 July 1940, p. 89.
of mixed-blood', Duguid argued.\textsuperscript{55} In his view, this made white society 'especially responsible for [them] irrespective of when the infusion of 'white blood' occurred.\textsuperscript{56}

Like Hasluck and others, Duguid continued to believe that the 'white blood' (and hence lighter skin colour) in 'half-castes' made them more amenable to social assimilation. However, whereas previously Duguid had acknowledged little, if any, connection between Aborigines of full and mixed-descent in terms of Aboriginal identity, during the 1950s this changed. Following his trip to Darwin, Duguid began to see Aborigines of mixed descent as being 'part-Aboriginal': a change in nomenclature which symbolised Duguid's growing awareness, and acceptance, that people of mixed-descent were not only 'part-white', they were also 'part-Aboriginal'. Terms like 'full-blood' and 'half-caste' were not just casual descriptors, as Duguid knew, but names loaded with meaning. In 1959, Professor J.B. Cleland, a friend and contemporary of Duguid's, proposed that 'part-white' be used instead of 'part-Aboriginal' because it would bring Aborigines of mixed-descent 'more closely into the white fraternity into which they must ultimately merge'.\textsuperscript{57} Duguid's use of the term 'part-Aboriginal' in preference to 'part-white' did much more, therefore, than reflect the changing parlance of the day; it also reflected his changing view of what it meant to be Aboriginal.

II. Sydney James Cook, a test case for assimilation

When Sydney James Cook arrived at Roper River mission in the Northern Territory in 1950 he felt like a 'foreigner in a foreign land': 'I was as black as any of them yet I couldn't understand a word they said', Cook told the journalist Douglas Lockwood in 1965. According to Lockwood, the 'Roper people made an Aboriginal of [Cook]'; soon he was 'able to undertake walkabouts of several hundred miles and live by his wits and his hunting skills'.\textsuperscript{58} Cook had been at Roper River for two years when he wrote the following letter, delighting in his new-found hunting prowess, to Charles Duguid:

Dear Dad,

How are you getting on, Also mum and Andrew, has Rosemary won any more tennis games. I hope she has. We killed a buffaloe with spears, Myself, John, Tex, Dexter, Don, Darvis, Mjangria, we were all killing fish in one billabong when Dexter told us to go down to one little creek, as soon as we came to the edge of the creek we found him having a bathe. So we all through our spears and John killed him right in the back and broke his spine so he

\textsuperscript{55} Duguid to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 6 September 1955, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{56} Duguid, typescript entitled 'ABC National News Item', [January] 1959.
\textsuperscript{57} 'Part-white?', \textit{News}, 29 December 1959, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 118.
\textsuperscript{58} Douglas Lockwood, 'He grew up in a white world', \textit{Herald} (Melbourne), 26 February 1965.
could not get up, but Mjangria ran to get Mr Hart to come and shoot it with his gun ...

to mum

*I'm glad that I have kill him, the big strong buffaloe

*I'm glad, I'm glad ...

Your Loving son,

Sydney.

Despite sending Cook hundreds of kilometres away, and to a place so far removed from their own way of life that it might as well have been a 'foreign land', Charles and Phyllis Duguid wanted Cook to feel that their 'home circle [was] his'. In 1951, Charles visited Cook at Roper River, and in 1952 Cook spent seven weeks with the family in Adelaide. Beyond that all contact was by correspondence. 

Rather than severing the Duguids' relationship with Cook, sending Cook to Roper River engendered a new kind of relationship between the Duguids, Cook and the authorities responsible for Cook's welfare: the superintendents at Roper River, C.D. Gilchrist and later P.E. Leske; a district welfare officer, J.R. Ryan, whose task it was to report to the administration on Cook's welfare and progress; the Director of Welfare, H.C. Giese and the Administrators of the Northern Territory, F.J.S. Wise and later J.C. Archer, all of whom kept the Duguids informed of Cook's progress; and Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories, who took 'a close personal interest in the lad ... because of the special circumstances surrounding [him]'.

Those 'special circumstances', namely the education Cook received in Adelaide and the Duguids' continuing interest in him, meant that Cook was closely monitored by the Northern Territory administration. Cook was viewed as a test case for assimilation. Because '[it was] of course on the results of cases such as [Cook's] that the success or failure of our assimilation programme will be judged', reports, letters and telegrams flew back and forth between Roper River, Katherine, Darwin, Canberra and Adelaide creating a file on Cook whose size alone is testimony to the high degree of 'particular and personal attention', or surveillance, he endured.

Everyone had an opinion on what was best for Cook, including Cook himself. Towards the end of 1953, Cook, aged sixteen, wrote to Duguid asking for permission to leave Roper River:

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59 Sydney James Cook to Duguid, 12 June 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. The spelling and punctuation in this letter has not been corrected or altered from the original. Cook's meaning is quite clear without the use of sic, which, I feel, would be patronising in this context.

60 Duguid to Hasluck, 21 October 1953, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.

61 H.C. Giese, Director of Welfare to J.R. Ryan, District Welfare Officer, 12 June 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/98. In this letter, Giese advised Ryan that 'the Minister, because of the special circumstances surrounding Sydney Cook, takes a close personal interest in the lad'.


63 J.C. Archer, Administrator, to Hasluck, 5 June 1957, NAA, F1, 1955/820/96-95.
I am wondering if I can go away and work on one of the Stations near the mission called Nutwood Downs for a change please and earn some money because I am walking around this place just like a bachelor with broken clothes and no net and blanket.\textsuperscript{64}

Cook's request in this matter was important to Duguid for it removed 'any question of pushing him around'.\textsuperscript{65} Despite receiving contrary advice from Gilchrist who felt that Cook had not yet 'reached the stage where he would settle down to such employment', Duguid felt that Cook's 'desire to earn ... [was] natural and right'.\textsuperscript{66} For assistance in this matter, Duguid turned to Hasluck who initiated a series of enquires that resulted in Cook's employment at Nutwood Downs in 1954.\textsuperscript{67}

Hasluck's intervention was significant for several reasons. Because of the great distance involved, Duguid relied on information from the Northern Territory administration and his connection to Hasluck ensured that such advice was forthcoming. Hasluck wanted 'what [was] best' for Cook, but he also wanted to make sure that Duguid had no cause for complaint.\textsuperscript{68} He therefore requested that Duguid be kept informed of Cook's progress at Nutwood Downs; a request which established a 'system of reporting to private people' that was bitterly resented by members of Hasluck's department and, in the opinion of E.C. Evans, Chief Welfare Officer, was having a detrimental impact on Cook.\textsuperscript{69}

As Evans saw it, the department's 'constant inquiry'—prompted by 'Dr Duguid and his pen'—left Cook with no 'opportunity to settle down'.\textsuperscript{70} Thus, while Hasluck's intervention went some way towards bridging the gap between Duguid and the administration, it also increased the gap by fostering resentment against what was seen as Duguid's interference.

After three years at Nutwood Downs, during which time Duguid received nothing but favourable reports regarding Cook's 'conduct and efficiency', Duguid sought Hasluck's

\textsuperscript{64} Cook to Duguid, September 1953, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.
\textsuperscript{65} Duguid to Hasluck, 21 October 1953.
\textsuperscript{66} C.D. Gilchrist, superintendent Roper River mission to Duguid, 29 September and 22 October 1953, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566; Duguid to Hasluck, 21 October 1953.
\textsuperscript{67} Hasluck to Duguid, 27 October 1953, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566; R.K. McCaffery, Acting Director of Native Affairs to J.M. Hood, manager Nutwood Downs, 24 November 1953, NAA: F1, 1955/820/10; Hasluck to Duguid, 3 December 1953, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Hood to Director of Native Affairs, 14 January 1954, NAA: F1, 1955/820/20-21; C.R. Lambert, secretary Department of Native Affairs to Duguid, 24 March 1954, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.
\textsuperscript{68} Hasluck to Duguid, 27 October 1953.
\textsuperscript{70} Handwritten notes by Evans on Leske to Giese, 20 June 1958 and Ryan to Giese, 20 November 1958.
advice on the question of Cook's exemption from the Aboriginals Ordinance. Duguid took it for granted that Cook would 'be exempted sooner or later', and since Cook was now 19 years of age, Duguid presented Hasluck with a strong case for the earlier option. Cook had several years experience in cattle work and was 'now learning the engineering side of station work', he could read and speak English 'perfectly' and was 'fully knowledgable in our ways'. Given this, was 'he not a case who should be exempted?', Duguid asked.

Rather than continue to receive the wage given to an Aboriginal of his age and experience—one pound per week plus board, lodging and tobacco—Duguid wanted Cook to receive a 'wage worthy of his hire'; 'the white mans wage'. Hasluck agreed, but the decision was not his to make. Hasluck referred the matter to the Administrator, J.C. Archer who referred it to J.R. Ryan, the district welfare officer responsible for monitoring Cook's progress. Asked for his opinion as to Cook's 'ability to adequately manage his own affairs and conduct himself as a full citizen', Ryan stated that he 'could not, under any consideration, recommend that young Cook be exempted'. Quite apart from Cook's lacking 'the necessary sense of responsibility', Ryan maintained that Cook's 'manner of living and his general lack of knowledge of our life would not qualify him for an exemption'. Informing Hasluck of such, Archer recommended that 'it would not be in the lad's interest for him to be declared not to be an Aborigine'. Hasluck was not impressed. Although he 'only [knew] of [Cook's] circumstances at second-hand', Hasluck protested that it was 'not enough ... [to] declare him a ward. [Can't] we build upon undoubted advantages [Cook] had in his early training and make something out of him?', Hasluck asked.

No-one, it seems, thought to ask Cook how he felt about being exempted. On learning of Duguid's efforts, Cook made his feelings clear:

"I do wish you would not write to Native Affairs about being like white man's way, like have rights. Just forget about that please ... I have been pushed

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71 Duguid received three such reports. See Wise to Duguid, 2 December 1954, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Wise to Duguid, 25 July 1955, NAA: F1, 1955/820/43; Archer to Duguid, 8 August 1956, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. In the final report, Duguid was told that Cook was 'quite happy at Nutwood Downs' and that the manager 'had no complaints whatsoever regarding his conduct and efficiency'.

72 Duguid to Hasluck, 20 November 1956, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.

73 Ibid.; Having previously requested the comparative rates of pay for Aborigines and whites employed in the pastoral industry in the Northern Territory, Duguid was appalled to learn that Cook was receiving one-seventh the amount paid to white employees his age. In contrast to Cook's one pound per week plus board, lodging and tobacco, a white man his age received over seven pounds per week. See Archer to Duguid, 15 October 1956, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1. Hasluck to Duguid, 3 December 1956, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566; Evans to Giese, 14 February 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/67; Giese to Ryan 12 March 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/74.

74 Ryan to Giese, 12 March 1957; Ryan to Giese, 23 March 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/79.

75 Archer to secretary, Department of the Territories, 15 April 1957, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566 (emphasis added).

76 Hasluck to Archer, 16 May 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/87.
'END OF THE TRIBES'

around to much I am getting sick of it I don't suppose this a good letter but
I'm just tell you how I feel about it like someone going to shoot himself.79

Clearly, Cook wanted to be left alone. Whether he also wanted to continue to be 'an
Aborigine' was less clear, however, particularly since the two were almost entirely
incompatible.

In April 1957, the Welfare Ordinance, 1953 came into operation and Cook was
declared a ward.80 Under the new Ordinance, wards were defined as people incapable of
exercising the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and in need of 'special care and
assistance'. In theory, anybody could be declared a ward, including white Australians.
However, as Anna Haebich has explained, Hasluck's attempt to deal with people on the
basis of need rather than race was undermined by a group of concerned parliamentarians
who pushed through a clause which stated that 'anybody who was entitled to vote could
not normally be declared a "ward"'.81 Thus, in reality, ward meant 'full-blood Aboriginal';
all Aborigines of mixed-descent in the Northern Territory having been exempted from the
Aboriginals Ordinance and declared 'citizens of Australia' in 1953.82 Under the new
Ordinance the Director of Welfare was the legal guardian of all wards—'as though they
were children', Charles Rowley later observed.83 As Duguid understood it: 'Wards cannot
vote and permission is required for marriage ... Wards cannot own property nor are they
free to move from place to place without permission'.84 In other words, wards got 'pushed
around' at the discretion of the Director, as Cook soon discovered.

In July 1957, after absencing himself from Nutwood Downs—where, unbeknown
to Duguid, Cook had been accused of stealing and inappropriate sexual behaviour—Cook
returned to Roper River in order to 'obtain a wife'.85 The superintendent at Roper River,
P.E. Leske, strongly disapproved of the match. He informed Phyllis Duguid that the
woman in question, Ruth Camfoo, although 'a decent Christian girl as far as native
Christian women go', was quite unsuitable for Cook, being ten years his senior and already
married with four children.86 From Hasluck, Charles Duguid learned that Ruth was 'only

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79 Cook to Duguid, 27 October 1957, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
80 Teleprinter message, 29 April 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/85; Hasluck to Duguid, 10 May 1957,
Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
81 Anna Haebich, Broken Circles. Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000, Fremantle Arts
Read, 'Northern Territory' in Ann McGrath, (ed.), Contested ground: Australian Aborigines
85 Giese to Leske, 19 July 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/99. Duguid received edited versions of
Ryan's reports. For example, he was not told that Cook had been causing 'trouble... with some
of the girls in the camp' or that he had been 'showing signs of being "light fingered"'. See Ryan
to Giese, 5 July 1956, NAA: F1, 1955/820/41.
86 Leske to Giese, 22 August 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/106-05; Leske to Phyllis Duguid, 22
August 1957, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.

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tribally married to Tex Camfoo who [was] soon to marry another full-blood'.
Although assured by Hasluck that ‘nothing ... against [Cook’s] interests’ would be sanctioned by the department, Duguid was so dismayed at the prospect of Cook entering ‘a lifelong union with a woman so much older than himself’ that he suggested moving Cook to ‘Ernabella or [anywhere] less primitive than Roper River’. Fearing that unless Cook was encouraged ‘to re-orientate himself and adjust his sense of values’ he might never re-enter the white community as planned, Duguid also suggested another visit to Adelaide at the department’s expense.

Rather than authorise Cook’s visit to Adelaide, the Director of Welfare, H.C. Giese arranged for Cook to be taken to Darwin ‘for a period of adjustment, discussion and possible employment’. While there, Giese and Evans had several ‘long and frank discussions with [Cook] concerning his proposed marriage and his future’. The outcome of these discussions, according to Evans, was that Cook agreed to abide by their ruling that it was ‘not in his best interests’ to marry Ruth. On the strict ‘understanding that he [would] not continue his association with Ruth’, Cook was permitted to return to Roper River mission in October 1957. Less than two weeks later, Cook wrote to Duguid ‘about this bissiness about this girl’:

I still wish to marry this girl Ruth I have been up to Darwin to see Mr Geecie about it but Mr Evans told me to write to you to see what you say because they are alright about it ... Well I wish you would let me marry Ruth because I love her ... I am looking after her now and children and she wishes to get married to me.

Cook’s letter left Duguid with the impression that the only person stopping the marriage was him. Since Cook was ‘evidently living with Ruth’, Duguid proposed that all objections to the marriage be withdrawn.

'Between two worlds' or within them?
In February 1960, Cook and Ruth were finally married. By then, only six ‘full-blood’ Aborigines—all men—had been granted citizenship in the Northern Territory. Cook was

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88 Duguid to Hasluck, 27 August 1957 and 2 October 1957, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.
91 Cook to Duguid, 27 October 1957 (original spelling).
92 Duguid to Hasluck, 5 November 1957, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.
93 Marriage Certificate, 25 February 1960, NAA: F1, 1955/820/177. A suggestion that Cook was having an affair with Ruth’s eldest daughter was made, but not followed up. By 1960, the Welfare Branch was so determined to see Cook and Ruth married that a sum of 8 pounds 12 shillings was advanced to Cook to cover the registrar’s fee and the cost of the ring. See Giese to
not one of these. To have their name removed from the Register of Wards, Aborigines of full-descent needed to show that they could live an independent assimilated way of life. Or, as was the case with Albert Namatjira, gain the attention of activists and humanitarians in the south. In response to political pressure, and in recognition of his achievement as an artist, Namatjira was granted full citizenship in 1957. Namatjira's conviction for supplying alcohol to wards in 1958 and his death the following year prompted many people to question the correctness of this decision.

Having met Namatjira at Hermannsburg mission in 1934, opened his first exhibition of water-colours in Adelaide in 1939, and made the artist welcome in his home on at least three separate occasions 'for periods up to a week', Duguid considered Namatjira a 'personal friend'. After witnessing Namatjira's 'tragc decline as reported in the national press, Duguid informed Giese that he did 'not regard an Aborigine as a failure because he [wished] to live with his people'. Here, Duguid was referring specifically to Cook's frustrated desire to marry Ruth. Having earlier opposed the marriage on the grounds that it would prevent Cook from 're-entering the general community', Duguid's altered view owed much to his understanding of the difficulties Namatjira faced in the process of assimilation. Thus, while providing some insight into Duguid's re-evaluation of Cook's status, his sympathy for Namatjira's dilemma also further illustrates the difference between his and Hasluck's version of assimilation.

As Rachel Standfield has observed, 'Namatjira the 'perfect Aborigine' did not translate easily into Namatjira the perfect citizen'. A public argument between Namatjira and his agent, John Brakenreg, conducted in the pages of the Sydney Morning Herald and the Sun Herald newspapers in July 1958, encapsulated for many the problems with granting citizenship to 'full-blood' Aborigines. According to Brakenreg, Namatjira lived in squalid conditions, held 'wild beer and wine parties at [his] camp' and 'squandered much of the money he received for his paintings' on relatives and other 'hangers-on'. Brakenreg also claimed that Namatjira and his relatives 'were being badly affected by the cheap liquor being illegally supplied to them'. Although Namatjira responded that he was, in fact,
legally entitled to drink given his status as a citizen—'if I want to have an occasional drink there is nothing to stop me'—the picture of irresponsibility and intemperance painted by Brakenreg left readers with the clear impression that Namatjira had failed to live up to the standards of citizenship.\textsuperscript{102} The death of a young Aboriginal woman at Morris Soak, the settlement where Namatjira lived, in August 1958, reinforced this picture. Namatjira was charged on four counts of supplying alcohol to wards, convicted and sentenced to six months gaol with hard labour, later reduced to three months which he served at the Haast Bluff section of Papunya settlement, 200 miles west of Alice Springs.\textsuperscript{103} Namatjira's conviction provoked widespread public sympathy and support, with appeals for clemency coming from all sections of the Australian community on the grounds that Namatjira had been 'asked to do the impossible—to live as a white man in a black camp'.\textsuperscript{104} However, there were just as many who felt that the blame lay elsewhere.

In January 1959, thirteen prominent Alice Springs residents, each claiming to have 'had several years experience in the field of Aboriginal welfare, education and/or employment', blamed the granting of citizenship 'by enactment' for the 'tragic and growing social problem' of which Namatjira's 'addiction to liquor' was just a part.\textsuperscript{105} Published in the letters column of the Adelaide \textit{Advertiser}, their view that the federal government's granting of citizenship to Aborigines such as Namatjira 'without proper preparation [was] tantamount to writing their death sentence', provoked the following outraged response from Duguid:

The suggestion that Aborigines should be "candidates" for citizenship in their own land is a gross insult. "Addiction to alcohol and gambling" is cited as a cause of failure. It is, but what example is being shown them?\textsuperscript{106}

As far as Duguid was concerned, 'the greatest factor in the success of the enactment [of citizenship was] the attitude of white citizens of Australia'.\textsuperscript{107} He doubted whether any of the thirteen men had 'taken Aboriginal orphans into their homes on the same footing as their own children' (as he had done with Cook), and until they did—until they were 'prepared to welcome Aboriginal people into their homes'—Duguid argued that they had no right or recourse to 'blame the government'.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{102} 'Albert Namatjira Voices Protest—'Have a Right to Drink", \textit{Sun Herald}, 20 July 1958.
\textsuperscript{103} Standfield, 'Not for lack of trying', p. 28; Duguid, \textit{No Dying Race}, p. 137.
\textsuperscript{104} Laurie Thomas, 'Namatjira: Tragic Symbol of the Lost People', \textit{Woman's Day}, 27 October 1958, pp. 4-5; Standfield, 'Not for lack of trying', pp. 27-29.
\textsuperscript{105} Reverend A.W. Grant et.al. to editor, \textit{Advertiser}, 9 January 1959, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 101. Among the thirteen citizens—all white men—were F.W. Albrecht, superintendent at Hermannsburg mission, and Rex Batterbee, the artist.
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}
Reflecting on Namatjira's fall from grace in *No Dying Race* (1963), Duguid attempted to explain the artist's actions within a framework of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture. According to Duguid, Namatjira had been 'reluctant to accept' full citizenship status because he realised that it would be impossible for him to be loyal to conflicting laws, for he was *by birth and training a tribal full-blood* and as such had to share everything with his people. He was not only an artist; he was a fine character with high standards of loyalty to family and kin, and a greater sense of responsibility than those people in capital cities who introduced him to social sipping of alcohol. For in time he became fond of it and shared his new possession with his tribal kith and kin.\(^9\)

Although Duguid did not approve of the drinking, let alone the sharing of alcohol by anyone, he believed that the 'habit of sharing, which persist[ed] with the Aborigines' was essentially 'good'. At the second annual FCAA conference in 1959, Duguid observed that '[m]any Aborigines who have long been converts to Christianity still seem to feel strongly their obligation to share their goods with relatives and tribal relatives'. By contrast, '[a]mong us, it is felt that it is the duty of a good citizen to provide good living conditions first for himself and his immediate family, and to give only what is left over after this, if he wishes, to others in need'. It seemed to Duguid that the 'difficulty of reconciling these two points of view' was one of the greatest 'obstacles in carrying out the assimilation policy'. 'Namatjira himself', Duguid confirmed, was testimony to the importance of appreciating the cultural significance of sharing among Aborigines.\(^10\)

Rather than blame assimilation directly, Duguid blamed Namatjira's downfall on 'the cash art dealers', 'the people who [loaded] him with luxury presents' and the people who introduced him to alcohol. Duguid's obvious sympathy for the difficulties Namatjira faced in being 'caught between two civilisations' contrasted markedly with Hasluck's perception.\(^11\) Since the 'expiring influence of Aboriginal culture' was such that Hasluck found it 'difficult to trace', he blamed the artist's attachment to a false Aboriginality, or, to use Hasluck's words, 'the cult of the Aboriginal that [was] being fostered in Australia'.\(^12\) Hasluck suggested 'that the Aboriginal, considered as an individual person, felt the drag of

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three sets of influences when he was on the borders of acceptance into Australian society. First, 'there was the influence of his present social and cultural condition'. Essentially, this meant that even Aborigines who 'appeared to have lost all touch with an Aboriginal life' were 'sometimes slow and unwilling to step into the [white] world' through fear of further change. The second set of influences related to 'race'—or 'breeding' as Hasluck put it—and were impediments only in so far as they existed 'in the mind of the coloured person and in the mind of the white person'. Reluctantly describing the third set of influences as 'kinship', Hasluck explained that by the time the individual Aborigine was preparing to enter Australian society, the old tribal meanings of kinship and the obligations of kinship—whether in marriage, in sharing of food or the acts of an avenger—had faded but he still had relatives and he could not wholly escape from them.\(^{113}\)

Implying that the difficulties Namatjira encountered were directly attributable to 'displacement'—to his no longer belonging to the crumbling Aboriginal society from which he came—Hasluck argued that Namatjira's principal difficulty was 'the strain he felt ... between him and his own people'; the undifferentiated masses of Aboriginal people not ready to be assimilated, yet unable to let Namatjira go.\(^{114}\)

Having lived in white society and been expelled from it, the nature of Cook's displacement was almost the complete reverse of Namatjira's. It was the considered view of Archer, Giese, Ryan and others, that Cook's problems stemmed directly from his being 'forced ... back into a native camp environment' by Duguid in 1950.\(^{115}\) According to Ryan, when Cook 'first arrived at Roper River mission from Adelaide the other natives considered him a prodigy with his superior education and his ability to attract attention with stories of life in the city'.\(^{116}\) As the novelty wore off, Cook's behaviour deteriorated in line with his efforts to regain this 'early prestige', resulting in a vast inventory of complaints against him. Cook's fiercest critic was P.E. Leske, superintendent at Roper River mission.\(^{117}\) According to Leske, Cook was 'a first class nuisance [who obeyed] only when inclined, [walked] off a job without notice, and even once led a stop-work among the young fellows' at the mission.\(^{118}\) Cook was so 'lazy' and so 'arrogant', Leske complained,

\(^{113}\) Ibid., pp. 132-33.


\(^{115}\) Archer to Hasluck, 5 June 1957.


\(^{117}\) Evans felt that Leske had a 'personal bias against' Cook. Rather than Cook being the sole cause of trouble, Evans suggested that a climate of 'mutual bitterness [had] developed between the missionaries and [Cook]'. 'In the former's eyes [Cook] is capable of any evil, whilst [Cook] obviously thinks that the missionaries are out to frustrate him at every turn and blame him for everything', Evans explained. See handwritten notes by Evans on Leske to Giese, 20 June 1958 and Ryan to Giese, 20 November 1958.

that when he went 'walkabout' he stole horses to 'save his legs'. Unfortunately for Cook, it was not just other Aborigines who considered him something of a prodigy; Leske too 'had many hopes for the lad'. Lamenting the fact that 'with [Cook] it [was] more retrogression rather than progression', Leske let his disappointment show. More than Cook's poor behaviour, however, it was his disinclination to 'progress' in the direction that Leske and others thought appropriate given his 'privileged' upbringing and 'excellent' education that was the cause of their disappointment.

Unable to abide Cook's 'wilful persistence in continual disidence', Leske had him expelled from the mission at the end of 1958. From there Cook and Ruth went to Beswick Creek Station, where all seemed well until April 1960 when Cook was sentenced to four months' gaol for seriously assaulting his wife. Had Cook 'used his fists or a piece of wood the offence would not have appeared so bad', according to Ryan, but since 'the weapon [Cook] used a four foot length of flat iron approximately 2 inches in width', Ryan was surprised that 'he did not have to answer a charge of manslaughter or murder'. Ryan attributed the bulk of Cook's problems, including his violent temperament, to the 'difficulties he ... had to contend with in being sent as a child to surroundings completely unfamiliar to him'. Although not disclosed to Duguid at the time, Ryan cited 'Dr Duguid's action in sending [Cook] from his home to a comparatively isolated mission' as one of the principal reasons for disallowing Cook's exemption. Such an action being contrary to the aims of assimilation, Archer had agreed. Assimilation moved Aborigines out of Aboriginal society and into white society, not the reverse. It was clear to Archer that Cook's 'progress' had been ' retarded' by 'circumstances outside his control', for instead of 'building on the experiences and adjustment which [Cook] had gained during his stay with Dr Duguid', Duguid had 'made [Cook] slip back in the forward move towards assimilation' by sending him to Roper River.

Duguid would have been horrified to learn that his actions were perceived in this way. As indicated in chapter four, Duguid believed that Cook had been displaced at birth. Unlike Namatjira who was 'by birth and training a tribal full-blood', Cook was only 'tribal in appearance', meaning of full-Aboriginal descent. By giving Cook 'a people' and 'a place' at Roper River, Duguid felt that he was replacing that which Cook had been denied; the companionship and support of his 'own people', other 'full-blood' Aborigines who were

121 Leske to Giese, 20 June 1958; C.D. Gilchrist, acting superintendent Roper River mission to Giese, 31 October 1958, NAA: F1, 1955/820/147-46. The decision to expel Cook was made by Leske before he went on furlough that month.
122 Giese to Duguid, 26 April 1960, Duguid Paper: 1, Series 1; Giese to Duguid, 11 May 1960, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
123 Ryan to Giese, 23 March 1957, NAA: F1, 1955/820/79. In this report, Ryan described Cook's movement from Duguid's home to Roper River as 'cruel'.
124 Archer to Hasluck, 5 June 1957.
travelling the same road. In *Doctor and the Aborigines* (1972), Duguid proclaimed himself right. Describing his visit to Roper River mission in 1951, Duguid wrote:

> There were two corroborees while I stayed at Roper River, and [Cook] was at both of them. The turn-out of Aborigines was understandably small at the Sunday morning [Church] service, since the corroborees had been going on through the two previous nights, but [Cook] turned up somewhat late looking sleepy and tousled. *He was a good example of assimilation into two worlds, able to dance and sing at the traditional ceremonies of the Aborigines and follow them with worship at a Christian service.*

Assimilation worked, Duguid was saying: just look at Cook, an assimilated 'full-blood' Aborigine with a place in both worlds, Aboriginal and white. While this interpretation was consistent with Duguid's overall approach to assimilation, and bore some resemblance to comments he made at the time—for example, Duguid noted Cook's attendance at a corroboree in his travel diary, and remarked upon Cook's tardiness at Church the next day—it did not reflect the reality of Cook's place at Roper River in 1951 or later. Nor did it reflect the reality of Hasluck's assimilation. This being Duguid's last word on his 'adopted' Aboriginal son's life, it reflected instead Duguid's hope that Cook would one day find a place in both worlds, and be happy there.

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128 Duguid, Travel Diary, July 1951, pp. 65-66, 68.
129 The Welfare Branch ceased its close monitoring of Cook following his imprisonment. In 1962, Duguid was informed that Cook had completed a Patrol Assistant's training course and was giving 'excellent service to the Branch'. It was felt that Cook was 'destined to become an important figure in Territory life'. In 1964, Cook played the role of the witch-doctor in Cecil Holmes' film *I The Aboriginal*. In January 1965, Cook was appointed the 'first full-blood union organiser' with the North Australian Workers Union (NAWU). In July that year, Cook lost his NAWU position to Dexter Daniels, a childhood friend from Roper River. Cook died in 1983, aged 47. Anecdotal evidence suggests that his death was alcohol related. See A.H. Pitts, District Welfare Officer to Duguid, 19 December 1962, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; 'Foundling Aboriginal Gains Union Post', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 January 1965; 'Foundling Aboriginal new NAWU Organiser, *News* (Darwin), 11 January 1965; Erica Mirfin to Margery Meades, 15 June 1965, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Sandra Holmes to A.P. Elkin, 23 March 1965, A.P. Elkin Papers, University of Sydney Archives, Series 1, Box 5, Folder 66; Sandra Le Brun Holmes, *Faces in the Sun: Outback Journeys*, Penguin, Ringwood (Vic), 1999; Personal communication with Nancy Sheppard, 17 January 2000.
III. Government Settlements versus Ernabella Mission

At a public meeting in Adelaide in July 1955, Duguid challenged two unnamed men who made the following statements:

1. That the Government and Missions in the Northern Territory were combining to detribalise the Aborigines and to make them available, whether they liked it or not, to the cattle stations.
2. That the Government had formed compounds throughout the Northern Territory in which to hold the Aborigines for a few weeks before sending them to work on cattle stations.
3. That Aborigines from many different tribes were being forced into these compounds far removed from their tribal country and that even aeroplanes were being used to collect the natives.  

Informing Hasluck of such, Duguid made it clear that while he doubted the veracity of these claims—"such conduct ... [being] at variance from [Hasluck's] published policy"—he nevertheless wanted 'definite information on the above points' so that he could positively refute the charges.

In reply, Hasluck stated that 'there [was] most definitely no deliberate attempt on the part of either the Missions or the Government to hold Aborigines as a labour pool for pastoralists', and this was so

even although the Government clearly recognises that large numbers of Aborigines must look to the pastoralists for employment if they are to become skilled and self-supporting units within the white Australia economy as envisaged in the governments assimilation policy.

Nor were 'any Aborigines forced into 'compounds", Hasluck maintained, despite the fact that:

It is true that the Northern Territory welfare programme is based in part on a system of "settlements" ... [However, no] natives are forced to live on settlements and, of those who elect to live there, none are forced to leave.  

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130 Duguid to Hasluck, 23 July 1955, Sir Paul Hasluck Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5274 (hereafter Hasluck Papers), Box 32.
131 Ibid.
132 Hasluck to Duguid, [August 1955], Hasluck Papers, Box 32.
133 Ibid.
As for detribalisation, the answer was 'simply that this process [had] developed inevitably as a result of the general impact of the 20th Century on the Aborigines', Hasluck explained.\(^{134}\)

Duguid had his own views on the causes of detribalisation (see chapter two). Although he wanted to accept the Minister's assurances, the idea that 'full-bloods [were] being taken into compounds and ... compulsorily put to work—often far removed from their own country' was 'very persistent', and could not be 'authoritatively refute[d]' on the basis of Hasluck's statement.\(^{135}\) More information, and less prevarication, was required.

Perhaps fearing Duguid's propensity to cause trouble, Hasluck wasted no time requesting further information from his department—'supported by statistics ... if possible'—to answer Duguid's concerns.\(^{136}\) Duly supplied, such figures 'clearly demonstrate[d]' that the department's 'preference [was] to keep natives in their home country', and to encourage Aborigines to seek employment 'on the pastoral stations and elsewhere rather than [have them] gathered into government settlements'. Moreover, Duguid could be 'assured that it [was] most definitely not the objective of [government] policy to gather natives on to settlements and missions'.\(^{137}\) Such places were 'regarded only as a means by which the needs of policy [were] served and not as an end in themselves'. Since the 'ultimate objective of [government] policy [was] that, generation by generation, more and more natives [would] be able to live as members of the general community', Hasluck explained that he

would regard it as a policy failure if the eventual outcome was that we had in the Northern Territory a series of flourishing native settlements in which the majority of the native peoples were living apart from the rest of the community.\(^{138}\)

Admonishing Duguid to 'refute most emphatically any suggestion' that government was holding the Aborigines as a labour pool for pastoralists, Hasluck decried the absurdity of such an idea: 'The Aborigine is as free in principle to choose his employment as is the white Australian. Any suggestion to the contrary is quite absurd'.\(^{139}\) With this, Duguid let the matter rest, however, his '[refusal] to believe' that Hasluck would condone such practices was not the same as positively knowing that they did not occur.\(^{140}\)

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\(^{134}\) Ibid.

\(^{135}\) Duguid to Hasluck, 24 August 1955, Hasluck Papers, Box 32.

\(^{136}\) Hasluck to Duguid, 29 August 1955, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566. See additional note at foot of letter, Hasluck to secretary: 'Please send a copy of my letter to the Acting Administrator and ask him to arrange for Mr Giese to let me have a more carefully considered reply to Dr Duguid. If possible the reply should be supported by statistics.'

\(^{137}\) Hasluck to Duguid, 11 October, 1955, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566 (original emphasis).

\(^{138}\) Ibid.

\(^{139}\) Ibid.

\(^{140}\) Duguid to Hasluck, 24 August 1955.
Following press reports in April 1964 that over forty 'primitive' Aborigines from the western desert region had been 'taken at their own request' to the Papunya native settlement 300 miles away in the Northern Territory, Duguid raised the matter again—only this time in public. In an address to an ABSCHOL meeting in July 1964, Duguid condemned what he saw as 'relentless assimilation in West Australia and [the] Northern Territory'. Unwilling to accept the claim that these 'primitive Aborigines ... want[ed] to abandon their sand and spinifex hunting grounds and move into the fringe of white civilisation', Duguid asked why, if their general health was 'good' as reported, they had been 'enticed and impressed to leave their own homeland for a crowded settlement and to a life utterly foreign to them?' 'Is it that [government has] become solicitous for the people in the desert? If so, there was no need to uproot them', Duguid asserted. Ration depots could have been set up 'in their own country' and 'visited by patrols from time to time'. Instead, the Northern Territory administration sent out patrols to bring the people in:

A truck is loaded with foodstuffs and second-hand dresses, trousers and shirts.

The primitive Aborigines when found are first given food ... [then they] are told [that] food is in plenty at Papunya but that they cannot have it in their own country. Duguid doubted 'whether regard for the natives' welfare was the factor at work'. In his view, it was about government 'hurrying the last of a nomadic people into civilisation'; it was about the 'End of the Tribes'.

By 1964 the Northern Territory had ceased to be Hasluck's responsibility. That Hasluck's move to the Department of Defence preceded Duguid's public criticism of assimilation is no coincidence. Duguid, it seems, felt freer to air his misgivings about assimilation after Hasluck's change of portfolio. This change also influenced Duguid's later account of his visit to several native welfare settlements in the Northern Territory in 1960.

As with his earlier trip to Darwin in 1951, Duguid contacted Hasluck before venturing into the Northern Territory. Hoping for a letter of introduction and permission to visit the settlements west of Alice Springs, Duguid was gratified to learn that arrangements had been made for him to visit seven such settlements 'in company with a

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142 Duguid, 'Relentless Assimilation', pp. 15-16.
144 Hasluck moved to the Department of Defence in January 1964. In April that year, he moved to the Department of External Affairs. See Duguid to Hasluck, 13 January 1964 and 29 April 1964, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
senior officer of the Welfare Branch and with transport provided by the Administration'. In May 1960, Duguid spent one week inspecting the settlements at Jay Creek, Amoonguna, Warrabri, Yuendumu, Papunya, Areyonga and Ilparpa. Immediately upon his return to Adelaide, Duguid congratulated the Commonwealth government 'on its handling of the Northern Territory Aboriginal assimilation problem': 'The Commonwealth government is undertaking an excellent programme to raise the full-blood tribal natives to our standard', he told the Adelaide Advertiser, adding that in his opinion, it was the 'most progressive effort ever made in this country'.

Duguid's 'willingness to publicise what the Commonwealth government [was] doing in the field of native welfare in the Northern Territory [was] greatly appreciated' by the Welfare Branch. Giese told Duguid that his positive evaluation would enable the Welfare Branch to

counter some of the unwarranted and unjustified criticism which emanates from some Aborigines welfare organisations in the southern States who in some cases, of course, have not had an opportunity to talk to us about our problems here and to see what we are attempting to do.

Duguid guessed that the welfare organisations to which Giese referred were the 'two Victorian organisations'—the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League and the Council for Aboriginal Rights—'whose attitude to Mr Hasluck and his work in the Northern Territory' Duguid deplored. So much so, Duguid explained, that his organisation, the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL), was considering withdrawing from the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (FCAA), it being too heavily dominated, in his view, by the Victorian organisations. Like Giese, Duguid had no time for the criticisms of organisations without 'knowledge' or 'first-hand' experience of the 'practical issues'. Anything Duguid could do to help sway public opinion in favour of the settlement programme would be gladly done.

With the aim of further helping government, Duguid compiled a detailed report of his visit to the settlements. As with his Darwin report, Duguid sent the first draft to be checked by government before releasing it to the press: 'I would like you, or someone

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147 'Natives Project Praised', Advertiser, 4 June 1960; Duguid to Giese, 8 June 1960, NAA: Fl, 1960/398.
149 Giese to Duguid, 10 June 1960, NAA: Fl, 1960/398.
150 Duguid to Giese, 18 June 1960, NAA: Fl, 1960/398. The SA AAL's affiliation with the FCAA was 'frequently debated' from 1958 until 1966 when the decision to withdraw was finally made. See SA AAL Minutes, 2 November 1958 and 27 April 1959, League Papers, Series 3/2; SA AAL Minutes, 10 August 1964, League Papers, Series 3/3; SA AAL Minutes, 15 August 1966, League Papers, Series 3/4; Phyllis Duguid, The History of the League Part II, Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter, No. 27, September 1965, p. 4; Iris Schultz to editor, Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter, March 1966, p. 5. See also chapter six.
nominated by you, to read what I have written to correct any misconception', he told
Giese. 151 Giese's representative, the Assistant Director of Welfare, E.P. Milliken
suggested several minor alterations to Duguid's text, none of which were substantive
changes. Duguid's report, as Milliken noted, was 'certainly very comprehensive'. 152 It
described in detail the type of housing provided on the settlements—'prefabricated
aluminium houses, a single room 12 feet by 12 feet with a 6 foot verandah on three
sides'—and the type of facilities provided, such as at Amoonguna, a settlement near Alice
Springs, where there was a

school, two dormitories, and a pre-school centre, modern hospital, kitchen and
mess room unit for the provision of three cooked meals a day, ablution blocks
and toilets with septic tank drainage, a manual training centre for trades, and
an agricultural training area, and there is a large recreation hut with canteen at
one end. 153

According to Duguid, this 'new and positive approach'—wholly 'conceived by the Minister,
Mr Hasluck'—was designed 'to give the native people in the Northern Territory an
opportunity to understand the white man's way of life, in the hope that, in due course, they
will become part of it'. 154 What Duguid saw in the Northern Territory left him 'in no doubt
that as far as Aborigines under Federal Ordinance are concerned, we have entered an era of
hope', and he urged 'all who are interested in the future of our dark brethren to support the
settlement policy'. 155

In an otherwise soporific report, leaden with detail about building materials and the
like, Duguid's 'thrill' at meeting Tjaruru at Papunya settlement, and at being remembered
by him, was self-evident. Duguid first met Tjaruru in 1936 when 'he was a boy of eleven,
and one the most brilliant youths of any race [Duguid had] known' (see chapter four).
Although twenty-four years had elapsed since last they met, they 'knew one another at
sight'. 156 Before leaving for Alice Springs, Duguid had mentioned his desire to see Tjaruru
and Warungulla, a friend of Tjaruru's he had also met in 1936. 157 Enquires were made as

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151 Duguid to Giese, 30 August 1960, NAA: F1, 1960/398.
152 Milliken to Duguid, 18 November 1960.
153 Duguid, 'Welfare Work in the Northern Territory', unpublished report, 29 August 1960, Charles
Duguid Papers, Private Collection, Adelaide, since deposited at the National Library of Australia
(hereafter Duguid Papers: 3).
154 Clearly, government was sparing no expense in 'furthering the development of the full-bloods'.
To those who would argue that the cost was too high, Duguid maintained that it was 'not a
thousandth part of what we [had] taken from them'. According to Jeremy Long, more than half of
the greatly increased expenditure on Aboriginal welfare in the post-war period was devoted to
these settlements. Duguid, 'Welfare Work in the Northern Territory'; Long, The Go-Betweens,
p. 123. See also Tim Rowse, White Flour, White Power: From Rations to Citizenship in
155 Duguid, 'Welfare Work in the Northern Territory'.
156 Ibid.
157 Duguid to Administrator, 27 March 1960, NAA: F1, 1960/398; Duguid to Giese, 7 April 1960,
NAA: F1, 1960/398.
to their whereabouts, however, 'none of the white staff' knew them, Duguid explained in his report, because it was 'the policy of the Welfare Department to speak only in English'. Duguid found them by asking 'older natives' at Papunya where they were. As in 1936 when Tjaruru had 'amazed' him with his intelligence, Duguid delighted in reporting that nothing had changed: 'in the early morning who should be standing near the track as we left but Tjaruru, waving farewell. Don't try to tell me that young man belongs to an inferior race'.

Recounting this meeting with Tjaruru at Papunya in Doctor and the Aborigines (1972), Duguid told a very different story. Although twelve years had passed, more important than the lapse of time was the fact that Duguid no longer felt compelled to project a positive image of the settlement project. In Doctor and the Aborigines Duguid explained that no white person at Papunya had known who Tjaruru and Warungulla were because they were known as 'Johnny D and C-two'. In Duguid's view, this lack of insight suggested a fundamental lack of respect on the part of the white staff, none of whom, he recalled, 'had any knowledge of the native tongues'. This in turn affected the teaching of children in the settlement schools where only English—'a completely foreign tongue with no relevance to their old way of life'—was being taught. 'In the Papunya dining hall', Duguid continued:

I saw the Aborigines file in three times a day, and sit on chairs at tables with knives, forks and spoons in front of them. The Commonwealth government was certainly feeding those who might otherwise go hungry, but it seemed hardly right to hustle them at such a speed into the western way of life.

Like the re-naming of Tjaruru and Warungulla and the teaching of English only, Duguid protested that the distribution of food at Papunya reflected an attitude of 'unimaginative benevolence' which was as 'damaging in its own way ... [as] downright malevolence'.

Rather than new views, or views revised over time, I suggest that Duguid's comments on Papunya in Doctor and the Aborigines accurately reflect how he felt in 1960. To have raised such concerns then would have fuelled Hasluck's critics' fire, thus Duguid kept his misgivings to himself. However, it is clear that Duguid had reservations about aspects of the settlement project prior to the publication of his autobiography. In July 1960, just two months after Duguid's Northern Territory tour, the South Australian government agreed to establish a cattle station in the Musgrave Ranges to 'train and employ tribal Aborigines' from Ernabella mission. Praising this initiative in a letter to the editor of the Adelaide Advertiser, Duguid explained that the aim was 'to settle the young

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158 Duguid, 'Welfare Work in the Northern Territory'.
159 Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, p. 200.
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid.
men with their wives and families in their tribal country'. In 1962, in an address to the fifth annual FCAA conference, Duguid urged the states to follow the Northern Territory's lead, or better yet to 'improve on it' by sending 'well-trained people ... to the reserves to train [the Aborigines] for a satisfying life' In 1963, while still maintaining his support for the settlement project, Duguid argued that there was, however, an 'inherent weakness in the scheme': 'The Aborigines, divorced from their tribal life and the discipline of their own culture, are forced to accept laws and sanctions they cannot readily understand'. With great care and more subtlety than he usually employed, Duguid proffered Ernabella mission as a better model, implying that rather than move 'tribal' Aborigines to the settlements, it was far better 'to train and settle the young men with their wives and families in their [own] country', as was being done at Ernabella, because 'loss of land [meant] the end of tribal life'.

Following the 'forced' relocation of Aborigines from the western desert to Papunya in 1964, Duguid was less circumspect in his promotion of Ernabella. It was, he declared, the one 'bright spot' in an otherwise sorry record of assimilation for 'tribal full-bloods'. In stark contrast to the 'drastic idea of immediate assimilation being countenanced' by the Commonwealth government, Ernabella offered 'quiet and gradual assimilation', Duguid claimed. For 27 years this alternative form of 'assimilation [had] been going on' at Ernabella and the results spoke for themselves: 'There [was] no inferiority at Ernabella, no apathy, no sad faces'. Instead, the people were 'happy'. Before the mission came, the people 'were dignified men and women living meaningful lives like nomadic Aborigines everywhere'; 'today [they] are responsible for almost all the work on the station—boring for water, erecting windmills and tanks, fencing, gardening, butchering, driving trucks and now, house building'.

According to Duguid, the key to this 'gradual and happy change', indeed the key to Ernabella's success, was 'intelligent compromise'—a policy which acknowledged that 'our civilisation [had] something to offer the Aborigines', but which recognised the importance of offering it 'to them on their own terms and in their own tribal land'. Duguid was 'completely convinced that no-one [had] any right to force another into a new way of life', yet he was 'equally convinced that true Christian living [was] a larger and a better way of life than that of the tribal native'. Thus, he advocated leaving 'it to the Aborigines to make

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164 Duguid, No Dying Race, p. 116.
166 Ibid.; Duguid, Relentless Assimilation in West Australia and Northern Territory', p. 16.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid.
the change if they [thought] our way [was] better than theirs'. At Emabella, this meant that there was 'respect for native customs [and] no compulsion in education or religion'. It meant that the children were taught to read and write in their own language before later being taught English, and that 'responsibility [was] passed to the Aborigines whenever they [were] willing and able to take it'. These 'basic factors' were the 'secret of the rapid yet quiet and solid development of the Aborigines at Emabella'. In Duguid's view, they were what made Emabella and the Commonwealth government's approach to assimilation 'as far apart as the poles'.

Duguid's finest (and favourite) exemplars of the 'rapid development' that was possible at a mission or settlement that met 'tribal natives' on their own terms were the Aborigines from Emabella who travelled to Adelaide to see the Queen in 1954 (see Plate 12):

The extent to which they have travelled from the Stone Age in 16 years can be gauged when I tell you that 24 of them came down the thousand miles by truck to Adelaide to see the Queen. They paid their expenses and had enough money over to do a full day's shopping before returning home.

This was what 'quiet' assimilation could achieve; 'actual tribal Aborigines who in sixteen years [had] developed to our standard of living from the native tribal state'. Without face paint, body paint, loincloth or spears, these were 'tribal' Aborigines who stood alongside whites to see the Queen, not as the attraction, but as interested observers. Hair neatly combed and coifed in finery, 'their behaviour was a lesson in poise and dignity', Duguid claimed:

It was the first time the white citizens [of Adelaide] had seen tribal full-blood[s] in the city and they were duly impressed. Now they had to admit they were little different from ourselves except in colour, and that they were practising Christians.

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170 Ibid.; Duguid, 'Relentless Assimilation in West Australia and Northern Territory', p. 16.

171 Duguid, 'Voices From Overseas', typescript of radio broadcast, recorded 18 May 1954, Duguid Papers: 3. See also Duguid, 'The Aborigines: From Stone-Age to Twentieth Century in Sixteen Years', p. 58; Duguid, 'White Doctor, Chapter 3: Aborigines who went to see the Queen', *Evening News* (Scotland), 29 December 1954, p. 5.

172 Duguid to Playford, Premier South Australia, 31 July 1953, State Records of South Australia, GRG 24/140/22 (cited, *recordSArchives*, official newsletter of the State Records of South Australia, No. 20, March 2002, p. 3).

Where Duguid stressed the uniqueness of this occasion for having brought 'tribal full-bloods' in contact with white Australians in the city, Hasluck would probably have questioned the designation 'tribal'. Certainly they were 'full-bloods', but if they had 'developed to our standard of living' as Duguid claimed, were they not detribalised? Was this not the point of assimilation?

Hasluck viewed detribalisation as a necessary precondition for assimilation, arguing in 1959 that 'if anyone of Aboriginal descent is to be accepted as a full member of our society, he must cease to be a primitive Aboriginal and change in outlook and habit'.

The Aborigines from Emabella who went to see the Queen had changed in outlook and habit, and were no longer 'primitive'—if by 'primitive' was meant a 'way of life' ignorant of all things 'modern'—but they were still 'tribal' in Duguid's eyes, and always would be. They were civilised and Christianised 'tribal' Aborigines who had changed far more than Duguid believed necessary for full social acceptance—their right as human beings—to be accorded them.

Assimilation, if carried out correctly, did not stop 'full-blood' Aborigines being 'tribal', according to Duguid. Instead, it gave them the necessary skills to cope with white society, to interact with white people on equal terms, and to 'take their part in the economy of Australia'. As early as 1952, Duguid claimed that Emabella showed how 'quickly ... tribal people' could fit 'into our national life'. At that time, the men were 'responsible for the economy of 2000 square miles of country', and did the shepherding, shearing and wool classing of over 4000 sheep, while the women turned the waste-wool into rugs and mats and were 'responsible for the daily feeding of at least 250 people'. Thirteen years later, at a 'Wages and Employment Seminar' organised by the SA AAL, Duguid proudly declared that the Aborigines at Emabella were 'still tribal':

In 1935 when I first visited the Musgraves, every man, woman and child were naked nomads living off the land. They still do that. You must realise this when considering the whole situation. They are still tribal—still hold corroborees. The boys still go through their initiation rites. Marriage customs are still tribal. Tribal culture continues at their wish and ours.

174 'Minister, Differ on Natives', Advertiser, 29 August 1959, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 112.
175 Duguid, 'Full-blood Mothers and their Half-caste Children'.
176 Duguid, 'What we are doing to help Aborigines fit into our national life', typescript of ABC broadcast, 28 January 1952, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6. See also Peggy Brock, 'Pastoral Stations and Reserves in South and Central Australia', Aboriginal Workers: Labour History, No. 69, November 1995, pp. 102-114.
177 Duguid, untitled paper presented at 'Wages and Employment Seminar' organised by the SA AAL, 9 October 1965, Papers of Dr Charles Duguid, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 387, Series 5.
By 1965, the Aborigines at Ernabella were ‘beginning to move out to other employment’, however, Duguid was confident that they would return to Ernabella when their work was done, for ‘it [was] home to the Pitjantjatjara people’.178

Duguid’s description of Ernabella as a ‘happy, contented community in which the Aborigines [were] playing a great part, and [which would] soon [play] a major part in the development of the north-west corner of South Australia’, would have caused Hasluck to look askance.179 In Hasluck’s perception of assimilation, it was critical that missions and government settlements be regarded as transitory places where individuals would acquire the ‘tools of assimilation’ and then move off into white society.180 In 1961, Hasluck argued that the task of missions and settlements was to do ‘themselves out of a job’. The natives cannot be kept in one place simply to keep a mission or settlement in continued existence’, he asserted, adding that ‘in the long run’ assimilation meant that missions would ‘cease to exist’.181 By the late 1970s Ernabella had ceased to exist as a mission, but the people had not moved on. In one of Duguid’s last published articles, ‘Tribal Nomadic People’ (1978), he observed that: ‘Today Ernabella is no longer a mission, but independent land administered by a democratically elected council of semi-tribal men and women who choose white "community advisers" to help them on their way.’ With its own ‘modern amenities’—grocery store, hospital, church and school—Ernabella had become what Duguid always hoped it would, and what Hasluck most feared—a self-managing Aboriginal community that was more or less separate from white society.182

Duguid was a strong supporter of Hasluck and assimilation, and yet, as this chapter has shown, he was not supportive of all that was done in the name of assimilation. He did not support the forced removal of Aboriginal children, or the forced relocation of Aboriginal adults. Nor did he support the central tenet of Hasluck’s ideal—individualism. Instead, Duguid believed that Aborigines needed the support of their own people in order to assimilate; that Aboriginal culture aided rather than impeded assimilation; and that ‘tribal’ Aborigines could make the ‘transition to our way of life’ without giving up their ‘tribal’ identity or their ‘tribal’ land. Duguid believed that ‘true assimilation’ meant saving Aborigines and their culture from extinction by encouraging them to ‘bring their gifts to

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178 Duguid worked hard to make Ernabella a viable home in terms of employment and economic sustainability. As a consequence of the areas limited natural resources, this was no easy task. Visiting Ernabella in 1958, Duguid met many ‘young men who had been educated at the school, but for whom work was not available’. In 1960, he described unemployment as the mission’s ‘chief failure’. By 1965, Duguid was resigned to the fact that such men would have to ‘move out’ to seek employment. See Duguid, handwritten notes on Ernabella’s future, [1960], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 10, Sub-series 6; Duguid, No Dying race, p. 109; Duguid, untitled paper presented at ‘Wages and Employment Seminar’.

179 Duguid, ‘White Doctor, Chapter 4: The Aborigines began to die out’.


the common pool of Australia's enrichment: it meant the creation of a 'new Australia' in which all Aborigines would be 'welcomed as full citizens'. Duguid thought this was what Hasluck meant by assimilation. Indeed, he thought this was what assimilation meant. Although his willingness to publicise his misgivings over the way assimilation was being implemented in the Northern Territory following Hasluck's change of portfolio suggests that Duguid came to believe otherwise, Duguid did not join the chorus of anti-assimilationists in the 1960s because he believed that his version of assimilation was worth fighting for.

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Chapter 6

URBAN ABORIGINES
Assimilation in Adelaide

While at Emabella mission in November 1953, Charles Duguid learned that Lucy Turner, a 'part-Aboriginal girl who [was] almost white', was to be included in the party travelling to Adelaide to see the Queen.¹ Duguid queried this decision, only to learn from Ronald Trudinger, superintendent of the mission, that Lucy was 'the keenest of all the girls to go' and that it would 'break her heart' if she was not allowed. Pleading Lucy's case, Trudinger argued that she could 'stand in the back with us whites', leaving the 'main phalanx ... compiled entirely of full-bloods'.² Despite everyone at the mission being 'overwhelmingly' in favour of Lucy being allowed to go, Duguid prevailed. Since the 'party [was] being represented as tribal Aborigines', Duguid felt it unwise to include 'Lucy in full-blood contingent'. In his view, it was not appropriate to keep Lucy 'in the background when the Queen pass[ed]', not least because it would hurt her feelings, but because appearances mattered. Simply put, Lucy could not stand with her friends and relatives to see the Queen because she was not one of them; she was not a 'full-blood' and only 'full-bloods' could be 'tribal'.³

Duguid found Trudinger's attitude towards Lucy deeply troubling. Whereas Trudinger believed that Lucy would 'eventually ... marry a full-blood native and ... be a great asset to Emabella', Duguid was appalled at the prospect of 'starting a run of part-Aborigines in a tribal area'. 'Keeping Lucy at Emabella has not been the best for her', he told Trudinger, for if 'she had gone to a half-caste training centre and school, she would now be a member of the white community'.⁴ Having planned an overseas trip during 1954, Duguid could not take Lucy into his own home as he wished, but if not for this he would have taken her for as long as necessary to introduce her to the white community.⁵ Later, Lucy did go to live with the Duguids, but she did not stay in white society as Duguid hoped. After marrying Jim (now Yami) Lester from the Duguids' home, with Charles and Phyllis acting as father and mother of the bride, hosting the festivities and giving their 'foster daughter' away, Lucy returned to Central Australia and made her life there.⁶ At an

¹ Charles Duguid, 'Proposed Visit of Emnabella Natives to Adelaide: Talk with Staff Council', typescript report, November 1953, Records of the Presbyterian Church, South Australian Assembly, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection (hereafter Presbyterian Papers), SRG 123/300.
² Ibid.; Ronald Trudinger to Duguid, 6 February 1954 and Duguid to Trudinger, 9 February 1954, Presbyterian Papers, SRG 123/300.
³ Duguid, 'Proposed Visit of Emnabella Natives to Adelaide'.
⁴ Ibid.; Duguid to Trudinger, 9 February 1954.
⁵ Duguid to Trudinger, 28 March 1954, Presbyterian Papers, SRG 123/300.
⁶ Nancy Barnes, Munyi's daughter: A spirited Brumby, Seaview Press, Henley Beach, 2000, p. 68.

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Aboriginal Women in Focus Forum in 1985, Lucy (now Waniwa Lester) spoke of her life 'between two worlds':

I grew up at Emabella. I lived with my people and went out hunting with them and learned their ways. It gives me great honour to be between two worlds. I choose to be in the middle. I choose not to leave my people, to live my life as [a] two-way person.7

Lucy chose a different life from the one Duguid thought 'best for her'. But was it really best for her, or best for the 'full-blood' community at Emabella that she be brought to white society? Clearly the welfare of the 'full-blood' community was dominant in Duguid's thinking. It did not occur to him that Lucy could be as 'Aboriginal', or as 'tribal', as her 'full-blood' relatives. Blinded by Lucy's 'almost white' appearance, and the threat she posed to the Aboriginality of the others at the mission, Duguid could not see that her attachment to her people, her place and her land was as strong and as important to her as it was to 'tribal' Aborigines.

As determined as Duguid was to help 'tribal' Aborigines maintain their culture and identity, his dealings with Aborigines of mixed-descent were informed by the view that their 'white blood' somehow precluded their access to Aboriginality. If even Lucy—someone who had lived her entire life among 'tribal' Aborigines—was not Aboriginal enough to remain at Emabella, then what of Aborigines of mixed-descent who had grown up in white society? How did Duguid view such people? How did they view themselves?

To understand Duguid's efforts on behalf of urban Aborigines, it is essential to know something about the people he was fighting for; whether his goals matched theirs; whether he listened to them; whether he learned from them. The sparsity of documentary evidence makes such questions difficult, but not impossible, to answer. Using oral testimony, autobiographies and sources from the time, it is possible to gain some insight into what Aborigines in the settled parts of South Australia wanted in the 1950s and 1960s. Representing Duguid's views on Aborigines of mixed-descent poses a similar challenge. Very few of Duguid's published writings dealt specifically, or even mostly, with Aborigines of mixed-descent. Scattered references in Duguid's correspondence, unpublished articles and speeches, and other material including the records of the South Australian Aborigines Advancement League (SA AAL) provide much needed insight, however, in comparison to the vast volumes Duguid produced on 'tribal' Aborigines, they

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also attest to his preference of 'leaving the question of the ['part-Aborigines'] to other[s]'\(^8\). During the 1950s and 1960s, the 'others' Duguid deferred to became 'part-Aborigines' themselves. Beginning with an account of Duguid's connection to Colebrook, the United Aborigines Mission (UAM) facility for Aboriginal children at Quorn in South Australia, this chapter examines Duguid's views on the relative ease with which Aborigines of mixed-descent could assimilate. It documents the SA AAL's campaigns on behalf of urban Aborigines and explores the changing scene of Aboriginal politics in the mid 1960s—the rise of 'all Aboriginal' organisations (or 'black power') and Duguid's response to it.

I. 'Part-Aborigines present little difficulty'

Not all Aborigines of mixed-descent were 'urban'. Although the majority of Aborigines who lived in the settled parts of South Australia were of mixed-descent, many also lived in remote parts of the state. Fay Gale, a doctoral student in the Department of Geography at the University of Adelaide undertook an extensive program of fieldwork among Aborigines of mixed-descent in South Australia in the late 1950s. Her thesis, 'A Study of Assimilation: Part-Aborigines in South Australia', begins with the question:

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\text{how best can a relatively small population of mixed bloods, no longer able to participate in the life of their indigenous forebears, find a place within the general community, which will give both satisfaction to themselves and be beneficial and acceptable to the larger community?}\]\(^9\)

Covering the whole state, from the densely populated white-dominated south, to the thinly populated Aboriginal-dominated north, Gale concluded that:

\[
\text{No one answer can possibly suit both the three-quarter caste living in a semi-tribalised manner in the northern part of the State, and the quarter-caste in standard housing and employment—almost completely accepted by his neighbours in suburban Adelaide.}\]\(^10\)

Another researcher in South Australia working on the question of Aborigines of mixed-descent at this time was Judy Inglis. Like Gale, she found it difficult to 'give a simple account of the way of life of our part-Aborigines' because:

\[^{8}\text{Duguid, Speech delivered at the Melbourne Town Hall under the auspice of the Council for Aboriginal Rights (hereafter CAR Speech), 19 June 1951, Duguid Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5068 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 1), Series 6.}\]


\[^{10}\text{Ibid., p. 394.}\]
They live on government reserves or stations, in shanty towns, and in ordinary houses in country towns and cities ... Their appearance varies from quite dark to fair, their living conditions vary from very bad to very good and their attitudes cover a wide range from feckless dependence on government assistance to aggressive independence ... In some cases they retain social habits and customs which seem to derive from their tribal past while in others their way of life differs little from that of European Australians.\(^\text{11}\)

Duguid was not blind to this diversity. He realised that 'the majority of half-castes [had] poor living conditions', and that in some parts of the state 'their lot was sheer tragedy'. However, rather than address such differences, he tended to focus on those Aborigines of mixed-descent who lived 'in our community' as proof that they all could.\(^\text{12}\)

In 1958 Duguid claimed to know 'of about 100 young part-Aborigines who were born in the back country and who grew up under the sympathetic guidance of white people further south', and who were now 'so much [a] part of our community that few people [knew] they [were] in our midst'.\(^\text{13}\) Inglis' astute observation 'that what we do, or try to do, will be influenced by the end result we are seeking' found clear affirmation in Duguid's promotion of these people—separated from their parents, raised in institutions and educated in state schools—as proof that 'part-Aborigines who [had] opportunity and respect from birth [were] as capable of taking their place in our civilisation as we [were]'.\(^\text{14}\)

While Duguid understood that not all Aborigines of mixed-descent were as 'favoured', he believed that the 'less favoured majority' could also take their place in white society if given 'respect and opportunity'. By respect Duguid meant that white Australians 'must look on the Aborigines with whom [they came] in contact as [they did their] own relatives—no better, no worse'. Full opportunity, he explained, meant ensuring 'that the Aborigines you

\(^{11}\) Judy Inglis, research notes entitled 'Australia's Racial Minority', [1960], Judy Inglis Papers, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 2907 (hereafter Inglis Papers), Box 1, Series 2, Item 6.

\(^{12}\) Duguid, 'The Aborigines' place in the present day life of Australia', typescript of ABC radio broadcast, [1952], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6.

\(^{13}\) Duguid, 'The Aborigines of Australia', *Outlook*, November, 1958, pp. 8-9, 14, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 6. Duguid was referring to former residents of Colebrook and St Francis homes. Duguid had less contact with the children from St Francis home for Aboriginal boys at Sephamore, however, the children from Colebrook and St Francis knew each other. According to Peter Read, '[p]robably as much love was bestowed upon the boys' at St Francis by Father Percy Smith, an Anglican priest, and his wife Isabel, 'as on any children in the long history of Aboriginal institutions'. When the Smiths left in 1948, 'the atmosphere of love and understanding which had characterised St Francis House so far went with them', but not Smith's Anglican values of 'honest endeavour'. From St Francis came university graduates, a doctor of philosophy, a police sergeant, an industrial foreman and a director of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia. See Peter Read, *Charles Perkins. A Biography*, Penguin Books, Ringwood (Vic), 2001 (revised edition), p. 30-33, 41.

\(^{14}\) Inglis, 'Detribalised Reserves', draft copy of paper prepared for FCAA conference, 1962, p. 11, Inglis Papers, Box 1, Series 2, Item 9; Duguid, 'The Aborigines of Australia', *Outlook*, November, 1958.
URBAN ABORIGINES

[were] interested in [received] the same education and training for jobs you [got], with in addition a dash of encouragement thrown in'.

By making white Australians responsible for these 'two essentials for their future'—respect and opportunity—Duguid sought to involve white Australians in Aboriginal advancement by giving them familial responsibilities akin to parenthood. In his home, his work-place and through the voluntary association he headed, the SA AAL, this was what Duguid himself tried to do. In 1950, Myra Taylor, originally from Hermannsburg mission and latterly of Colebrook, went to live with the Duguids as Phyllis' 'standby'. Another former Colebrook resident, Nancy Barnes (nee Brumby), was also living with the Duguids at that time and working as Charles' secretary. 'In no time', according to Barnes, she and Myra 'came to be "adopted" as ... daughter[s]' Myra was the first of the Duguids' 'foster daughters' to be married from their home in 1954. With nearly 100 invited guests—over 70 being Aborigines—Myra's marriage to Fred Ah Chee, also of Aboriginal descent, was news. The Adelaide Advertiser reported that:

Crowds jammed the Magill Baptist Church for an Aboriginal wedding ... Many of the guests were Aborigines from Victoria, the Northern Territory and the South Australian outback. Eighty attended a reception in Dr Charles Duguid's home afterwards. Tables were laden with cutlery, crystal, china, linen and other presents.

The reception was Phyllis' doing, Duguid told Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories: 'I gave [Myra] away'. Duguid's jubilant description of the 'dressing of the Aborigines of both sexes'—it was 'in perfect taste', he told Hasluck—suggests that for Duguid, Myra's wedding was more than a 'very happy occasion': it was proof that Aborigines 'could progress to the white man's level'—it was proof of assimilation. Nancy Barnes' adept handling of Duguid's correspondence, his accounts and appointment books was also proof of assimilation's success. At the bottom of a carefully typed and formatted letter to

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17 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, pp. 124-25.
18 Ibid., pp. 66-68.
19 'Big crowd attends Aboriginal wedding', Advertiser, 13 February 1954, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 27.
20 Duguid to Paul Hasluck, Minister for the Territories, 21 February 1954, Papers of Sir Paul Hasluck, National Library of Australia, MS 5274 (hereafter Hasluck Papers), Box 32. See also 'Expert makes plea for Aborigines', Herald (Melbourne), 6 February 1957, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 68.
Hasluck, Duguid wrote: 'P.S. This letter was typed by my secretary who is a 50/50 part-Aborigine'.

There is no denying that Duguid's approach to Aboriginal advancement was, at times, both patronising and paternalistic. Duguid's support for assimilation was founded on an assumption of cultural superiority. He did not hide his view that white society offered Aborigines a 'better way of life'. Duguid's policy for Aborigines of mixed-descent reflected his view that assisting them to 'live their lives as normal Australian citizens' was a relatively simple task. It did not matter to him whether they were 'of the first generation', meaning 'half-caste', or whether they were of 'three-quarter' or lesser caste; it did not matter whether they lived in Adelaide or Coober Pedy—as a consequence of his association with Colebrook, Duguid believed that assimilation for 'part-Aborigines [presented] little difficulty'.

Duguid's association with Colebrook owed much to the fact that many of the children there were of Pitjantjatjara descent. He knew their country, some of their Aboriginal mothers and most of their white fathers. He was even responsible for 'placing' some of them in the home (see chapter three). For Duguid, helping the Colebrook children achieve equality with white people was an extension of his self-imposed duty to their 'tribal' relatives at Emabella. In the summer of 1935-36, Duguid invited the Colebrook children—all thirty-four of them—to camp in his Adelaide house and garden (see Plate 13). Then aged eight, Nancy Barnes has recalled a summer of 'firsts':

This was the first time that Adelaide had seen a group of Aboriginal children... We did all the things we would never have had a chance to do—going to the zoo, radio stations... swimming, big ice-creams to lick, bigger than ourselves, our first train trip down from Quorn and arriving at Adelaide station, our first sight of the sea—endless water and sand; people, cars, tram cars, the Botanic Gardens—you name it—all these things... Doctor [Duguid] even took us proudly visiting the patients.

Among the children who camped in Duguid's garden that summer were Ray Lester, Steve O'Donoghue and George Tongerie who went on to win service honours with the RAAF.

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22 Duguid to Hasluck, 21 October 1953, National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), Series A452/1, Item1957/2566.
23 Duguid, 'The Aborigines: From Stone Age to Twentieth Century in Sixteen years', The Link, 1 October 1954, p. 58.
26 Peter Read, Interview with Lois O'Donoghue, 28 July 1988, Peter Read Collection, National Library of Australia, Oral History Collection (hereafter Read Collection), TRC 2303/18.
27 Cited in Mattingley, Survival In Our Land, p. 215.

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and Geoff O'Donoghue and Stephen Dodd who won AIF honours. The first primary school teacher of Aboriginal descent, Amy Levai (nee O'Donoghue), also spent that summer at the Duguids, as did her sister, Lois (now Lowitja) O'Donoghue, who became one of the first trainee nurses of Aboriginal descent in Adelaide, and whose list of civil honours and services to her people has made her one of the highest profile Aboriginal women in the country.  

Barnes, whose own significant accomplishments include becoming the first kindergarten director of Aboriginal descent, and the first woman of Aboriginal descent appointed to the South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Board, has described the successes of these and many other former residents as proof of Colebrook's 'tremendous achievement'.

Colebrook was not like other institutions for Aboriginal children. It would be difficult to imagine former residents of the now infamous Cootamundra Girls Home, or Kinchela Boys Home in New South Wales, banding together to buy back these properties, yet this is precisely what a group of former Colebrook residents—or 'Colebrookites' as they sometimes refer to themselves—did in the late 1970s. With assistance from the Aboriginal Development Committee, Nancy Barnes, Lois O'Donoghue, Faith Thomas (nee Coulthard) and others bought their childhood home on behalf of their 'Colebrook family'. With several permanent residences and a caravan park for campers, the property in Quorn is now a holiday home for Colebrook 'family members'.

In 1988, Peter Read asked O'Donoghue what she thought the difference between Cootamundra and Colebrook was:

Cootamundra was a government run institution, Colebrook was a church run mission, it had continuity, they still punished the inmates etc, but it wasn't as bad. The matrons had a commitment to doing the best they could. The two matrons were always there.

From 1927, when Colebrook was established, to 1952, the same two female missionaries, Sisters R. Hyde and D. Rutter, ran the Colebrook home. This consistency in staffing distinguished Colebrook from other homes and institutions where superintendents changed regularly, and helped create a 'family' atmosphere. As Thomas put it:

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28 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 82; Mattingley, Survival In Our Land, p. 216.
29 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 123; Mattingley, Survival In Our Land, p. 216. When Duguid looked upon Colebrook's success, he saw proof that Aborigines of mixed-descent 'differ[ed] from white people only in tint of skin'. Duguid, 'Voices From Overseas'.
31 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 135; See also Read, Interview with Lois O'Donoghue.
32 Read, Interview with Lois O'Donoghue.
33 Jane M. Jacobs, Caroline Laurence and Faith Thomas, 'Pearls from the Deep'. Re-evaluating the Early History of Colebrook Home for Aboriginal Children', in Tony Swain and Deborah Bird
'Colebrook started with Sister Hyde and Sister Rutter. They were Colebrook ... [We had] constant love and attention from the two ladies ... [they] pulled us into a family.' Barnes felt the same. With Hyde and Rutter, the place was a 'home with two people who were always there: two parent figures, absolutely committed to the Christian faith'. 'We didn't miss out on anything', Barnes explained: 'Except perhaps our mothers'. But even this loss was partially overcome by the family atmosphere of the home; 'the older girls cared for us, and we were still knit together in a tribal network'. All the children were like 'brothers and sisters in one big family, normal children leading a normal life', according to Barnes; 'We were warm, fed, housed, cared for and loved for ourselves. We were a family'.

After Hyde and Rutter left, the atmosphere at Colebrook changed dramatically. Characterised by frequent changes in staff, superintendents who cared little about their charges, and sexual and physical abuse and neglect, Colebrook became like most other institutions for Aboriginal children: 'hell on earth'. Lest the impression be formed that Colebrook under Hyde and Rutter was a paradise of sorts, it should be realised that while Colebrook may have been less brutal than other homes, the philosophy behind its establishment was the same. Founded on the idea that 'half-caste' children, once 'rescued' from the 'undesirable' influences of their Aboriginal relatives, could be turned into 'civilised Christians' and assimilated into white society, little thought or imagination went into the training of the children. As in other institutions, the girls were trained in domestic service and the boys in farm work. The number of former Colebrook residents who took up professional positions within white society far exceeded everyone's expectations, including Duguid's.

Following their summer holiday at his home, Duguid described the Colebrook girls as 'expert maids, trained to fill any situation', and the boys as having a 'natural love for gardening'. In keeping with his belief that they were 'practically as intelligent as white children', Duguid's hopes for their future in 1936 did not extend beyond such menial occupations. Over the next few years, however, and in line with their performance at school, Duguid amended his estimation of their intelligence. 'Half-caste children from Colebrook ... have frequently topped the state school classes and several have graduated to high school', Duguid exclaimed in 1941, thus 'proving that in intelligence, they differ in no way from the white child'. That their 'brains [had] proved in no way inferior to the white child' was as much a revelation to Duguid as it was to his readers. When it became clear

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Rose (eds.), *Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions*, Australian Association for the Study of Religions, Bedford Park, p. 146.
34 Cited, Mattingley, *Survival In Our Own Land*, p. 216.
37 Jacobs et.al., 'Pearls from the Deep', pp. 146-49.
40 Duguid, 'The Australian Aborigines—(II)', *The Australian Intercollegian*, 1 July 1940, p. 90.
that the Colebrook children wanted more out of life than domestic service and farm work, and that they were capable of more, Duguid was among the first to help them.

**A 'scandal howling for redress'**

Until 1962 when the law governing Aborigines in South Australia was finally changed, 'everyone with any Aboriginal blood, no matter how advanced in culture or training' was legally subject to the control of the *Aborigines Act 1939*. Under this Act—described by Duguid in 1955 as a 'scandal howling for redress'—the only way for Aborigines to obtain 'full citizenship', or the 'status of a white person', was to apply for exemption from the Act. Although provision for the granting of 'immediate and irrevocable' exemptions existed, the Aborigines Protection Board compelled most applicants to accept the conditional terms of the Act, which meant undergoing 'a period of three years trial of character and conduct'. If, at the end of this period, full citizenship was granted, exempted Aborigines were required to carry a card—or 'dog tag'—to prove their legal status. According to Duguid, many Aborigines considered this process 'an indignity and the vast majority ... [refused] to apply believing that citizenship in their own country [was] their birthright and not a matter for declaration by the white race'. Former Colebrook residents figured prominently among the number who were 'working and living in the white community as full citizens without exemption'; as 'citizens in everything but law'. Rather than force them to endure the 'humiliation' of exemption, Duguid wanted the Aborigines Act 'altered so that Aborigines born in our midst, educated in our schools, trained in our callings, [earning] their living amongst us and paying income tax, [would] be citizens by right of birth'. Perhaps more importantly, he believed that this was what Aborigines themselves wanted.

In 1954 Duguid told the annual meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in London that he knew 'the majority of [Aborigines in South Australia] well'. Not that he knew the majority of Aborigines in Adelaide or at Ernabella well, but that he knew the majority of all Aborigines in South Australia. Based on the 1954 Census, police reports and reports of

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44 Duguid, handwritten notes on 'Citizenship', [1961].
47 Duguid, *The Aborigines of Australia*, p. 4
the Aborigines Protection Board, Gale has estimated that at least 5635 Aborigines lived in South Australia at that time. Of these, just under 2000 were Aborigines of full-descent and well over 3500 were Aborigines of mixed-descent. Clearly, Duguid was exaggerating when he said he knew the majority of these people well. Leaving Aborigines of full-descent aside, it is possible that Duguid knew many of the 240 Aborigines of mixed-descent who were believed to live in Adelaide, and at least some of the 800 or more who lived at the government settlements at Point Pearce and Point McLeay, but to say he knew the majority of them well was plainly absurd.

More than exaggeration, more than mere arrogance, Duguid's claims to 'know' Aborigines can be read as a reflection of his desire to know them. Unlike many other white (and black) campaigners who presumed to know, or did not care what Aborigines wanted, Duguid made it his business to find out. He was well known for keeping an 'open house' and for encouraging Aborigines to call on him for help. 'No problem was too insignificant to be heard and receive his personal attention', Nancy Barnes has recalled; 'his door was always open for Aborigines'. Likewise, Gladys Elphick, who grew up at Point Pearce, always felt welcome in Duguid's home. 'We can just walk into his home and there we are', she stated; 'there's no discrimination in his home.' Most of the Aborigines who turned to Duguid for help wanted the same thing—an end to discriminatory laws, attitudes and ideas, and equality with white people—leading Duguid to believe that he knew the majority well.

The reality, however, is that Duguid did not, and could not, know Aborigines any better than they knew themselves. Not all Aborigines wanted the same things, and even those who did were not always in agreement over how to achieve them. To expect otherwise is to expect Aborigines in Adelaide to have behaved differently from any other social or political group. White people disagreed over what was best for Aborigines, and so too did the people they fought over. Some Aborigines of mixed-descent preferred not to identify as Aborigines, some wanted help to assimilate, while others wanted nothing to do with white people. Some were angry and resentful towards white society, others were not. Some Aborigines of mixed-descent applied for and were granted exemptions from the Aborigines Act, while others found the system of exemptions insulting and refused to apply. Of those who refused to apply, some agreed with Duguid that citizenship should be

48 Gale, 'A Study of Assimilation', pp. 36-37.
49 Ibid., p. 59.
50 See Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 36. In this unattributed newspaper clipping [1955], Duguid is described as having kept an 'open house' for Aboriginal people of South and Central Australia.
51 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 143. Personal communication with Nancy Barnes, 15 January 2000.
their birthright, while others, such as Mrs M.E. Williams from Point Pearce, felt that becoming exempted meant losing her 'birthright, of which [she was] proud'.

Duguid tended to respond best to Aborigines (and whites) whose views accorded with his own; very few Aborigines challenged him during the 1950s. George Abdulla, 'a part Aboriginate man belonging to Western Australia', was one who did. At the beginning of 1953, Duguid gave Abdulla a few days work in his garden because he claimed to have no money. Subsequently, Duguid found Abdulla 'making misstatements'. In February 1953, for example, Abdulla was reported in the Advertiser as saying that 'he had seen more degradation among his people living in Adelaide than anywhere else in Australia'. 'Knowing the plight' of Aborigines in Abdulla's home state, Duguid declared himself 'surprised at this utterance'. 'The Aborigines in Adelaide are far better off than almost anywhere', Duguid tersely responded:

they vote, they attend primary and secondary schools, they can marry who they like, they can work where they will and many are members of trade unions. They can own property and they are not restricted in movement.

Abdulla's efforts to form a Native Welfare Council later that year met with strong opposition from Duguid who argued that the SA AAL was already 'doing all the things for Aborigines' that Abdulla claimed for his Council. Duguid warned Abdulla that the SA AAL would suffer if representatives from the Churches and other organisations joined his Council, yet 'none of these things interested him'. Incensed, Duguid wrote to Hasluck, describing Abdulla as 'a shrewd fellow' who had spent time 'with the communists' in Sydney, and possibly in Melbourne. Duguid did not need to label his adversary a communist for Hasluck to get the point, his blunt musings on the source of Abdulla's income did the job: 'I cannot help but wonder where he is getting the money for his activities. He is well dressed and well spoken and very connected'.

Duguid's overt dislike and mistrust of communists will be examined later in the chapter. This notwithstanding, his reaction to Abdulla, as well as his method of dealing

54 Duguid to Hasluck, 3 July 1953, Hasluck Papers, Box 32.
55 Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 19 February 1953, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 32.
56 Minutes of the Aborigines Advancement League of South Australia (hereafter SA AAL Minutes ), 1 July 1953, Papers of the Aborigines Advancement League, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, SRG 250 (hereafter League Papers), Series 3/1.
57 Duguid to Hasluck, 3 July 1953. Hasluck was already familiar with George Abdulla. He advised Duguid to treat him with 'kindly cautiousness', but otherwise not to worry about him, for although Abdulla had 'apparently identified himself with the Aboriginal people', Hasluck doubted whether they would 'regard him as one of themselves'; his surname suggested that he had 'in reality very little Australian Aboriginal blood'. Hasluck to Duguid, 10 July 1953, Hasluck Papers, Box 32. For more information on Abdulla, see George Abdulla in Kevin Gilbert (ed.), Living Black, pp. 205-11. See also entry in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 17, (forthcoming 2007).
with him, supports a former member of the SA AAL, Jean Blackburn's contention that Duguid 'wouldn't really allow another voice but his own to be heard about anything'.

'Duguid was a marvellous man', Blackburn told Peter Read in 1988, but his word 'was also the end'. According to Blackburn, there were two main groups of Aborigines in Adelaide in the 1950s and 1960s; those 'who supported and followed the Duguids' and were patronised by them ... and the ones who resented that and wanted to take affairs into their own hands'. Describing the former group as 'Uncle Toms', a derogatory term meaning black people who were openly servile to whites, Blackburn's sympathy for the latter group was obvious. The Duguids and the SA AAL, she recalled, 'never had the notion that it was a good thing to encourage Aboriginal solidarity in the city, they were assimilationists in a big way'. Having 'invested their lives in helping Aborigines', Blackburn believed that Charles and Phyllis Duguid and other members of the SA AAL were 'sustained by the appreciation and gratitude' they received from the Aborigines who supported them. This shaped their 'own view about themselves', she argued, and led them to regard 'with some hostility' moves by Aborigines to act on their own behalf: 'no matter what they might have thought in their head about its desirability, [they] didn't like Aborigines organising on their own behalf'.

What Charles Duguid disliked was Aborigines like Abdulla who were 'queer[ing] the pitch'; that is, whose public 'rantings' had the potential to interfere with, or spoil, his own sanctioned efforts on behalf of Aborigines. The issue is not whether Duguid opposed Aborigines organising on their own behalf, for in fact he strongly encouraged it, but to which Aborigines, and to which of their causes, he gave his support. The simple answer is that Duguid supported Aborigines who supported assimilation. Yet, as Blackburn's denunciation of such Aborigines attests, there was nothing simple about this arrangement. To Blackburn's 'Uncle Tom' label could be added several others from Aboriginal people themselves; 'stool-pigeons', 'white lovers', 'tame blacks'. Aborigines accused of forgetting, or forgoing, their Aboriginal identity in favour of assimilation were, and still are, called 'coconuts' by other Aborigines, meaning 'dark outside, white inside'. To have supported assimilation in the 1950s and 1960s is not something that most Aborigines would now admit to, or be proud of. Yet many did, and it was these Aborigines that Duguid tried to help through the SA AAL.

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58 Read, Interview with Jean Blackburn, 21 July 1988, Read Collection, TRC 2303/17.
60 Read, Interview with Jean Blackburn.
61 Duguid to Hasluck, 15 September 1953, Hasluck Papers, Box 32.
II. The South Australian Aborigines Advancement League

In May 1946, the Aborigines Protection League (APL), of which Charles Duguid was president, disbanded and donated its funds to the League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women. Founded in 1925 on a platform of support for a Model Aboriginal State, the APL had long since ceased to be an effective lobby group. By 1939, its members 'were rapidly dropping away—death, sickness and old age being the chief causes'. The possibility of amalgamation with the League for Women was discussed in 1940 but, fearing that they would 'lose [their] individuality' as a group of women, the League for Women rejected the idea. The APL's decision to disband removed the question of amalgamation, yet in practice this is what occurred.

In July 1946, the League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women shed its cumbersome title in favour of a new name; the Aborigines Advancement League. It also passed a resolution stating that 'membership should henceforth be open to men and women and [that] efforts should be made to gain Aboriginal members'. Out of the APL's disbandment then, a new League with a new name and new purpose was formed. No longer restricted to helping Aboriginal women, the SA AAL's aim was 'to secure for Aborigines and part-Aborigines an honourable status within the Australian nation by ensuring the economic security and development of the race'. Towards this end, the SA AAL claimed to 'investigate' every report—pertaining to the welfare of the Aborigine—that [was] received'. During its first few years of operation, most of the League's activities were directed towards raising funds for a 'Native Hostel' in Adelaide.

At the end of 1946, three 'educated part-Aborigines' took their concerns 'about what the future held for young Aboriginal people' to Charles Duguid. According to Jeff Barnes, one of the three, Duguid advised them to 'find out what [their] people needed most and then come back to him'. With Alex Taylor, a former Colebrook resident, Barnes surveyed Aborigines in the country areas of South Australia, while the third member of their party, Ivy Mitchell, surveyed Aborigines living in Adelaide. The end result was that 'the majority of the people' wanted a hostel in the city—'a place of their own where they could meet'. Barnes, Taylor and Mitchell presented their findings to Duguid who suggested that they approach the SA AAL for help. In March 1947, the SA AAL agreed to

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64 Minutes of the League for the Protection and Advancement of Aboriginal and Half-Caste Women (hereafter League for Women Minutes), 31 May 1946, League Papers, Series 2/2.
68 SA AAL Minutes, 23 June 1947, League Papers, Series 2/2.
69 SA AAL Minutes, 22 October 1951, League Papers, Series 3/1.
70 Jeff Barnes in Nancy Barnes, Munyi's daughter, pp. 85-86.
back their plan. However, other than creating a 'Hostel Fund' and steadily raising money for it, the SA AAL made little progress towards the establishment of such a facility until Charles Duguid took over as president in October 1951.

In March 1951, M.E. Eaton (the WCTU representative that Phyllis travelled to Alice Springs with in 1938), complained that 'the work of the League [was] too slow'. Rather than a pressure group with a clearly defined objective, League meetings resembled those of a charity organisation, with talk of jumble sales, garden fetes, and afternoon teas dominating each session. Following Eaton's criticism, it was minuted that 'the urgency for some definite plan' for the Native Hostel was being felt, yet no moves towards formulating a plan were made. Perhaps the clearest indication of the SA AAL's tenor at the time Duguid took over lies in its testimonial to the out-going president, Mrs Burnard, who had held the position for six years. Recording the League's 'pleasure' at having been 'associated with such a grand lady', the secretary described Burnard as:

well beloved for her kindly understanding of the native people. She is patient and treats them like children—never losing her confidence that they are really worthwhile.

That such attributes were considered admirable in the president of a League devoted to Aboriginal advancement belies the League's superior attitude towards the people it was supposed to help.

Under Burnard's presidency the SA AAL was white-dominated, patronising and painfully slow; the League had tried to 'make friendly contact with the natives' but 'without much success'. When coupled with Eaton's further complaint 'that some people alive now [would] not live to see the results of [the League's] efforts', it seems that Blackburn may have been right in her criticism of the SA AAL, if not of Duguid. Eaton wanted the League's work to quicken as much for her own benefit as for Aborigines; she wanted to see change happen and reap the rewards of her benevolence. Neither was Duguid selfless in his endeavours. Asked in 1971 what he considered his proudest achievement, Duguid replied: 'that I have lived to see white attitudes come much closer to my viewpoint'. However, it does not necessarily follow that this precluded Duguid's support for Aborigines organising on their own behalf. Following his election as president of the SA

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71 SA AAL Minutes, 16 March 1951, League Papers, Series 3/1.
72 Formulating a 'definite plan' for the hostel seemed less important to most members than raising funds for it. It did not matter, for example, that the League had 'no definite plan' for the hostel in September 1950, because their functions that year had 'been so well supported'. SA AAL Minutes, 6 September 1950, League Papers, Series 3/1.
73 SA AAL Minutes, 22 October 1951, League Papers, Series 3/1.
74 Ibid.
75 SA AAL Minutes, 6 September 1950. At Duguid's suggestion, Jeff Barnes and Ivy Mitchell were appointed vice presidents, but few other Aborigines joined the League at that time.
76 SA AAL Minutes, 16 March 1951.
77 'There's no way round a lie', Advertiser, 26 October 1971, Duguid Papers: 3.
AAL, Mitchell and another Aboriginal member, Mrs Weetra, 'expressed gratitude to Dr Duguid for the help he had given their people'. Duguid received such compliments because he helped Aborigines, it was not why he helped them. More importantly, he received such compliments because he helped Aborigines 'to help themselves'.

Duguid's reaction to hearing Barnes, Taylor and Mitchell's initial proposal for an Aboriginal hostel in 1947 was to describe their endeavours as 'the most heartening sign of development in South Australia' to date. That they had, 'of their own accord ... formulated a policy without any assistance' from white people, left him 'convinced that the time [was] at hand when people of Aboriginal blood in South Australia [would] state the case for their people'. As far as Duguid was concerned, that time 'could not come too soon'. Under his presidency, the SA AAL became a platform for Aborigines to have their voices heard.

The Town Hall Meeting
Lois O'Donoghue has recalled how she and many other former Colebrook residents joined the SA AAL in the early 1950s to fight 'a case for the girls to get into professions, like nursing and teaching and so on, and the fellas to get into apprenticeships':

Dr Duguid was very much part of it, on side, he supported us ... but it was all under the banner of the [SA] AAL really, and we did—the young ones—things like go with delegations and be part of that, speaking on platforms or providing entertainment like a choir for big rallies which was fairly radical in those days ... I think that was really the time that I guess I became involved in the fight for a better, well, acceptance of Aboriginal people. Really things started to happen from there.

O'Donoghue began training as a nurse at a country hospital in Victor Harbour in 1950. When she tried to transfer to the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) to complete her training in 1953, she 'realised how hard it was going to be'. The RAH 'wouldn't accept me', O'Donoghue explained, 'the matron wouldn't accept me. She never once even invited me into her office just to talk'.

Nancy Barnes, then working as Duguid's secretary in his North Terrace surgery, remembers the day in June 1953 when Grace Lester, Muriel Brumbie, and Faith Coulthard, all former Colebrook residents, arrived 'in some agitation, asking to see the

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79 Duguid to J.C. Archer, Administrator of the Northern Territory, 20 February 1957, NAA: Fl, 1955/82073-70.
80 Duguid to Malcolm McIntosh, Minister for Works, 28 April 1947, Papers of Dr Charles Duguid, State Library of South Australia, Mortlock Collection, PRG 387 (hereafter Duguid Papers: 2), Series 2; Duguid, 'The Lot of the Aborigine in Australia', unpublished typescript, [1947].
81 Read, Interview with Lois O'Donoghue.
82 Ibid.
Doctor. Like O'Donoghue, they too had been denied permission to train at the RAH. Despite having the necessary pre-requisite education, the matron had told them 'that it would be much better if they went to Alice Springs and nursed their own people'. Barnes 'shared their indignation and their hurt' with Duguid who flew into a 'wild rage' and immediately set about changing the situation. The timing could not have been better. Since becoming president of the SA AAL, Duguid had twice invited Aboriginal speakers to address League meetings on the problems they faced in the white community, and had been so impressed with the 'excellent' standard of their speeches that he had booked the Adelaide Town Hall for a public meeting to be addressed solely by Aborigines. The nursing issue, along with the need for an Aboriginal hostel, was placed high on the agenda.

'So far as anyone knew', Duguid later explained, 'it was the first time that a Town Hall audience [had been] addressed by Aborigines'. Indeed, the 'idea was so novel that press and radio combined to publicise the meeting', with the result that over 1000 people turned up on the coldest and wettest night of the year, 31 August 1953, to hear what Aborigines had to say. The programme included 'singing, and the playing of instruments by Aborigines of different ages [and] ... a film of the Emabella Mission', but it was the 'speeches by five part-Aborigines [that] proved the hit of the evening', Duguid claimed; 'not one grammatical error and the content, sequence and English could not have been improved'. The first three speakers, George Rankin, Mona Paul and Peter Tilmouth spoke on the topic 'Our Place in the Community', leaving Ivy Mitchell and Jeff Barnes to address the need for an Aboriginal hostel in Adelaide (see Plate 14).

Originally from Point Pearce, Rankin spoke about his experience of coming to Adelaide fifty years earlier, while Tilmouth told how he had come, at the age of ten, from Alice Springs to the St Francis home for Aboriginal boys in Sephamore. A former Colebrook resident, Paul used her speech to appeal to Aboriginal parents to send their children to school beyond the leaving age, for 'it was only by being better educated that Aborigines could fill their proper place in the community'. On the question of an Aboriginal hostel, Barnes and Mitchell told the audience: 'We want to feel we have your support for this project. But most of all, we want your best wishes and when we come to live with you, your neighbourliness'.

83 Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, p. 91.
84 Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, Rigby, Adelaide, 1972, p. 175; SA AAL Annual Report 1953, League Papers, Series 3/1. In April 1952, Duguid invited 'several native speakers', including Mitchell and two residents of the St Francis home for Aboriginal boys, Mark Wilson and Peter Tilmouth, to address the League on the need for an Aboriginal Hostel. In June that year, a discussion was introduced 'by Aboriginal speakers on the place of Aborigines in the community'. SA AAL Minutes, 16 April 1952 and 11 June 1952, League Papers, Series 3/1.
85 Duguid, Doctor and the Aborigines, p. 175.
86 Duguid, 'White Doctor, Chapter 5: Australia should be proud of her 'Abos'', Evening News (Scotland), 31 December 1954, Duguid Papers: 3.
87 Duguid to Hasluck, 15 September 1953, Hasluck Papers, Box 32; Duguid, No Dying Race, Rigby, 1963, pp. 100-01.
88 'Town Hall audience gets shock it won't forget', News, 1 September 1953, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 22; Read, Charles Perkins, p. 55.
'What a contrast to the rantings of [George] Abdulla', Duguid wryly observed in a letter to Hasluck detailing the meeting’s success. Unlike Abdulla, all five participants had spoken 'quietly and with restraint'. In Duguid's view, it was their lack of 'bitterness', their lack of 'resentment' and their 'dignity' that 'captivated the audience' as they told of the 'social disabilities they suffered' as a consequence 'of having been born as Aborigines in Australia'. For Duguid, the 'most memorable of these disabilities' was related by Tilmouth who told how 'he and his part-Aboriginal friends had been refused the right to sit down with white people in the dining car of the north-south railway train'. Certainly this was shocking, but in the opinion of an Adelaide News reporter, it was Tilmouth's declaration that he was proud of both sides of his ancestry that most upset 'the complacency of the white members of the audience'. 'I am proud of my blood—both black and white', Tilmouth announced: 'Through each I have inherited a certain intelligence and I am going to use it'. Paul's disclosure that 'part-Aboriginal girls' were refused permission to train as nurses at the RAH 'because of their colour' also caused a stir, with the result that a few days after the Town Hall meeting, O'Donoghue and the others were invited to start their training.

The Town Hall meeting was a huge success. In addition to remedying the nursing problem, the meeting resulted in 'much heart-searching, many subscriptions for the Hostel Fund, and a very great increase in membership of the [SA] AAL'. More importantly, according to Duguid, the meeting proved that 'part-Aboriginal people needed only the encouragement of those who were interested in them to help them to speak and act for themselves'. At the end of 1953, the League's annual report stressed the importance of its 'native members':

It will be seen from this outline of the years work that our native members have taken a full part in all the activities of the League. *We look forward to the time when the administration will be entirely in their hands.*

Were these just words, as Blackburn implied, or did the white members of the SA AAL really look forward to making themselves redundant?

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89 Duguid to Hasluck, 15 September 1953; Duguid, 'White Doctor, Chapter 5: Australia should be proud of her 'Abos'.
90 Duguid, "White Doctor, Chapter 5: Australia should be proud of her 'Abos'; Duguid, *No Dying Race*, p. 100-01; Duguid, *Doctor and the Aborigines*, p. 176.
91 Duguid, *No Dying Race*, p. 100-01.
92 'Town Hall audience gets shock it won't forget', *News*, 1 September 1953.
93 'Big Crowd at Meeting to Aid Aborigines', [newspaper clipping], Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 22; Mattingley, *Survival In Our Own Land*, p. 121; Read, Interview with Lois O'Donoghue.
94 Duguid to Hasluck, 15 September 1953.
95 Duguid, *Doctor and the Aborigines*, p. 176.
96 SA AAL Annual Report, 1953.
Carried by the momentum of the previous year, the League began making plans for the Native Hostel in 1954 while Duguid was overseas. Upon learning that these plans centred on establishing a hostel for Aboriginal girls, Duguid objected that this was not what the initiators of the scheme, Barnes, Taylor and Mitchell, had wanted. Taylor 'said that in the beginning he and Mr Barnes had thought mainly of a social centre', while Mitchell said that she 'had thought of accommodation for transients and young people working'. Since no-one had thought of a hostel for girls, the SA AAL resolved 'that when the Hostel was established, those groups of native people whose need seemed greatest should be accommodated, and that a clubroom or recreation centre should be associated with it'. In the end, the group whose need seemed greatest was Aboriginal girls.97

Duguid's unsuccessful appeal to the South Australian government for help with funding in 1955 reveals that he, at least, was listening to what the initiators of the hostel scheme said they wanted:

They wish to be a real part of the community with a social centre of their own to which they can invite their white friends as well as their own people. They hope too, if possible, to have a few rooms for young [Aborigines] from the country attending technical and high schools, for young apprentices and for young people working in Adelaide.98

With no help forthcoming from government, it was another year before the SA AAL was in a position to purchase a suitable home for the hostel. At the beginning of 1956, the League bought 'a large private house' in the Adelaide suburb of Millswood which could accommodate up to ten girls. In November that year, the hostel was finally opened.99

Named 'Wiltja', a Pitjantjatjara word for 'home', the hostel was the culmination of nearly ten years work of which the 'outstanding feature', according to Phyllis Duguid, 'was the steady work of the Aboriginal people themselves'.100 From the initial idea, through to fund raising and campaigning, from furnishing and decorating the home through to working there—the first matron, Millie Glen, was a young 'part-Aboriginal' woman, and Aboriginal committee members were integrally involved in the daily running of the hostel—'Aborigines [had] been whole-hearted in their efforts since 1947 to achieve this result', Duguid proudly exclaimed.101 Neither he, nor anyone else, raised any objections to the hostel being for Aboriginal girls. Regardless of its form, Duguid was just thankful that

98 Duguid to Playford, 7 October 1955, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.
100 Phyllis Duguid, 'The History of the League Pt. II', Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter, No. 27, September 1965, p. 3.
the hostel 'was an established fact' so that the SA AAL could 'return to [considering] wider aspects of Aboriginal welfare'.

'Need not race'

Explaining why it is that collaboration such as this between black and white campaigners has been largely ignored by historians, Alison Holland has pointed to the evolution of Aboriginal History as a separate discipline within the academy as a possible cause. Following Bain Attwood, she has argued that this effectively silenced the "dialectical process" involved in relations between Aborigines and non-Aborigines within Australian history. Citing the preference of historians such as Peter Read to write about the 'the more fashionable and acceptable period of the 1960s' when there were 'changing perceptions by blacks and whites of who was to lead the advance', Holland's thesis is that '[a]nalysis of the Aboriginal advancement movement of the 1950s ... has been marginalised because it is seen to be white dominated', and because '[a]dvancement objectives are understood to have been one and the same as assimilation'.

Assuming a contrary position, Holland has argued that the SA AAL's efforts to establish an Aboriginal hostel were, in fact, 'quite at odds with the assimilationist rhetoric of post-war Aboriginal administrations'. For rather than severing community ties—an essential 'precondition' of assimilation, according to Holland—hostels 'would facilitate Aboriginal integration, without destroying Aboriginal community ties. They would provide a means by which Aboriginal people could move into and share in the benefits and privileges of white society, while staying grounded within their own'. However, whereas Holland sees this 'clash' between the advancement aims of the humanitarians and the assimilationist perspective of the governments' as indicative of the gulf that existed between them, I argue that there was no 'clash' because there was no acknowledgment of their different agendas. In the case of the SA AAL and government, it is only in hindsight that such differences emerge.

Duguid and the SA AAL—its Aboriginal members included—believed that their hostel would facilitate assimilation by helping Aboriginal 'girls to become independent members of the community'. So too, it seems, did Hasluck and the Northern Territory administration. Prior to the hostel's official opening, Duguid wrote to Hasluck advising him that the SA AAL would be pleased to accept girls from the Northern Territory, provided that the administration was prepared to pay for them. In reply, Hasluck confirmed that the Commonwealth government would contribute 'up to a maximum of 300

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102 SA AAL Minutes, 16 April 1956.
104 Holland, 'Saving the Aborigines', p. 302.
106 Duguid to Hasluck, 20 November 1956.
pounds a year towards the board, accommodation, clothing and education' of 'part-coloured children from the Northern Territory selected for training ... [in] the Southern States'. Hasluck assured Duguid that he would ask the Administrator to 'consider whether the hostel of the [SA AAL] might come within this scheme'.

Although few records remain, it seems that the outcome was favourable. The SA AAL's newsletter for March 1967 states that of the 71 girls who had been through the hostel, 'a number [had] come from the N.T.', and furthermore, that their boarding fees had been paid 'by the N.T. Administration'.

In 1958, the newly formed Victorian Aborigines Advancement League (VAAL) opened a hostel for Aboriginal girls in the inner Melbourne suburb of Northcote. Two years later, the VAAL contacted Hasluck offering 'use of the hostel to accommodate 2 or 3 girls from the Northern Territory'. According to Diane Barwick, the 'administration refused this offer because, since all the residents and the matron were Aborigines, such placements would "not be consistent with the policy of assimilation"'. The VAAL understood this to mean that 'the Government policy of assimilation required such hostels to have white residents as well'. However, since the SA AAL's hostel, replete with Aboriginal residents and an Aboriginal matron, was acceptable, the difference was altogether more subtle, and more political, than the VAAL appreciated.

Duguid's willingness to have his positive appraisal of the Northern Territory's settlement program used by the administration to 'counter some of the unwarranted criticism' of the VAAL, as mentioned in the previous chapter, provides some insight into tension that existed between the Adelaide and Melbourne based organisations. Both were constituent members of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (FCAA), however their disagreement over fundamental matters of policy was the cause of a major

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107 Hasluck to Duguid, 3 December 1956, NAA: A452/1, 1957/2566.
112 At the beginning of 1957, Pastor Douglas Nicholls, a well known and highly respected Aboriginal man, investigated the health and well-being of Aborigines in the Warburton Ranges whose country was being used by the British government to test atomic weapons. The film Nicholls brought back to Melbourne (Manslaughter) showed Aboriginal children with stick-like limbs, distended stomachs and protruding ribs. These horrifying images, shown in town and country areas of Melbourne, resulted in the formation of the VAAL. With Gordon Bryant and Doris Blackburn, both Labor politicians, as president and vice-president respectively, StanDavey, a former pastor of the Church of Christ as secretary, and Nicholls as field-officer, the VAAL marshalled public sympathy into a powerful political force. By 1959, the VAAL had established fourteen branches in suburban Melbourne and country Victoria with eight more in the planning stage. See Victims or Victors. The Story of the VAAL, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1985, p. 52; Sue Taffe, The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. The politics of inter-racial coalition in Australia, 1958-1973, PhD Thesis, School of Historical Studies, Monash University, 2001, pp. 46-47, 73.
rift. The FCAA's first campaign following its formation in February 1958 was to mount an appeal against the conviction and sentencing of the Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira. According to Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, this campaign 'fell to the VAAL when the new organisation proved unequal to the task'. However, Sue Taffe has argued that it was because the 'politicisation of the Namatjira case was not endorsed by all FCAA affiliates'—namely the SA AAL—that the VAAL 'took responsibility' for it.113

In October 1958, the Melbourne based executive of the FCAA warned affiliates to be ready for an appeal for financial support. Legal advice had already been sought and it had been announced over the radio that there was to be a nation wide appeal for funds for Namatjira's defence. As president of the FCAA, Duguid was outraged. Having been neither consulted nor 'informed beforehand that the Council intended to make these moves', Duguid called an emergency meeting of the SA AAL's executive to consider Namatjira's appeal. After much discussion, the secretary of the SA AAL was instructed to write to the Federal Council expressing the League's opposition to a public appeal for funds.114 According to Taffe, the SA AAL refused to endorse the Federal Council's action 'on the grounds that the Victorians were planning to use the case to point out the weaknesses of the Northern Territory's Welfare Ordinance'.115 Given Duguid's strong support for Hasluck and the Northern Territory administration, this seems possible, even likely, yet this was not the reason the SA AAL gave for opposing the appeal. Believing that Namatjira 'could pay his [own] expenses, either immediately or by raising a loan', the SA AAL declared: 'We must not pauperise [him]—he is receiving a regular royalty' for his paintings.116

The SA AAL may have been more 'conservative' than the VAAL, as Taffe has argued, but it was not afraid to protest against government when it believed that such protest was warranted. In the case of Namatjira, the League believed it was not. The emphasis Taffe has placed on the SA AAL's apparent 'unpreparedness ... to challenge government on this issue' misses the point that in refusing to finance Namatjira's appeal, the League was upholding the classic liberal—and assimilationist—philosophy that any such assistance 'should be based on need, and not on race'.117 In the SA AAL's opinion, Namatjira did not 'need' financial help. Nor did Rupert Max Stuart, an Aboriginal man


115 Taffe, 'The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders', p. 77 (see footnote 18).

116 The SA AAL also argued that 'constituent bodies ought to have been consulted' before the decision to finance Namatjira's defence was made. They wanted a clause inserted 'in the constitution of the [Federal] Council saying that on all matters of major policy, the constituent bodies must be consulted'. SA AAL Minutes, 2 November 1958 and 24 November 1958, League Papers, Series 3/2.

found guilty of the rape and murder of a nine year old white girl in the following year. Though 'troubled' by Stuart's conviction, Duguid and the majority of the SA AAL felt that 'the issue at stake was not the defence of an Aboriginal, but of a man'. Hence, the 'only action taken by [the] League as a League was the sending of telegrams' on the eve of Stuart's execution asking for his sentence to be commuted.

In Duguid's view, Aborigines had to have 'the same rights and responsibilities as the rest of us—why else [was] assimilation preached?' Instead of imposing racial restrictions on Aborigines, the law of the land should operate for all', he argued in 1961. This was as true for citizenship as it was for the 'right to take, or to refuse, alcohol'. Although Duguid personally deplored the drinking of alcohol by 'any human beings no matter what the colour of their skins', and sought to 'disassociate entirely' the conception of citizenship with the right to drink, he argued that what was 'legally right for white people ... should not be legally wrong for Aborigines'. Following the success of the 1967 referendum which 'empowered the Commonwealth to enact 'special laws' for members of 'the Aboriginal race' and provided for Aboriginal people to be counted in the national census', the SA AAL sounded the following warning about the 'dangers inherent in [enacting] special legislation for a minority ethnic group'.

Our League has always maintained that special provision for any group of people should be made on the basis of need, and not on the basis of 'race, colour, or creed'. The very attempt to define "Aborigines" for the purpose of social legislation is full of difficulty and danger. Our League would hope that any legislation enacted exclusively for "Aborigines" would be a temporary measure, designed, like the League itself, only for a period of adjustment.

With this unambiguously assimilationist philosophy at its core, and Duguid and its helm, it is hardly surprising that the Northern Territory administration chose to send Aboriginal girls to the SA AAL's hostel, and not to the VAAL's. 'Our League', Duguid reminded Hasluck in 1959, 'is an old and solid one. Members are all Church people including

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118 See Ken Inglis, The Stuart Case, Black Inc, Melbourne, 2002.

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Salvation Army, and a high proportion are University graduates. The SA AAL was not to be mistakenly classed with the troublesome new-comers.

'Proud of colour'
Although the SA AAL had many Aboriginal members, and although, as Duguid proudly declared in 1953, 'half the executive and its treasurer [were] part-Aborigines', most of its members were white. Moreover, most of its members—Aboriginal and white—understood its advancement objectives as being one and the same as assimilation. In seeking retrospectively to demonstrate the difference between advancement and assimilation, Holland's work 'denies the historic specificity of the 1950s' in much the same way, and for much the same reason, as those works she criticises for overlooking this period in Australia's history. The problem lies with assimilation, or more precisely, with the negative image of assimilation currently held by most historians. A reluctance on the part of historians to acknowledge that many Aborigines supported assimilation lies at heart of this problem, for if Aborigines supported assimilation and assimilation meant extinction, then Aborigines were complicit in their own devastation. However, if Aborigines supported advancement and advancement was different to assimilation, then no such problem, fraught with political recriminations, exists.

Holland's position—that advancement objectives were different to assimilation—is equally as unsatisfactory as Read's. According to Read, Charles Perkins, a former St Francis resident and perhaps the best known and most outspoken advocate for his people, was 'an assimilationist', however he only supported assimilation because 'he knew no other policy and ... had been driven to it by years of enforced education'. Read's attempt to excuse Perkins' support for assimilation not only denies the historical specificity of Aboriginal support for assimilation in general, and Perkins' in particular, it suggests that Aborigines who supported assimilation did not know what they were doing. Subscribing to the view that 'assimilation ultimately [meant] absorption and that [meant] extinction', Read has argued that the implication 'that Aboriginal culture would be an unavoidable casualty of the process' of assimilation went 'unobserved or ignored' in the rush to 'enjoy the good life enjoyed by the Whites'. However, if Aborigines (and others) who supported assimilation did not know, or did not believe, that assimilation meant extinction, why the need to excuse their support? Surely, it is more valuable to ask what they meant by assimilation than dismiss their support as misguided or ill-informed.

Not everyone subscribed to the view that assimilation meant absorption and extinction. Duguid certainly did not, but then nor did he believe that Aborigines of mixed-

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125 Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 8 September 1953.
127 Read, Charles Perkins, p. 69.
128 Ibid., p. 70.

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descent had any Aboriginal culture to lose. In this belief he was not alone. Of 'part-Aborigines' living in Adelaide in the 1940s, the anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt found that:

Most of them, except for newcomers from outlying regions, have little if any knowledge of Aboriginal life and culture, and retain only a few unrelated fragments which have no serious significance except that they represent some association with the past. 129

According to the Berndts, the 'main trend of their behaviour [was] towards assimilation into white society', not through compulsion, but because Aborigines of mixed-descent considered 'that their main hope for the future [lay] in their identification with the white community'. This, the Berndts claimed, was 'one reason for the desire of many women to have children from white fathers'; light-skinned progeny 'enhance[d] their social prestige and hasten[ed] their assimilation'. 130 Writing of the same region more than a decade later, Gale concurred: 'None of the mixed-bloods ... has any tribal affiliation, nor does any remember the culture of his Aboriginal forebears ... Nothing remains of their Aboriginal traditions'. There being no hope of 'integration' or 'acculturation' for 'these remnant people', Gale argued that 'eventual absorption [seemed] the only likely future' for them. 'It is merely a matter of time', she observed, '[a]lready many have been completely absorbed and are no longer recognised as being of Aboriginal admixture'. 131

The main difference between the Berndts and Gale on the one hand and Duguid on the other, was that Duguid did not conflate absorption with assimilation. Against the Berndts' claim 'that many Aboriginal women prefer white babies, and that the absorption policy [was] favoured by spokesmen for the Aborigines themselves', Duguid argued that his 'experience on these points [was] the reverse'. Having learned from Tilmouth that 'the overwhelming majority of the Aborigines, if not all of them, [were] proud of their native blood', Duguid argued that it was 'time white people recognised that ... they much prefer to marry to their own people'. 132 Duguid was not opposed to inter-marriage. Quite the contrary. He saw the 'idea of marriage between Aborigines and non-Aboriginal Australians ... [as the] final test of true social acceptance'. Duguid's point was that 'inter-marriage [was] not an indispensable condition of assimilation'. 133 Promoting the virtues of assimilation as opposed to absorption, Duguid declared:

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130 Ibid.
When to official Government recognition is added complete social acceptance by the community there will be no need for whiter skins; the Aborigines as they are will play their part in the economy of Australia. Many of them are doing that now.  

To meet whites on equal terms, Duguid believed that Aborigines of mixed-descent needed to feel 'proud of [their] colour'. The alternative, borne through decades of contempt on the part of white Australians, was shame. Since shame was not conducive to social equality, let alone 'self-respect', Duguid encouraged Aborigines of mixed-descent to look upon their darker skin with pride. Being 'proud of [one's] colour', or one's 'native blood', was not the same as being Aboriginal in a 'tribal' or 'traditional' sense, however. In Duguid's view, it was like having pride in one's cultural and familial heritage; one's past. Whether Aborigines of mixed-descent had any Aboriginal culture left was not something Duguid spoke about; their colour was a link to their ancestors and a constant reminder, both to themselves and white Australians, that they came from 'Aboriginal stock'.

Ephraim Trip and the Consorting Clause

Duguid and the SA AAL—its Aboriginal members included—did not challenge assimilation. Instead, they challenged discriminatory laws and ideas which threatened to upset the smooth operation of assimilation. In February 1957, Ephraim Trip, a 'part-Aboriginal' man from Victor Harbour, presented Duguid with a definite example of this. According to Trip, he and a white friend, Andrew Tuckwell, had been stopped by a police constable who asked whether Trip was an 'exempted native'. When Trip answered 'no', the constable motioned Tuckwell aside and told him that being in Trip's company 'laid him open to a charge of consorting with a native'. Under section 14 of the Police Offences Act 1953, it was an offence for any white person to 'habitually consort' with 'an Aboriginal native of Australia ... without reasonable excuse'. The penalty was 50 pounds or three months imprisonment. Trip, who drove to work with a white man every day and worked with white men on the Nairne railway, asked whether they were all liable to conviction. The constable answered 'yes'. When the constable learned that Trip could read and write English and that he lived in trust house only two doors down from Tuckwell (rather than in a tent or a 'wurlie'), Trip was told to go home and to forget about the incident. But Trip 'was most unhappy' and brought the matter to Duguid the very next day. In a subsequent letter to Duguid, Trip wrote:

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134 Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 25 August 1955.
135 Ibid.
I hope you will help me to get better treatment for my people who are trying to abide by white laws. We have heard much about the Government policy of assimilation of Aborigines, but to expect this policy to succeed while full citizenship rights are withheld from us is pure nonsense. Who will invite us to their homes while the consorting clause of the Police Act threatens them?

'This from a man who was asked whether he could read and write English!', Duguid noted with contempt. The consorting clause was humiliating, contradictory to assimilation and needed to be changed.

How could Aborigines assimilate—learn to live like whites and with whites—if they were barred from social mixing? Duguid 'habitually consorted' with unexempted Aborigines—was he guilty of an offence? According to government, the clause was there to prevent 'undesirable characters' preying on Aborigines; it was there to protect Aborigines, not to impede 'free and friendly social relationships on a genuine basis'. Any white person who 'habitually consort[ed] with an Aboriginal native of Australia with honest intentions and with a reasonable reputation could not be prosecuted under this Section', Duguid was told. However, such reassurances were meaningless when, as Trip's encounter had shown, it was 'evident that others [had] a different interpretation'.

Duguid brought this flagrant act of 'unwarranted interference with the freedom of a white man and an Aborigine' to the attention of the SA AAL. In July 1957, the SA AAL agreed to sponsor a petition to have this 'unnecessary' clause removed. Drawn up by Donald Dunstan, then Labor shadow attorney-general and a member of the SA AAL, the League's petition stressed the incongruity between the 'declared assimilation policy of the Aborigines Protection Board' and the consorting clause which 'prevent[ed] the achievement' of that aim. By June 1958, over 7000 signatures had been collected. In October that year, the consorting clause was repealed.

Recalling this win for assimilation, Dunstan implied that it was actually the beginning of the end of the assimilation policy in South Australia. Rather than Trip's encounter being the catalyst for this campaign, Dunstan claimed that he had been approached by a group of Aboriginal men led by Charles Perkins who were 'keen ... to end discriminatory legislation against Aborigines'. In his autobiography, Felicia (1981) Dunstan explained: 'I suggested that the first target be the consorting provision in the Police Offences Act and they enthusiastically agreed'. Once this 'obnoxious provision [was] repealed ... we evolved a general policy about Aborigines which we would pursue:

Ibid.

Duguid, 'Assimilation challenged'.

'Law on natives to be changed', Advertiser, 19 July 1958, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 90.

Duguid, 'Assimilation challenged'.

the assimilation policy must be scrapped and the Aborigines' rights to maintain and enhance as much of their culture as they could be recognised and supported'.

It seems that Aborigines (and historians on their behalf), are not the only ones reluctant to be remembered as supporters of assimilation. Dunstan too would prefer to be remembered otherwise. Perkins, who left Australia towards the end of 1957 and did not return until June 1959, probably did not approach Dunstan until 1960. Nor did the reforms worked on by Dunstan and Perkins, along with several other former St Francis residents including John Moriarty and Gordon Briscoe, pose any challenge to assimilation. Quite the contrary. By calling for an end to discriminatory legislation, the implication of their efforts was assimilation. Together they worked to 'abolish the worst excesses' of the South Australian Aborigines Act, such as the much resented system of exemptions, and to collect signatures for a petition which called for legislation to be passed removing all 'legal restrictions specially applicable to Aborigines or persons of Aboriginal descent'.

In June 1961, Perkins organised a meeting at the Croatian Hall in Brompton in support of Dunstan's plan to introduce a private members Bill, which, had it been passed, would have given Aborigines 'full citizenship rights'. Approximately 50 people attended this meeting, at least 16 of whom were Aborigines; Moriarty and Briscoe were there, so was Ray Lister from Colebrook and Millie Glen, the matron of the SA AAL's hostel, along with four Wiltja residents. The Adelaide Advertiser's report of this meeting described Perkins as 'the vice-president' of the SA AAL, a 'misstatement' Duguid duly pointed out and had corrected. Perkins had joined the League in April that year, but he did not hold any office. Nor was Perkins' meeting 'sponsored in any way' by the SA AAL. Casting a different light on Jean Blackburn's later denunciation of Duguid and the SA AAL, it was she who stressed that Perkins 'had acted and spoken very unwisely' in representing himself as vice-president of the League, and it was she who moved that the SA AAL endorse the executive's action of sending letters to the editor of the Advertiser and the News correcting Perkins' misstatements.

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142 Don Dunstan, Felicia, The Macmillan Company, South Melbourne, 1981, p. 70; Read, Interview with Don Dunstan, 28 July 1988, Read Collection, TRC 2303/16.
143 For details of Perkins movements see Charles Perkins, A Bastard Like Me, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1975; Read, Charles Perkins, p. 60.
145 Read says that this meeting was held at the Salvation Army Hall in Kilkenny, however, newspaper reports and Inglis' notes clearly show otherwise. Read, Charles Perkins, p. 66; 'Natives May Hear Bill in Parliament', Advertiser, 17 June 1961; Inglis, handwritten notes entitled 'Charles Perkins', [July 1961], Inglis Papers, Series 2, Item 7.
146 Inglis, handwritten notes entitled 'Charles Perkins', [July 1961].
147 While Perkins had 'the good wishes and support of the League in his campaign for civil rights for his people', the SA AAL wanted it known that he had acted alone in organising the Brompton meeting. See 'Natives May Hear Bill in Parliament', Advertiser, 17 June 1961; honorary
III. 'Out of his depth'?

In 1988, Peter Read conducted a series of interviews with former members of the SA AAL for his biography of Charles Perkins. Among those interviewed, Laurie Bryan, a white member of the League, was the most scathing in his criticism of Duguid. As Bryan 'saw it, [Aborigines] respected Dr Duguid, but they were conscious of his lack of appreciation of living under urban conditions'. The 'other thing ... that was very very wrong', according to Bryan, was the 'assimilation programme'. Later in the interview, Read suggested that:

A number of white people who work with traditional people, like Dr Duguid, find it difficult to work in an urban environment ... Urban people find them a bit patronising. I don't know if that was the case here, the Aboriginal people might have found he talked down to them a bit too much?

Bryan: I'm sure that was the case.148

In response to Blackburn's claim that Duguid was one of the main protagonists against Aborigines organising on their own behalf, Read suggested that:

Perhaps [Duguid] was a bit out of his depth with urban Aborigines?

Blackburn: Yes, I think that's right ... [Duguid] was very respectful of [Aboriginal] culture and wanting to preserve it ... but of course there was not really a proper differentiation made between the needs of Aboriginal groups living in traditional ways and those in the city.149

Read's explicit positioning of Duguid as someone who may have been 'out of his depth' among urban Aborigines, and Bryan and Blackburn's ready agreement, is symptomatic of contemporary anti-assimilationist feelings. Brought to its simplest form, this teleological view holds that because assimilation was 'very wrong', and Duguid supported assimilation, then Duguid was wrong.

The reality was far more complex. As this chapter has shown, most of the Aborigines who came to Duguid for help wanted to assimilate: to become the social, economic, legal and political equals of whites. Were they wrong too? Or, as Blackburn put it, had they lost their 'self-consciousness' as Aborigines as a consequence of being 'really oppressed and very patronised by do-gooding whites' like Duguid?150 Nancy Barnes lived

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149 Read, Interview with Laurie Bryan, 20 July 1988, Read Collection, TRC 2303/14.
150 Read, Interview with Jean Blackburn.
with the Duguid family for over five years, worked as Duguid's receptionist, and credits Duguid with having 'raised [her] people from despair—even extinction—restoring their faith, hope, dignity, pride and the will to live'. She would strongly disagree on both counts; Gladys Elphick might not.151 In the late 1980s, Elphick told Faith Bandler that the FCAA (later the Federal Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) had helped her people 'to wake up to the do-gooders and help [themselves]'.152 Elphick had 'nothing against [Duguid] personally', he was just too old, she believed, to 'change his ways' in line with the changing scene of Aboriginal politics in the 1960s.153

Duguid thought so too, but this did not stop him finding fault with the changes he saw. In October 1961, after ten years as president of the SA AAL, Duguid announced that 'the time had come for a younger man to take his place'. In taking this step, and making his resignation effective immediately, Duguid explained that he was heeding the advice of his physician who had warned him to 'resign from [all] positions that entailed tension and strain'.154 Having no reason to disbelieve their former leader whose 'devotion to the cause of Aboriginal advancement [was] so deep and sincere', the SA AAL honoured Duguid with life membership of the League.155 Duguid told C.J. Millar, acting secretary of the APB, a different story which Millar, a public servant, dutifully passed on the Australian Security Intelligence Office (ASIO). According to Millar, Duguid cited communist infiltration of the SA AAL as the main reason for his resignation as president.156 By the middle of the following year, Duguid had become so 'perturbed at the communistic tendencies displayed by several members' of the League that he gave Millar a list of names to watch. Foremost among these were Jean Blackburn and Judy Inglis, both of whom had been appointed to the executive committee of the SA AAL at the end of 1960. Blackburn, who claimed to have resigned from the Communist Party in 1956, 'still expressed communist views and exhibited similar tactics', according to Duguid, while Inglis 'expressed opinions in line with those of communist supporters'. In May 1962, Duguid informed Millar that he 'expected to see the control of the League taken over by the Communist groups' at the next annual meeting scheduled for October.157

There was no 'communist coup'. Inglis' tragic death in July that year may have had something to do with this, however, it seems more likely that Duguid had exaggerated the situation. Duguid had 'an absolute hatred for [communists]', according to Bryan, so much that he once asked a member of the League to leave 'because she was of a communist

151 Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, p. 143.
153 Elphick in Gilbert, Living Black, pp. 95, 98.
157 Ibid.
In the context of Cold War paranoia and ASIO surveillance of suspected communists, Duguid's comments about the SA AAL had serious repercussions for the League. In July 1963, the South Australian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs stated in the House of Assembly that he had received private and confidential letters from people associated with the SA AAL who were concerned about 'communist influence' in the League. Hasluck responded with a nation-wide 'warning against the activities of people who were attempting to worsen race relations in Australia for political purposes'. Although the SA AAL denied these 'unsubstantiated accusations', and claimed not to know 'who the subversive elements' in their midst were, let alone who had made the 'cowardly' and 'unjust' accusations in the first place, indelible suspicion was cast on the League.

Duguid's determination that 'justice to the Aborigines should not be left to the communists', and his fear that it would be, was intolerable to Bryan who joined the SA AAL towards the end of 1963 and left soon after. 'I couldn't work with it', Bryan told Read—Duguid was 'impossible'. The attitude of SA AAL members towards the people they were supposed to help also worried him. According to Bryan, the SA AAL 'didn't see the need for Aboriginal participation at their meetings'. With Malcolm Cooper, an Aboriginal member of the SA AAL and former St Francis resident, and John Moriarty, Bryan helped to form an 'all Aboriginal' 'breakaway group'—the Aborigines Progress Association (APA)—in 1964. Although few details about this organisation remain, a doctoral student from the Department of Anthropology at Washington University, James Pierson, interviewed most of its members in the late 1960s, and included a full account of the APA's formation and operation in his thesis 'Aboriginality in Adelaide: Urban Resources and Adaptations'.

According to Pierson, most of the Aboriginal members of the SA AAL shifted to the APA soon after its formation. While some were dissatisfied with the SA AAL's approach, in particular with its close relationship to government, 'most Aborigines left it with few ill-feelings', Pierson claimed; the 'time had simply come to try an additional approach'. O'Donoghue told Read a similar story:

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158 Read, Interview with Laurie Bryan. Duguid's intolerance of communism was well known. Before agreeing to speak at a meeting organised by the Council for Aboriginal Rights in Melbourne in 1951, Duguid asked for 'an assurance' that it was 'not run by the Communist Party'. Duguid to Hasluck, 23 May 1951. Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1.

159 'Communism and the League', Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter, No. 19, September 1963, pp. 5-6.

160 Duguid to Hasluck, 23 May 1951. For Bryan's involvement in the SA AAL see Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter, No. 20. December 1963 and No. 22, June 1964.

161 Read, Interview with Laurie Bryan.

I guess we were wanting by this time to be more involved with a more Aboriginal organisation, whereas before we needed the help of an established organisation like the [SA AAL], and they were really committed to helping us, but when the Progress started up, we aligned ourselves with them—rather than with the [SA AAL]. For my part, there was never any bitterness about the [SA AAL].

Unlike the SA AAL, the APA was highly critical of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, of conditions on government settlements and reserves, of the police, and of the public in general. Indeed, they were so critical that some of Pierson's Aboriginal informants believed that white people stopped paying attention when 'particular APA members [made] public criticisms because "they [did] too much of that"'.

Given Bryan's role as co-founder, there was some dispute among Aborigines as to whether the APA was an 'all-Aboriginal' organisation, or simply a vehicle for Bryan to have his opinions voiced by Aborigines. Although membership and voting was restricted to persons of Aboriginal descent, 'meetings were generally open to whites and their ideas', and most of Pierson's Aboriginal informants believed that this was to enable Bryan's continued participation. While few denied that Bryan intended to be helpful, most believed that he was 'too active' in their organisation. Among Aborigines, according to Pierson, Bryan 'achieved the reputation of being a white who [told] Aborigines what they [wanted]'. Casting a different light on Bryan's later criticism of the SA AAL, Pierson believed that Bryan's 'patience [was] ... too short to allow Aborigines to make or institute decisions'; that he was 'immune to criticism from either Aborigines or whites'; and that he was 'often insensitive to the feelings of the people he [was] trying to help'. Not surprisingly, Bryan's close association with the APA caused 'some Aborigines to be suspicious and critical of any action the organisation [took]'.

Bryan's 'way didn't suit' Gladys Elphick who recalled a particularly heated incident between Bryan and herself during a conversation with Kevin Gilbert in the late 1970s:
[Bryan] wanted to send a letter to Dr Duguid protesting against Dr Duguid over some triflin' little things and I said, "Listen here Laurie ... You leave Dr Duguid out of this." I said, "He's been a good man," I said, "I got all the respect in the world for him and Mrs Duguid, more so because he's travelled amongst our people when they needed help and they were sick many years ago." I said, "He's getting on, now, and I don't think he should be drawn into anything like this." I said, "After all, you're not here to pick people that tried in the years past to help Aboriginals. You here to try to help the Aboriginals of today, what you're mixing with."\(^{169}\)

Particularly since discrediting Duguid seems to have been part of Bryan's agenda, his later comments should be read with caution. Elphick, who considered herself 'a bit of a stirrer', was asked to leave the APA soon after this incident.\(^{170}\) In 1966, she and several other Aboriginal women combined to form their own 'all Aboriginal' organisation, the Council of Aboriginal Women of South Australia (CAWSA). Described by Elphick as an organisation formed 'by rejects and a breakaway group of Aboriginal women from another group run mainly by white people', the CAWSA's antagonism towards the APA, and Bryan in particular, was far greater, it seems, than either organisation's antipathy towards the SA AAL.\(^{171}\)

As suggested by its name, the CAWSA restricted its membership to Aboriginal women. Most of its work, according to Pierson, was of a 'community service', rather than political nature. The CAWSA provided advice to individual Aboriginal families about their entitlements, and provided clothing, household items and small cash subsidies for food to Aboriginal families in need. They held weekly sewing, reading and art classes, and organised dances and other social events for Aboriginals.\(^{172}\) The CAWSA also tried 'to educate the white people' and 'improve the image of the Aboriginal in the eyes of the white community' by showing 'them what Aborigines could do'.\(^{173}\) Unlike the APA, the CAWSA worked closely with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and received substantial funding and support. The CAWSA had a permanent office, supplied by the Department, and a paid staff of three; an Aboriginal field-officer, a white social worker and a white receptionist. That the CAWSA not only employed white people, but took advice from them about Aborigines, was the cause of much critical concern among APA members. According to Pierson, the APA's president, Malcolm Cooper, 'repeatedly [criticised the] CAWSA for not merely encouraging, but paying a white to "do things for Aborigines". However, since the CAWSA believed that Cooper was 'strongly influenced

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169 Elphick in Gilbert (ed.), *Living Black*, p. 95.
171 Pierson, 'Aboriginality in Adelaide', p. 335.
by whites in most of his statements and actions', the women tended to regard such criticisms with amusement. 'Of course [the white social worker] tells us what to do', a CAWSA member told Pierson, 'that's what we pay him for'.

Personalities and other conflicts aside, the CAWSA, the APA and the SA AAL were all working towards the same basic goal; equality with white people for Aborigines. In a paper entitled 'The Situation As I See It', delivered at a conference on the future prospects of Aborigines in South Australia in 1969, Moriarty, then vice-president and treasurer of the APA, said:

do not get us wrong, we want to be part of your society, we want a share of the affluence that is all around us, we want big houses and we want motor cars ... We would like to mix with the general community ... We feel we can contribute a lot socially and culturally, and given half a chance can add to the gross national product ... We want to enjoy your affluence with you and, of course, contribute to it.

The problem, as Moriarty saw it, was that Aborigines had not been given a chance to 'integrate' into white society. Aborigines needed better housing, better employment prospects and, most of all, a completely new education system that was geared to the needs of Aboriginal people. '[W]e must ... start working from the Aborigine's point of view and present level', Moriarty argued. 'Concessions must be made on the way to the top, with the ultimate aim of reaching the same level as the Europeans'. To have 'top men in the same proportions as Europeans: professors, lawyers, doctors' was Moriarty's goal. To this end, policies of 'separate or segregated development ... always [had] been ... and always [would] be bad', according to him, for they 'produced only second rate citizens'. Aborigines wanted to be 'a part of Australia', Moriarty assured his audience, but rather than 'White Australia', it was 'Brown Australia' they longed for.

Many of the Aborigines Pierson spoke to disliked Moriarty's 'outspoken nature'. They resented that fact that Moriarty, who grew up at St Francis and completed a trade apprenticeship before attending university, was better educated and had had more opportunities than most Aborigines. CAWSA members disliked what they saw as Moriarty's 'better than us' attitude, and the way 'he flaunt[ed] his education in [their] faces'. That several of Pierson's Aboriginal informants also accused Moriarty of 'acting white' begs the question—was Moriarty 'out of his depth' too? Or was he, as Read has suggested of Peter Tilmouth, Lois O'Donoghue, Charles Perkins and other former

174 Pierson, 'Aboriginality in Adelaide', pp. 305, 345 (original emphasis).
175 John Moriarty, 'The situation as I see it', *The Aborigines of Australia, Their Backgrounds and Future Prospects*, Proceedings of a Conference held at the University of Adelaide, June 1969, Department of Adult Education (No. 19), University of Adelaide, 1969, pp. 82-3.
176 Ibid., pp. 77-82.
'inmates' of St Francis and Colebrook, 'still groping towards a secure identity' as an Aboriginal'\textsuperscript{178} Moriarty has recently stated that he 'always felt strongly Aboriginal, right from when [he] was a kid'. In his autobiography, \textit{Saltwater Fella} (2000), Moriarty explained that for him, Aboriginality 'is that inner fabric you build on to do all other things'.\textsuperscript{179} Now head of his own highly acclaimed company, Balarinji designs, Moriarty still rejects separate development and believes that Aborigines need to be 'integrated' into the 'wider society'. He also believes that Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders and white Australians 'need to come to the negotiating table in a genuine spirit of \textit{co-operation} ... [and] \textit{mutual respect} if reconciliation is to be achieved.\textsuperscript{180}

Having found his 'peace in both camps—the indigenous community and the wider Australian community', Moriarty's call for reconciliation mirrors his own and Duguid's aspirations from several decades prior; they mirror what Duguid called assimilation, yet Moriarty's hatred of the policy that stole him from his mother, his people and his culture is clear. In \textit{Saltwater Fella}, Moriarty vehemently denounced assimilation. It was, he declared, 'an insidious, arrogant policy that amounted to cultural genocide. It was the stuff Hitler was made of, the things he espoused that are seen as abhorrent today'.\textsuperscript{181}

Rather than assimilation, it was integration that Moriarty fought for and still supports today. But how different was integration from assimilation? In 1960, Fay Gale described integration as being 'almost synonymous with social assimilation'. Unlike 'genetic assimilation' which meant 'intermarriage' and the 'eventual disappearance' of Aborigines, 'social assimilation' implied that Aborigines could 'live alongside, or within the general community, and enjoy all the benefits of housing, education etc., while still remaining a distinct people'. In other words, Gale believed that integration was to 'social assimilation' what absorption was to 'genetic assimilation'—they were two very different branches of the same (assimilation) tree.\textsuperscript{182} Judy Inglis' notes on the policy of assimilation are equally revealing: 'What is it? How can it be worked? What does it mean in practical terms?' she asked herself in the early 1960s. Does assimilation mean 'miscegenation and ultimate disappearance of [Aborigines]? Inglis wondered.\textsuperscript{183} What about 'integration'—a policy which is aimed at incorporating dark groups, as groups, into white society'—could it be pursued simultaneously with assimilation, and if so, was it really that different to assimilation?\textsuperscript{184} Following Inglis' death in 1962, Diane Barwick, then a doctoral student in the Department of Anthropology at the Australian National University, described Inglis' work on assimilation as 'the least opinionated' she had seen 'for a long time'. By contrast, a session at the ANZAAS conference that year called 'Should the Aborigines be Assimilated'

\textsuperscript{178} Read, \textit{Charles Perkins}, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{179} Moriarty, \textit{Saltwater Fella}, p. 159.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., pp. 218, 277.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., pp. 6-7.
\textsuperscript{182} Gale, 'A Study of Assimilation', pp. xxi-xxii.
\textsuperscript{183} Inglis, untitled research notes, [1960-61] Inglis Papers, Box 1, Series 2, Item 6.
\textsuperscript{184} Inglis, 'Detribalised Reserves'. p. 11.
was 'lousy', Barwick contended, with little or no attempt made to analyse assimilation as a 'concept'.

Barwick submitted her doctoral thesis, 'A Little More Than Kin: Regional Affiliations and Group Identity Among Aboriginal Migrants in Melbourne' in 1963. In it she stated that 'Assimilation has many meanings'. In the same year, the National Missionary Council (NMC) released a detailed statement clarifying its meaning of assimilation. Although committed to a policy of assimilation, the NMC was concerned that 'the word [was] used loosely with varying meanings', and that 'some Government statements, like that of the Native Welfare Conference of 1961, [had] emphasised the temporary nature of measures for Aboriginal development, as though assimilation meant absorption in relatively short time'. Before revealing the meaning it 'desire[d] to give to the word', the NMC thought it 'important to note' Charles Rowley's observation that,

when the term 'assimilation' was adopted in 1939 to indicate the new policy on Aborigines, it was used by those best informed as a counter to the set of ideas for which the current term was 'absorption', involving the disappearance of the problem through the disappearance of Aboriginal physical and cultural characteristics.

Rejecting the term integration on the grounds that it too had 'several meanings and usages in Australia', the NMC defined assimilation as 'policy founded on mutual respect and the mutual recognition of common rights and responsibilities in a land that is shared by two races'. Furthermore, the Council stressed that assimilation had to be 'a two-way process' with the greater initiative resting with white Australians, and that it had to be a 'voluntary process' requiring 'assent' and the 'provision of alternatives to participation in the mainstream of Australian life'.

In our haste to condemn assimilation, and to distinguish it from the policy that followed, this period of discussion and debate about assimilation's multiple meanings and possibilities has been largely ignored by historians. If social commentators, missionary bodies, academics and other interested observers in the 1960s did not know what assimilation meant, or were concerned enough about its multiple meanings to clarify what they meant by it, why do we presume to know now that assimilation meant extinction? The constant claim of this thesis has been that assimilation, including its various guises of 'uplift', 'progress' and 'advancement', meant different things to different people at different times. Likewise, integration had more than one meaning. In Pierson's view, it made 'little

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185 Barwick to Shirley Andrews, 26 August 1962, Inglis Papers, Box 1, Series 2, Item 9.
188 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
difference' which term was used: 'Arguments about the use of the term "integration" as opposed to the official "assimilation" simply enable[d] the absence of action to be obscured by rhetoric'. Duguid tended to agree. Rather than debate the multiple meanings of these terms, in 1971 Duguid told an interviewer: 'Let's not talk about integration or assimilation. Those are just words. Let us work simply and go together as citizens of the same country'.

'Black Power is madness'

Was Duguid 'out of his depth with urban Aborigines'? In Adelaide, as in other parts of Australia, Aboriginal politics changed dramatically during the 1960s. White people were no longer wanted, and Aborigines of mixed-descent, previously considered a people without culture, were now proclaiming and celebrating their Aboriginal identity. The development of 'all Aboriginal' organisations in Adelaide (and elsewhere) both reflected and accentuated this change, for while the APA and the CAWSA played an important role in the 'increase of pride in Aboriginality' among urban Aborigines, as Pierson has argued, they also grew out of this change. If Duguid was 'out of his depth', then it was here, in his inability or unwillingness to see what 'being Aboriginal' meant to the people he was trying to help, that he was most at sea. More than 'colour', more than 'blood', more than a tenuous connection to a 'traditional' culture long since forgotten, 'Aboriginality' was a living, breathing and changing identity forged through shared experiences of discrimination and rejection by white society, and a desire to 'be Aboriginal'. Duguid had spent so long trying to prove that Aborigines of mixed-descent were the same as white people, only darker, that he could not understand their desire to 'be Aboriginal'; to be different. Nor could he understand their rejection of him and his help.

Aborigines were 'tired of white people making all their decisions', the CAWSA's first newsletter declared; Aborigines 'wanted the freedom and the opportunity to plan their own futures'. Throughout the 1950s, Duguid encouraged Aborigines to do just that, to state their claims in public, to make their voices heard, and to fight for their own rights. At the same time, Duguid encouraged white people to help Aborigines in this endeavour, to believe in them, and to co-operate with them. Duguid was not opposed to Aborigines organising on their behalf, but he was opposed to the 'isolationism' inherent in the idea of

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189 Pierson, 'Aboriginality in Adelaide', p. 37. Likewise, Charles Rowley argued that there was 'little point in semantic arguments, of the kind which have been common over the last few years, and which at the present time have resulted in increased support for 'integration', as a more humane long-range aim than 'assimilation'. Rowley, Outcasts in White Australia, Penguin Books, Sydney, 1972, p. 384.

190 'There's no way round a lie', Advertiser, 26 October 1971.

191 Pierson, 'Aboriginality in Adelaide', p. 305.

192 Throughout the 1950s, Duguid argued that Aborigines of mixed-descent differed 'little from ourselves except in colour'. See Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 5 July 1955; Duguid, 'Voices From Overseas'.

193 Mattingley, Survival In Our Own Land, p. 154.
'all Aboriginal' organisations. 'It is imperative', Duguid argued in *Doctor and the Aborigines*, 'that we all move forward together':

The Aboriginal race has increased considerably since 1939, but the increasing numbers, greater mobility, and better education of the Aborigines have brought their own problems. In the past, the white new-comers refused to co-operate with the Aborigines; today, a clamant minority of part-Aborigines refuses to co-operate with the white people or with the rest of their own race. There is increasing talk of "Black Power", and propaganda couched in the language used by some Negroes of the United States. Such isolationism will benefit neither the Aborigines as a race nor Australia as a nation.  

Still believing that 'a change of heart' on the part of white Australians was the key to Aboriginal advancement, Duguid rejected 'black power' and all the anger and divisiveness that went along with it. The 'dominant, dictatorial, half-baked part-[Aborigines]' who were making all the noise and causing all the trouble—who were ostracising white Australians and 'hitting below the belt'—would only end up doing themselves, their people and their cause a disservice, Duguid argued; 'Black power is madness. Neither black nor white should dictate to each other'.

In Duguid's view, Nancy Barnes and other Aborigines of mixed-descent who, like her, were quietly making a place for themselves and their people in the white community epitomised the way forward. After leaving Duguid's home and his employ in 1955, Barnes became a 'pioneer for her people', entering a one year intensive training course at the Kindergarten Training College in Adelaide. Following her graduation, Barnes was appointed director of the Salisbury Kindergarten in the northern suburbs of Adelaide. Interviewed in 1958 by the Adelaide *Advertiser*, Barnes explained her 'move towards independence and social status' in the following terms:

Most of my people are afraid to make the effort to come into the community and professional activities ... Their fear is not based on a feeling of inferiority, but on one of futility. I felt that the move had to be made by the individual.

After two years at Salisbury, Barnes took up a position as director of the new Ida Standley preschool in Alice Springs. In 1963 she travelled overseas and worked briefly at the

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195 Ibid., p. 218.
197 'Teacher is Pioneer for her People', *Advertiser*, 8 July 1958, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3, Clipping Book 3, p. 89. See also 'Representations by Dr Duguid, Charles re financial assistance for Brumbie, Miss Nancy to further her Kindergarten Training', NAA: A452/1, 1962/6747.
198 Ibid.
Barnardo Home in Kent, England, before being appointed a Regional Director with the Kindergarten Union of South Australia in 1965. In the same year, Barnes was appointed to the South Australian Government's Aboriginal Affairs Board. Jeff Barnes, one of the initiators of the SA AAL's hostel scheme, was the first person of Aboriginal descent appointed to this Board in 1963; Nancy was the first Aboriginal woman. For Nancy, being on the Board was 'critical' in terms of her 'goal of helping Aboriginal people and creating bridges'. For Jeff, a trained electrician, it meant being able to help other Aborigines to be like him—a good useful member of this community'. In 1968, Jeff and Nancy were married, with a proud Charles Duguid by their side acting as the 'father' of the bride (see Plate 15). 199

Having 'bridged the gap between two or more worlds' during her life, Nancy Barnes attributes her success to '[her] birth and [her] heritage, both Aboriginal and white', to Colebrook—'but for Colebrook, we would not be here like this and have what we have today'—and to 'the man who had a lasting influence on [her] life', Charles Duguid. 200

Born to an Aboriginal mother and a white father in 1927, Barnes was three years old at the time of her 'placement' at Colebrook. Not 'stolen', but 'placed' Barnes firmly stated on the first page of her autobiography, for it was 'only with the permission of their parents ... that children were admitted to Colebrook'. Permission may have been given, but it was not always given willingly, as Duguid's account of the 'rescue' and subsequent 'placement' at Colebrook of three girls who were probably Barnes' sisters in 1937 has shown (see chapter three). 201 The extent to which Barnes' self-image, her image of Colebrook and of Duguid rely on the pretext of 'placement' can be seen in the opening lines of her autobiography: 'We are referred to as the 'The Stolen Generation'. I consider myself 'Saved'. A sufferer of infantile poliomyelitis, Barnes' removal to Colebrook quite possibly prolonged her life, yet this is not what she meant by 'Saved'. 202 Her testimony in Christobel Mattingley's Survival In Our Own Land: 'Aboriginal' experiences in 'South Australia' since 1836, provides a partial answer:

This generation of children, the children of 1920s and 1930s, are still known as 'the lost children'. These children had been sacrificed, yet saved for a purpose—for the sake of the two races, the combination of the two races. Surely there is something significant in that. 203

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199 Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, pp. 106-116, 123.
200 Ibid., pp. 2, 174, 178.
201 Duguid did not name the girls—'aged eight, five and under two'—but he did say that they were the sisters of a girl 'rescued some time ago'. According to Barnes, her sisters—aged seven, five and two—joined her at Colebrook in 1937. See Duguid to Reverend H.C. Matthew, 23 February 1937 (enclosed a short note regarding recent rescues), Duguid Papers: 1, Series 1; Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, p. 38.
202 Barnes, Munyi's Daughter, pp. 1, 6. According to Barnes, she 'survived' poliomyelitis when she lived in the camp with her family; her own 'strong body' made its own cure.
203 Mattingley, Survival In Our Own Land, p. 215. Believing that she was 'placed' at Colebrook, Barnes placed the burden of her removal on her mother, for if it was her mother who gave her to
Not 'stolen' but 'lost', not 'sacrificed' but 'saved', Barnes' deliberate inversion of the highly emotive terms we have come to associate with Aboriginal child removal suggests that for her, these terms are not just a matter of semantics. They enable her positive self-image, while also projecting a positive image of Colebrook, and people like Duguid who helped her achieve the purpose for which she was 'saved'.

The recent controversy (February/March 2001) surrounding Lois O'Donoghue's acknowledgment that she was 'removed rather than stolen' has revealed how dangerous such alternative narratives can be. Misquoted and misrepresented, O'Donoghue's words were used by the Prime Minister, John Howard, to justify his government's refusal to apologise to the 'stolen generations', as if her experience 'somehow weakened the historical argument about and of the stolen generations', Peter Read has argued. Read maintains that 'no one should have been surprised' by O'Donoghue's story, for all that it revealed 'was the diversity of Aboriginal experience'. Personally speaking, I was not surprised, but then I had already read Nancy Barnes' autobiography. Barnes' story did surprise me, and force me to re-evaluate all that I thought I knew about assimilation.

Assimilation was not just about Aboriginal child-removal, it was not just about destroying Aboriginal culture, it was not just about forcibly moving Aboriginal people from place to place until they forgot who they were. For some Aborigines it was about all these things. However, for others like Nancy and Jeff Barnes, it was a regime that offered egalitarian rewards. Nancy and Jeff Barnes are 'thoroughly assimilated' Aborigines; they are both thankful for their 'early Christian education' and the opportunities life has presented them. That they supported assimilation in the 1950s and 1960s and still support it today gives lie to 'the cliche that [all] Aborigines rejected assimilation'. Nancy Barnes' story is her own, her views are not necessarily the views of other Aborigines, nor can her experiences be generalised as the experiences of others. But her story does...
indicate the need for further research into the diversity of Aboriginal experiences of assimilation, not least because of its potential to broaden our understanding of white support for assimilation as well. It was from Nancy Barnes and other 'Colebrookites' that Duguid learned what some Aborigines of mixed-descent could do, and it was from them that he learned what some Aborigines of mixed-descent wanted. Although Duguid, the respectable doctor and self-proclaimed father figure, probably influenced them more than they influenced him, it would go against everything Nancy Barnes has achieved, and everything she stands for, to suggest that she only supported assimilation because Duguid did.
A group of tribal young folk from Ernabella to see the Queen in Adelaide.


Aborigines Advancement League

Town Hall, Adelaide

Monday, 31st August
8 pm

Part-Aborigines will discuss

"Our place in the Community"
and

"Why we need a Hostel"

* MUSICAL ITEMS BY PART-ABORIGINES
— and —

Premiere of

"Men of the Mulga"

(Colour Sound Film of Tribal Aborigines in South Australia's Nor'-West)

Chairman - - Dr. Charles Duguid

Admission: 2/-

PROCEEDS IN AID OF HOSTEL FUNDS

Tickets at Allan's, Rundle Street

Honorary Secretary: MISS FAITH HOLLIDGE, 24 Westall Street, Hyde Park


Source: Sir Paul Hasluck Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 5274, Box 32.
PLATE 15a. Charles Duguid as father of the bride.

PLATE 15b. Charles Duguid and Nancy Barnes (nee Brumbie) on her wedding day, Adelaide, 1968.
IN THE VERY BEGINNING ... THERE WAS DUGUID

Epilogue

IN THE VERY BEGINNING ... THERE WAS DUGUID

On behalf of the Pitjantjatjara people of the Musgrave Ranges, and on behalf of 'all Aboriginal people throughout Australia', Nancy Barnes sought to have a knighthood conferred on Charles Duguid in 1972. She collected memories of Duguid from Aborigines and whites in support of her claim, including the following from Nganyintja on the origins of Ernabella mission:

Dr Duguid came in the very beginning and saw the people and reported back to the authorities and they sent missionaries, and Dr Duguid himself continued to care about us, and was one of us. Dr Duguid saw motherless children, and half-caste children disowned by their white fathers and he constantly spoke on their behalf, and helped them ... He suggested making work available for the Aborigines and because of him, we are where we are today. From Dr Duguid new life came into us in a way that has not happened from any other white person. And he is still helping us, even at his great age he thinks of us and we love him.

There was no knighthood—in Barnes' opinion, Duguid 'had offended too many government and parliamentary figures by his fierce championship of us [Aborigines'] to receive one'. Barnes' efforts were not without effect however, for in the same year another Ernabella resident, Peter Nyaningu, wrote:

But listen—I, and the men and women came together to discuss this. We have decided that Dr Duguid's body should lie here at Ernabella so that Aborigines will always remember that he was one of us and that he faithfully helped us. Listen, we really do wish this. You know we have buried Aborigines here, and we should also keep Dr Duguid here at Ernabella.

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1 Nancy Barnes, 'To whom it may concern', [1972], Charles Duguid Papers, Private Collection, Adelaide, since deposited at the National Library of Australia (hereafter Duguid Papers: 3).
2 Nganyintja, 'To whom it may concern', 10 July 1972, Nancy Barnes Private Collection, Adelaide. This statement can also be found in Christobel Mattingley (ed.), Survival in Our Own Land: 'Aboriginal' experiences in 'South Australia' since 1836, Hodder and Stoughton, Rydalmere, 1992, p. 255. See also Nancy Barnes, Munyi's daughter: A spirited Brumby, Seaview Press, Henley Beach, 2000, p. 79.
3 Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 80.
4 Peter Nyaningu to Nancy Sheppard, 18 July 1972, Nancy Barnes Private Collection, Adelaide. See also Barnes, Munyi's daughter, p. 80; Stewart Cockburn, 'Power of a selfless love', Advertiser, 2 December 1981.
This request, coming from the people of Emabella themselves, was Duguid's 'greatest honour'. Twenty-five years later, following his death in 1986, aged 102, Duguid's remains were buried at the Emabella cemetery.

In June 2001, I visited Duguid's grave at Emabella: a broken slab of concrete encased by spinifex, four lilting poles in place of a fence, and a solitary plastic rose faded white by the sun mark the spot (see Plate 16). A bronze plaque at the head of the grave reads:

CHARLES DUGUID
BORN SCOTLAND 1884
ARRIVED AUSTRALIA 1912
DIED ADELAIDE 1986
IN 1936 HE FOUNDED ERNABELLA FOR THE
PITJANTJATJARA PEOPLE

Pafurufanya altingu kala palumparingu.
Munla ngapartji palunya ngalya - altingu pilunpa ngarintjaku nganampa ngurangka.

He called us and we became his. So we called him here to lie in peace in our land.

The grave, which is also where Phyllis Duguid's ashes were scattered, is located at least ten metres away from the rest of the graves in the Emabella cemetery. It stands completely alone; a stark reminder of Duguid's singularity. At first its neglected appearance and solitary location saddened me. However, as I stood at the foot of Duguid's grave and looked towards the graves of the Aborigines buried there, I realised that its location mirrored the original situation of Aborigines and whites at Emabella mission; a lasting and potent reminder of Duguid's policy of minimal interference with 'tribal life'.

It was Duguid's plan that the missionaries at Emabella should live apart from the Aborigines, in a separate compound at least half-a-mile from the Aboriginal camp on the other side of the creek. Mary Bennett (nee Baird), a former teacher and craft coordinator at Emabella, felt that this policy left the missionaries 'free to be white people' and the Aborigines 'free to live their tribal life'. Together with Emabella's other operating principles—no compulsion in religion or education, the use of the tribal tongue by all white staff, and the teaching of children in Pitjantjatjara—the policy of minimal interference resulted, according to Duguid, 'in the maintenance of Pitjantjatjara culture, together with understanding of our life and ways'.

In February 1980, more than one hundred Aborigines from Emabella and surrounding communities travelled to Adelaide for a land rights demonstration. They

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5 Cockburn, 'Power of a selfless love'; Phyllis Duguid, notes on 'The Emabella burial', [1987], Duguid Papers: 3.
6 Duguid died in December 1986. His burial at Emabella was in January 1987.
7 Bob Innes interview with Mary Bennett (nee Baird), 25 August 1995, Ara Irititja Archive, Item s1507.
8 Duguid to editor, Advertiser, 24 March 1980.
camped at Victoria Park racecourse and Duguid, aged 95, joined them there (see Plate 17). Asked whether he agreed with their quest for land rights, Duguid declared: 'I have been of this opinion for 50 bloody years ... I know these people and I know why they need land rights.' Duguid was extremely 'proud' of the way his 'friends' handled themselves at the demonstration. He was equally 'proud to think that [his] efforts so many years ago [had] given them the chance now to stand up and speak for themselves'. The final draft of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Bill was passed in the South Australian parliament in March 1981. Initiated by Donald Dunstan's Labor government in the late 1970s, the Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act gave the Pitjantjatjara and Yankuntjara people inalienable freehold title to 102,360 square kilometres of land, their land. In November 1981, 1500 people gathered at Itjipiri Creek, nine kilometres north of Ernabella, to witness the handing over of the title. Too old and frail to attend the ceremony himself, Duguid sent a message of congratulation:

When I first visited the Pitjantjatjara lands, nearly fifty years ago, I felt a warm regard for your people and this has grown over the years as I have enjoyed many happy visits to you. I greatly admire the dignified persistence with which the [Pitjantjatjara] Council has maintained its struggle for land rights and I am very content that at last you have won legal recognition of those rights.

Duguid was 'grateful to have lived to see' this 'tremendous thing' come to pass. To him, it represented the final realisation of a long crusade that began with his first trip to the Musgrave Ranges in 1935.

**Pukatja, 2001-04**

Ernabella ceased to be a mission in 1974. Until recently it has been run by an elected council of community members, the Pitjantjatjara Council, and now it is run by the Anangu
Pitjantjatjara (AP) Executive Board.\textsuperscript{16} Today, Ernabella is known as Pukatja. With a population of about 400 people, it is the largest community on the AP Lands.\textsuperscript{17} It has a general store, medical clinic, pre-school, primary and secondary school, adult education and community centre, arts centre, service station and water treatment plant. Pukatja is not an easy place to visit: 1000 kilometres from Adelaide (including 200 kilometres of unsealed roads which become virtually impassable in the wet) and you need a permit to enter the Lands. When I first broached the idea of visiting Pukatja, several people who knew the place and who knew Duguid cautioned me against going. 'There's nowhere to stay', 'the people won't talk to you and, even if they do, you won't learn much', I was told: 'They speak a different language—you'll need an interpreter'.\textsuperscript{18} I was also told that Pukatja was vastly different from the Ernabella that Duguid knew: social problems, health problems, violence and substance abuse were mentioned as reasons against my going.\textsuperscript{19} All my research to that point had been about the past. I hadn't thought very much about what Ernabella/Pukatja was like in the present.

I decided that I needed to make the journey—if only to see the place that Duguid helped to establish and the place where he was buried. I talked to as many people as I could about life on remote Aboriginal communities, about Pukatja and what I might find there. I thought that I was prepared: I was wrong. I travelled to Pukatja with a white woman employed by the Anangu Tertiary Education Program (AnTEP). Her job was to train Aboriginal women as teachers' assistants; mine was to look after her two children during the day. We stayed in a house on the edge of town which had steel bars over unshatterable plastic windows and security doors. Seeing the house made me feel less, rather than more, secure: it made me wonder about what, or whom, I was being protected against. I spent three weeks at Pukatja: not long enough to 'know' the place, but long enough to gain some impressions. The children I was minding attended school in the mornings, leaving me free to explore the community for a few hours each day. Seeing teenagers holding tins of petrol to their faces made me wonder what Duguid would make of Pukatja today. Duguid's last visit to Ernabella was in 1969. In \textit{Doctor and the Aborigines}, he recorded his 'disappointment' at the state of the Aborigines' camp site: 'There was litter everywhere, too many dogs, and something new—many second-hand motor cars, a few of them broken down hulks'.\textsuperscript{20} Like Duguid, I saw packs of dogs scavenging for food in piles of rubbish and abandoned vehicles in various states of disrepair, but in comparison to Pukatja's other problems, Duguid's complaints seemed trivial; they belonged to a different time and place.

A few months after my visit to Pukatja, the journalist Paul Toohey visited the community—although 'community' was the wrong word, according to him, 'because there

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{16} Anangu is the Pitjantjatjara word for people.
\textsuperscript{17} These lands are sometimes referred to as Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunjtjara (APY) Lands.
\textsuperscript{18} Personal communication with Ron Lester and John Dallwitz, 25 January 2000.
\textsuperscript{19} Personal communication with Bill Edwards, 6 January 2000.
\end{footnotes}
is no sense of community' there. Toohey's article 'Highly inflammable: Petrol Heads' was printed in the *Weekend Australian Magazine* in November 2001. Toohey described Pukatja as 'a shabby desert town of filthy tin houses and office buildings that look more like jail blocks'; a town 'under siege by petrol sniffers; a town in 'deep crisis'. According to Toohey, Pukatja's petrol sniffing problem was 'the most blatant ... ever seen on Aboriginal land anywhere in Australia'. 'Petrol sniffers are in everybody's face, all the time'—they 'control the town and everyone is frightened'. Toohey estimated that there were 60 petrol sniffers at Pukatja. As for the rest of the Aboriginal population,

the majority of who are neither sniffers nor drunks, they have nowhere to hide. They are almost entirely welfare-dependent and find it hard to pack up and leave because their options are not appealing—perhaps another similarly ruined community further along the track, or to live with relatives in overcrowded camps in bigger towns. They have mostly given up hope and sit surrounded by the chaos, half-hoping for someone to airlift in an answer, but doubting it will arrive.

Searching for solutions, Toohey spoke to Peter Nyaningu (the Aboriginal man who requested that Duguid be buried at Emabella). Now a Pukatja elder and church minister, Nyaningu said: "We want the work to come back ... Horses, cattle, fencing, gardens, welding. We used to be busy". Nyaningu felt that unless something was done to save the community, Pukatja would cease to exist within 10 to 15 years. "There will be nothing here", Nyaningu lamented. 'Nothing', Toohey added, 'except perhaps a petrol bowser for those passing though the empty Lands, standing there in mocking triumph'.

While most respondents felt that Toohey's article was 'balanced' and 'truthful', Makinti Rosalind Minutjukar pointed out that petrol sniffing was 'the end of a great big problem'. A Pukatja resident and community leader, Minutjukur explained that

the start of the problem is no food, no work, no money, no good houses, no clothes, no education, no *waru* (warmth, fire, family hearth, home and happiness)—and because young people can't get any of those things properly, and because their parents can't help them to get those things, then the young people are sad and angry and they sniff.
In Minutjukur’s view, land rights was not enough: ‘we have our land, [but] we have nothing else. We can’t live on it the way we used to do because now we have to live like white people’, she explained. Minutjukur wanted the rest of Australia to know that parents at Pukatja were ‘trying to look after their children ... but inside they have given up hope. Because they can’t do everything by themselves [and] because the problem is so big’.25

In 2002, the South Australian coroner, Wayne Chivell, delivered a damning report on the living conditions on the AP Lands following his inquiry into the deaths of three ‘chronic petrol sniffers’ aged in their twenties. Chivell described petrol sniffing as ‘endemic on the Lands’, and called the situation a ‘disgrace and shame to us all’. Since petrol sniffing could not be divorced from the ‘environment of poverty, hunger, illness, poor education, almost total unemployment, boredom and hopelessness’ that characterised life on the AP Lands, Chivell criticised state and federal governments for taking ‘far too long to act’. As well as recommending the immediate establishment of secure detention, detoxification and rehabilitation facilities, Chivell called for a permanent police presence on the AP Lands—what was needed, he insisted, was ‘prompt, forthright, properly planned, properly funded action’.26

This year, 2004, has witnessed a great increase of political and media interest in the AP Lands, and Pukatja in particular. In March, the South Australian Legislative Council passed a motion of censure against the state government. It condemned its ‘failure to provide a timely and adequate response’ to Chivell’s recommendations; its ‘refusal to accept responsibility for the delays in providing effective health, welfare, police and other services for the people on the Lands’; and its ‘attempts to transfer blame to the AP Executive for the failures of the government to address issues on the AP Lands’.27 This followed a statement by the South Australian Deputy Premier, Kevin Foley, that self-governance on the AP Lands had failed, and his appointment of a white administrator to run the Lands.28 In April 2004, the South Australian Premier, Mike Rann, visited Pukatja and several other communities on the AP Lands accompanied by a large media contingent. Minutjukur and other community leaders expected Rann to meet with them and ‘to talk about their problems and hopes for a way forward’, but the meeting never happened. Instead, Rann walked around the town, spoke to the media, and then left.29 In August, Rann announced the appointment of Lowitja O’Donoghue and the Reverend Tim Costello as ‘special advisers’ on the AP Lands.30 It remains to be seen what effect these high profile

29 ‘Staring at the bottom of the bottle’, Age, 24 April 2004.
30 Robert Lawson, ‘The Tragedy of the Pitjantjatjara Lands’.
IN THE VERY BEGINNING ... THERE WAS DUGUID

advisers—one born on the Lands, one the brother of the current federal treasurer—will have.

There is another side of life at Pukatja: a thriving arts centre and industry, Ernabella Arts Incorporated. Established by the Western Australian campaigner Mary M. Bennett in 1948, the arts centre at Pukatja is thought to be the longest continually running Aboriginal arts centre in Australia. Since the early 1970s, the artists, most of whom are women, have been producing highly acclaimed batiks, screen-prints, baskets, rugs, wood-carvings and paintings (see Plate 18). According to David Kaus of the National Museum of Australia, Ernabella artists have 'created for themselves a well-deserved worldwide reputation for their high quality work'. Ernabella Arts Incorporated is a cultural, social, artistic and economic organisation—a vital community facility that provides essential employment as well as fostering meaningful cross-cultural exchanges. As well as the arts centre, there is a strong women's council on the AP Lands and programs such as the Ara Irititja Archival Project working with the community to preserve important historical records, and AnTEP working with the community to provide employment for the future.

Pukatja is a place of extreme contrasts: a place where talented artists produce internationally acclaimed works and where adolescents sniff petrol to dull the pain of boredom and depression. Regarding the petrol sniffing problem, Terry Plane of the *Adelaide Review* recently suggested that:

> Perhaps what it needs is what the tjilpis [wise men, or elders] have been advocating for years: a bush camp, where the young men are forced to stay and learn traditional lore and law. With no petrol, no grog, no dope. Just food and the collective wisdom of people who care for their future.

A much loved and admired 'tjilpi' himself, Charles Duguid would probably have agreed. On his last visit to Ernabella in 1969, Duguid found 'the revolt of the nyinkas [uninitiated males]' even more 'shocking' than the litter, dogs and cars. Whereas in the past, fathers and uncles had 'trained the boys in their teens before sending them out to fend for themselves ... [in] 1969 the nyinkas had not "gone bush"; they were living in a camp half-a-mile from the main camp'. Duguid 'saw a lad ride to the edge of the main camp and speak at length to a girl of his own age. That was a serious breach of nyinka discipline', he exclaimed. While Duguid understood that 'change of life at the mission was inevitable', he worried what a future devoid of tribal traditions and nyinka discipline would hold.

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32 Kaus, 'Ernabella'.
34 Duguid was called 'tjilpi' meaning 'old man-father' and 'tjaumu' meaning grandfather. See They remembered 'Tjil[p]i', *Advertiser*, 8 April 1974, Duguid Papers: 1, Series 3.
It is impossible to know what Duguid would think of Pukatja today—it is probably unfair to even surmise. And yet the question 'what would Duguid think of this place' was foremost in my mind during my three weeks there. What I really wanted to know was what would Duguid do about Ernabella/Pukatja if he were alive today? As I sat on the hill behind the arts centre, marvelling at the majestic beauty of the landscape—and hoping to remain unnoticed by the petrol sniffers below—my thoughts turned to the epigraph introducing Duguid's *No Dying Race*:

I saw an injustice done and tried to remedy it. I heard a falsehood taught and was compelled to deny it. Nothing else was possible to me. I knew not how little or how much might come of this business, or whether I was fit for it; but here was the lie, full set in front of me, and there was no way round it but only over it.

These words, written over one-hundred-and-fifty years ago by John Ruskin, artist, scientist, poet and philosopher, inspired Duguid to fight, and to keep fighting for justice for Aborigines for more than forty years. As Ann Curthoys has shown, their publicisation by Duguid in the 1960s also inspired others to become involved in the Aboriginal cause.

In today's increasingly uncertain world, words like 'injustice', 'falsehood' and 'lie' have less power to move us than in Duguid's day. We wonder what right we have to judge—from whose perspective is something unjust, false or wrong? Who is to say what is 'right'? Unburdened by such ethical questions, Charles Duguid would fight to save the people and the place he loved. Whether his help (interference) would be appreciated (allowed) today, I'm less certain, but I am positive that he would try.

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36 This passage appears at the very beginning of Duguid, *No Dying Race*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1963. Duguid dedicated the book 'To my wife—Always at one with me in my efforts for recognition of the Aborigines, she many years ago gave me these words of Ruskin'. John Ruskin wrote them in 1842 in response to criticism of J.M.W. Turner, a painter he greatly admired. See Quentin Bell, *Ruskin*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1963, p. 6.

Source: Sitarani Kerin, personal collection.

Source: 'Old friends keep up the struggle', *Advertiser*, 15 February 1980.
PLATE 18a. Detail of hand drawn batik
Artist: Atipalku Intjalki

PLATE 18b. Ernabella Arts Incorporated.

KEY:

I. PRINTED MATERIAL BY CHARLES AND PHYLLIS DUGUID

II. OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES
   (a) Manuscripts
   (b) Oral Sources
   (c) Official Printed (and online) Sources
   (d) Printed Sources (monographs, articles and pamphlets)
   (e) Newspapers, Newsletters and Periodicals

III. SECONDARY SOURCES
   (a) Books
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