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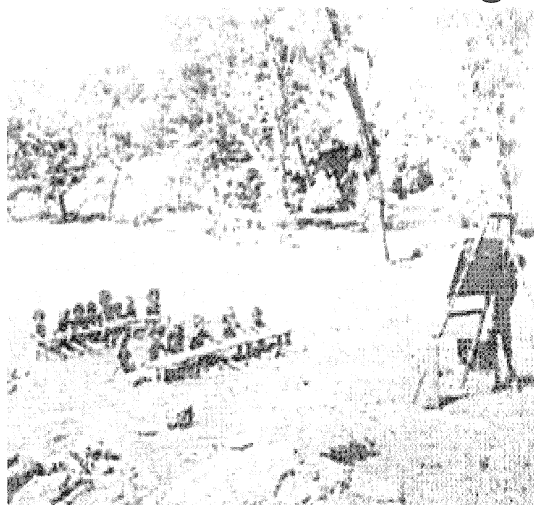
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**CONVERTING SALVATION: Protestant
Missionaries in Central Australia, 1930s-40s**

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CHAPTER ELEVEN: 'Language is always addressed to the other'¹: of Teachers, Tongues and Translations



In 'the last scrutiny' of Love's administration of Ernabella, the executive of the APB, its Secretary, William Penhall, and the Chairman, JB Cleland, after visits to Ernabella in 1945, had provided Love with an official stamp of approval. Penhall belatedly wrote to Matthews in March

1946, assessing the staff at the mission as 'a very good team': 'Mr. Love is a painstaking and capable leader, and appears to have the confidence of his men.'² Ironically, well before Penhall wrote this letter, Love had already advised the Board of Missions that he wished to resign from the Mission on the grounds that he felt that he had lost the confidence of two men with whom he had worked closely at Ernabella. The two men were not named but we may reasonably assume that they were Duguid and the young schoolteacher, Trudinger, apparently being groomed by the Board to succeed Love as superintendent of Ernabella Mission Station.³ To establish this assumption, and, more

¹ Emmanuel Levinas in "On the Usefulness of Insomnia", in Robbins, ed., *Is It Righteous To Be?*, p. 235. The inset photograph is held in the *Ara Irititja* Pitjantjatjara Collection in Adelaide. It shows one of the first school classes in March 1940, held in the Ernabella Creek, in that liminal space between the indigenous camps and the mission compound.

² SA State Records, "GRG 52/1": No 11 (A) of 1945, Penhall to Matthews, 8 Mar 1946.

³ See Duguid, "Duguid: Series 1: correspondence": Matthews to Duguid, 5 Apr 1944. There was a complex coterie of reasons for the disagreements between Love and the 'two men' named as the likely suspects, Duguid and Trudinger, some of which we have already noted. Differences in ideology or discourse are discussed in the text. It is also likely that significant personality conflicts were involved, which are not necessarily relevant to the discursive discords among the missionaries but may provide some background or context to them. Duguid's role in the Adelaide Committee, along with his status as the founder of the Mission, put him in a potentially adversarial position vis-à-vis Love which, given Duguid's combative nature and Love's noted desire to do things his way as superintendent, was bound to lead to some conflict. With Trudinger, it was another complex of reasons. The younger man had arrived at the mission before Love, and had picked up the language with great facility. Duguid, the Board of Missions and many in missionary circles (and outside) saw the work of the school and its teacher as the most important achievement of the Mission. At times, it was almost characterised as its only achievement: see, for example, *ibid.*, Matthews to Duguid, 18 May 1944. From comments made by other missionaries, it is apparent Trudinger was perceived by some as arrogant and opinionated. Walter MacDougall said of him in 1940, when he was acting superintendent: 'It is a great pity Mr Trudinger is so young. He thinks he is the greatest thing that has happened to the Abos. The whole of Ernabella is made up of the school. He is a great chap and doing a fine job but has the unhappy

importantly, to trace the unravelling of once substantially unified discourses and cordial relationships among the Ernabella missionary circle between 1944 and 1946, we need to go back to the earliest days of the Mission, back indeed to that liminal space, the *karu*, where black and white first ‘spoke’ to each other at this Mission. But in what tongue did they speak, and why?

During his 1937 preparatory visits, in his ventures across the Creek, seeking knowledge and a way of speaking to the Other, Love had prepared for subsequent missionaries a rudimentary grammar and vocabulary. Soon after his arrival in February 1940, Trudinger was quickly picking up the language. By April, he was revising and adding to Love’s grammar notes (‘it seems the syntax forms are more complicated than [Love]imagined’⁴). He described to Duguid the first classes in the creek, with ‘desks made out of old kerosene boxes’ and the children ‘practicing letters with charcoal on their tummies’. Then a crucial claim: ‘I

knack of annoying everybody’: Presbyterian Church of Australia, “BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 5”: MacDougall to Matthews, 19 Jun 1940. Add to this an apparent reluctance on Trudinger’s part to accept Love’s leadership fully and it was inevitable that points of conflict with Love emerged and got progressively worse. As often happens in these sorts of situations, these disagreements ranged from the trivial and pedantic to the significant. As indicated, the significant discursive disagreements, over language policy and missiological orientation, are discussed in the text. But there were many others. For example in 1943, Trudinger had apparently asked ‘privately’ for blinds to be supplied for the school: Love’s rather stern and pedantic response was that ‘He has been told that private requests for material for Mission buildings are not in order’: *ibid.*, Folder 4/1943: Love to Matthews, 29 Jan 1943. By 1944, Love noted to Matthews concerning Trudinger: ‘You will see that he is going from strength to strength in his wilful and selfish way’: *ibid.*, Love to Matthews, 31 May 1944. It also appears, on a more serious matter, that Love attempted to advise Trudinger, as had apparently Duguid as well as his own father, to exercise more care and discretion in his dealings with Aboriginal females and that this advice was brushed brusquely aside, which irritated and concerned the older and more experienced missionary: see *ibid.*, Folder 1/1939-46: Matthews to Trudinger, 9 Jun 1944. Subsequent events confirmed Love’s wisdom in this matter. Despite the fraught relationship between the two, they cooperated occasionally, working together on the translation of the Bible, the design of the new school, and there was the odd pleasantry: Love lent the young man some texts on Hebrew and Greek when he went to Melbourne to study for the ministry: *ibid.*, Trudinger to Matthews, 5 Sep 1944. In fact, Love towards the end of his superintendency, at least according to the young teacher, virtually ‘anointed’ Trudinger as his successor. While he recognised that the Board seemed determined that Trudinger become Superintendent (after completing his ordination at Ormond College in Melbourne), Love did more than merely bow to the inevitable and seemed, again at least to Trudinger, actively to characterize the succession as ‘understood’: see *ibid.*, Trudinger to Matthews, 4 Sep 1945, although it is possible this was more the young man’s ambition colouring his interpretation. While it may be understood much of this interests the writer of this thesis, it is mentioned only as background to the more relevant ideological disagreements the two men engaged in during these first crucial and formative years of the mission (with Trudinger acting in some ways as a surrogate for Duguid who was an indirect and invisible, but always voluble presence!).

⁴ Presbyterian Church of Australia, “BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 1/1939-46”: Trudinger to Matthews, 30 Apr 1940.

conduct school in their language.⁵ The policy of teaching in Pitjantjatjara was to be adhered to fiercely by the teacher, and supported by Duguid and the Board. But there were early signs of problems after Love had arrived as superintendent in 1941. The teacher wrote confidentially to the Board advising that as Love had not requested a report on the school he would to send it directly to the Board. He also argued vehemently for closure of the school during a period of his possible absence: the 'imposition' of English, he claimed, would be 'definitely harmful' and create 'tragic confusion'. He argued that the whole basis of the 'gradual introduction' of the native children to 'our culture' was that it was being done with 'the vernacular as the medium'.⁶

Although not yet an ordained minister, Trudinger was also preaching to the 'congregation' on one Sunday evening a month in the vernacular. Love, however, was apparently still preaching in English in July 1942. Trudinger was privately contemptuous of this.⁷ He wrote to Matthews in a thinly veiled criticism of Love: 'we are told the Australian Aborigines is a born linguist and understands more of our language than we think [but] not one of these [children] speak English and few if any could understand an English sentence or sequence which does not involve either actions making its meaning clear or words which the native has borrowed from us.'⁸ Love's response to this was that the children would not speak English if they were not taught it, and that a two-language policy was a wiser one. English, he thought, was a necessary tool for the Pitjantjatjara.

At least part of the matrix of the language policy divisions on the Ernabella mission site was a difference over the significance of the conversion project. To Love, it was crucial to provide the natives with means by which to ensure their survival in a hostile post-war environment. To Trudinger, from an evangelical and orthodox missionary background, the 'chief aim' was, as he noted to Matthews, for the children 'to know of God and the Saviour and then know Him

⁵ Ibid., Trudinger to Duguid, 5 Apr 1940.

⁶ Ibid., Trudinger to Matthews, 10 Aug 1941.

⁷ See also chapter 8, above.

⁸ Ibid., Trudinger to Mathews, 17 Jul 1942.

for their own.⁹ In a talk reprinted in the mission newsletter in 1943, the school teacher gave an explicitly evangelical justification for the native language policy: 'we aim to make these uncivilized nomadic people as universally literate as possible [so] that when the scriptures are translated and can be circulated amongst them, they will be able to use them to the fullest advantage...[even] on their Walk-Abouts.'¹⁰ Earlier he had expressed the same thought when advising Matthews in March 1943 that there were now about 40 children who could read and write in their own language: 'soon every family can have at least one member who can read and write against the time when the Scriptures are circulated.'¹¹

a special duty to preserve the race from extinction

Yet even the evangelical missionary at Ernabella was also ally imbued with the Levinasian politics of hospitality:

we simply must find a way by which we can bring these people...Christ's message of life, and at the same time maintain the physical and social and tribal life of the tribe. To us it seems wrong and un-Christlike that missionaries should purport to bring the so-called life more abundant, and be the conscious or unconscious perpetrators of physical death.'¹²

But 'sin' seemed always at the heart of the evangelical discourse: 'the great need is a Holy Spirit conviction of sin', the young teacher perceived. While devoted to the children, he noted that 'there is no consciousness of doing wrong, no sense of falling short of God's glory. No conscience seems to exist with regard to lying and thieving.'¹³ Love rarely if ever wrote privately in these terms, although he might for publication, or in a newsletter to the metropolitan audience. The first sentence of his 1944 statement 'The Policy for Ernabella' read: 'Our Scriptural Commission is to heal the sick and preach the Gospel.'¹⁴ Even here, the priority

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ SA State Records, "GRG 52/1": No. 16 of 1943, Ernabella Newsletter, December 1943 (copy): citing Trudinger.

¹¹ Presbyterian Church of Australia, "BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 1/1939-46": Trudinger to Matthews, 3 Mar 1943.

¹² SA State Records, "GRG 52/1": No. 19 of 1943, Ernabella Newsletter, December 1943 (copy): citing Trudinger.

¹³ Presbyterian Church of Australia, "BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 1/1939-46": handwritten circular by Trudinger to 'Friends' (distributed by 'the editor of one of Adelaide's religious periodicals') dated April 1942.

¹⁴ Ibid., Folder2/1938-45: The Policy of Ernabella (Rev. JRB Love 1944).

is given to the physical over the spiritual salvation. His second sentence is also characteristically non-evangelical: 'To this has been added the special duty of trying to preserve the race from extinction.' It was in the pursuance of this 'special duty' that he saw the importance of English – the language of the dominant and coming culture as he saw it – for the Aborigines.

In September of 1943, at his request, the Board met with Trudinger in Melbourne to discuss language policy. While reassuring Love that the discussions were conducted 'in complete loyalty to yourself and with a recognition constantly expressed that yours was the final authority on the Mission Station', Matthews advised the superintendent that the Board was in 'general agreement' with the native language policy of the schoolteacher.¹⁵ This policy was that 'the people be literate in their own language, until such time as a real need is seen to introduce the systematic teaching of English.' Again, the justification of the policy was that at least one person in each family could read in Pitjantjatjara, pending the translation of the scriptures.¹⁶

¹⁵ The question of 'loyalty' was becoming sensitive. Love had intimated to Matthews in September 1943 that he felt some 'doubt' in his competence emanating from the Board, and associated this with some possible 'lack of loyalty' on the part of some staff who may not have 'relished my taking over command' or 'taking orders'. The particular staff members were unnamed, perhaps because it may have been unnecessary to do so. Matthews had assured Love that the Board retained its fullest confidence in him: 'We asked you to transfer from Kunmunya to Ernabella because of our entire confidence in you ... That confidence remains.' He added, somewhat naively, or even disingenuously, that 'any lack of loyalty on the part of the staff is quite unknown to us and in contacts with them there has never been the slightest evidence of disloyalty.' I use the words 'naively' and 'disingenuously' advisedly as my close reading of the Trudinger correspondence with Matthews and the Board of Missions suggests, at the least, a careful but determined undermining of Love's superintendency: *ibid.*, Folder 4/1943": Matthews to Love, 24 Sep 1943, referring to a letter from Love [n.d. but written between June and August 1943]. It should be noted that Trudinger had asked to meet with the Board 'privately', asking explicitly that 'no other missionaries [be] present', to put his case for the language policy and other matters that were in contention with Love: *ibid.*, Folder 1/1939-46: Trudinger to Matthews, 29 Jul 1943. Was this 'undermining' the superintendent by going behind his back or was it legitimately 'defending' the Duguidian language policy of the Mission? Whichever it was, it was apparently done, as Matthews (naively) observed, with a 'constantly expressed recognition' of loyalty to Love and his authority on the mission site. It must be admitted that this so-called 'loyalty' is not evident, at least in the correspondence. Trudinger continued to express, 'privately' to Matthews, his dissatisfaction with the administration of the mission and what he characterised as the 'autocratic control' exercised by Love over other missionaries on the mission site. While he continued to acknowledge formally his 'fealty' to the superintendent, he made clear both his discontent and that his prior loyalties were due 'to God and then to the natives and their cause': see *ibid.*, Trudinger to Matthews, 1 Mar 1944 and 21 Mar 1944.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Folder 4/1943: Matthews to Love, 25 Sep 1943. The Board also supported Trudinger's requests for a new school; to be allowed more visitors; that the older children who were used as teacher's aides be given exemption from 'housework duties' and notice given (presumably by Love to Trudinger) if these assistants were 'taken off' school duties for manual work, and that he be given 'reasonable time' to study the language. These matters were all ones which had produced some tension between the superintendent and the teacher,

The volume of praise being bestowed upon the school and the teacher by the metropolitan audience was clearly irritating Love at this time. He objected to the claim in an Ernabella newsletter that by teaching native children to write in their own language, the pupils were achieving 'something aboriginals have never done before in any part of Australia'. At Kunmunya, Love asserted to Matthews, 'scholars learned to write in English and Worora.'¹⁷ For his part, the young school teacher privately complained to Matthews that he had become weary of 'reporting' his achievements to Love: 'I'm tired of writing [about] myself on a project of which I am the initiator...[Love's] annual report has much on sheep yards and dog scalps and makes no mention of the translation work (his or mine) or the issuing of a Hymn Book of thirty Pitjantjatjara hymns, and little reference to the school work.' To Trudinger, the fact that 'seventy children could now read and write in their own tongue' was seen by Love as 'not significant' whereas the superintendent found it important to note that their advancement in English was 'disappointing'.¹⁸ The politics of hospitality on the larger 'mission site' were being displaced by the politics of hostility in the staff room.¹⁹

and the teacher had fired off a pre-emptive shot in the battle by taking his grievances directly to a Board which, it must be said, he seems to have assiduously cultivated quite apart from the good impressions generated by his hard work and achievements in the work of the school.

¹⁷ Ibid., Love to Matthews, 5 Oct 1943.

¹⁸ Ibid., Folder 1/1939-46: Trudinger to Matthews, 8 Aug 1944. Love's actual wording of this in the Ernabella Mission Report for the year ending 30 Jun 1944 was: 'I am not satisfied with the progress in the use of English for the native people, but hope for improvement': *ibid.*, Folder 2/1938-45.

¹⁹ We should note that both Love and Trudinger wanted to give Matthews, and through him the Board, the clear impression that their criticisms of each other were shared by others: possibly a natural defence mechanism in these sorts of situations. Trudinger in his letters to the Secretary often spoke in the plural of 'our' difficulties with the autocratic superintendent who does not listen to helpful advice. There is some criticism of Love's handling of his colleagues in the literature: see, for example, the missionary/tradesman Mr S. Brown in 1943 confided to Matthews that the 'fellowship' and 'atmosphere' he had enjoyed on other missions was 'entirely missing' at Ernabella: *ibid.*, Folder 5: Brown to Matthews, 3 Oct 1943. In his turn, Love attempted to offset any impression that Trudinger may have given that it was Love and Love only against the collective of the staff by forwarding to Matthews letters from two of the staff (one of whom was the aforementioned Brown!). I have not seen the letters but their general content may be assumed by Love's action in providing them to the Board. He would not have done so, he writes, '[if you had not] placed me in the position of defendant. It may serve to further resolve any element of doubt you may have had in regard to relations between Trudinger and the rest of the staff, and Trudinger and me...I hope that a kindly conversation may result in a re-adjustment of his attitude, but you, as the Board, had better be prepared for the possibility that he will not re-adjust himself': *ibid.*, Folder 4/1944": Love to Matthews, 31 May 1944. Of course, mission sites were not exempt from the normal vicissitudes of 'office' or 'business' politics, although occasionally one is surprised by the atmosphere of hostility engendered in Christian contact zones, where relationships with the Other in indigenous form are often appreciably more 'hospitable' than those with the Other in missionary colleague form! These problems were not new at Ernabella. Even before Love arrived at the mission, Walter MacDougall, acting superintendent in 1940, advised Matthews that his suggestion of prayer meetings and Bible study for feuding missionaries was not working; they could not agree on what

civilization has come to the people of Ernabella

Love's response to being told, somewhat peremptorily, of the 'policy of the school' was to pen his own version: 'Ernabella: The Policy of the School'.²⁰ It was a powerful defence of his position on language at the mission site. He began by saying that after the war, there would be an inevitable increase in the number of white contacts with Ernabella people: 'civilization has come to the people frequenting Ernabella'. Love put the question of language policy firmly in terms of assisting the Pitjantjatjara 'meet the impact of civilization' and the 'land hunger' after the war:

I fear that we may have to fight hard to retain the use of the Musgrave Ranges for the aborigines. Already jealous murmurs are heard, asking why blacks should have this good land. The aborigines will have to prove that they are fit to retain their own land. If we can help them to prove it we shall do them a service.²¹

Again, we see the characteristic touch: while 'on their side', Love was adamant that indigenous Australians would have to 'earn' their place in the new post-war society, even to keep 'their own land'. Nothing was ever given or taken for free in Love's moral economy. He conceded the value of the vernacular: 'We are all agreed that it is a very valuable thing to teach the children to read and write in their own language; they must have the story of Christ in their own tongue, that they can repeat and love to recapitulate...' He paid tribute to the work of Trudinger in the school. Yet, to survive, the natives needed more:

without English, I cannot see that the school is justified...To me it is depressing to see the children of Ernabella so backward in comparison to the children of our other missions.

Love argued that what was needed was the sort of education that would enable the brightest of the 'bright boys here' to 'stand up and personify the best qualities

form the meetings should take! MacDougall concluded: 'I think the best way for the present is to keep them as far away from each other as possible': *ibid.*, Folder 5: MacDougall to Matthews, 19 Jun 1940.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Folder 2/1944: on the back of a copy of the Ernabella Mission Report for the year ending 30 June 1944 is a typed document headed 'Ernabella. The Policy of the School' and signed by JRB Love. This is the statement I have used for citing purposes although the original statement was sent by Love to Matthews with his letter of 6 Oct 1943 [see *ibid.*, Folder 4/1943]. Matthews responded to the school policy statement in his letter of 25 October 1943: see below.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Folder 2/1938-45: Love: 'The Policy of the School'

of their race, and to prove by their own example that the aborigine has a right to a place in this land?' However, the superintendent indicated that he did not want to 'enforce my views on this so important matter' and promised Trudinger 'every cordial encouragement from me to continue it the way he has been doing in the school.'²²

a miracle on the mission site

It is curious that Love's statement engendered little immediate reaction. His stern judgement of the school and its native language policy - privileged by what may be called the Ernabella missionary mafia, the Board, Duguid and his Adelaide Committee, Trudinger and evangelical 'friends of the mission' - must have cut deeply. Matthews however was as diplomatic as always towards Love, writing that his statement had been 'greatly appreciated' by the Board: all, he said, were agreed on 'the aim of our policy, namely, to enable the natives to meet the impact of our civilization which after the war is bound to be more insistent and difficult.' On the matter of language policy, Matthews asked Love to work with Trudinger on determining the 'balance' in the school between the two languages at issue.²³

Such a 'balance', however, was difficult to achieve. Trudinger continued to express his frustration at Sunday morning prayers and services being in English, with only the evening service conducted in Pitjantjatjara: 'Even when we have language fluency [in the vernacular] it is difficult to express some Gospel truths...but now they are glibly expressed in English...utterly unintelligible to anyone.' Love's rejoinder that 'they understand a lot more than we think they do' infuriated the young teacher: 'it is torture to sit through...I cannot attend another one.'²⁴ He was not alone in his agony. One visitor to the Mission was also mystified by Love's 'obstinate refusal' to conduct morning prayers in Pitjantjatjara: 'How can converts be won if there is no understanding?'²⁵

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., Folder 4/1943: Matthews to Love, 25 Oct 1943.

²⁴ Ibid., Folder 1/1939-1946: Trudinger to Matthews, 1 Mar 1944.

²⁵ Ibid., Wilson to Matthews, 24 Mar 1944. Allan Wilson was a geologist who visited Ernabella on the invitation of his friend, RM Trudinger. He made a number of critical assessments of Love's administration of Ernabella, including Love's apparent failure to 'take the advice and helpful criticisms of staff'. His own

Although he never explained himself, it is probable that Love's preaching in English was a deliberate strategy on his part to conduct the sort of 'education in English' that he thought was lacking in the school curriculum. We know from Albrecht's observations in 1942 that Love was well versed in the language even by then. We also know from the evidence of a visitor in 1943 that Love was explaining Scripture in the native tongue in one-to-one situations with the Pitjantjatjara.²⁶ So it was not from lack of fluency in or knowledge of the local language that Love continued to refuse to use it at service. It is possible that Love may have felt intimidated by Trudinger's much remarked facility with the native language (Matthews wrote of his 'genius for language'²⁷) and at least initially was reluctant to preach in Pitjantjatjara. But I think it more likely that Love, a determined and stubborn man, continued to adopt a tactic that accorded with his strategy of preparing the 'savage' for the impact of modernity, saving him for civilization as well as saving his soul through the translated Word in his own tongue.

The superintendent and the teacher clashed (as well as occasionally cooperating) on translation work. Love was reluctant to give the younger man the time he wanted to devote to translation, insisting that Trudinger also assist in more general mission work 'to do justice to the rest of the staff'.²⁸ This brought the response from the ambitious young evangelical that Love's attitude 'implied' that translation work was 'on a par with the breaking in of horses, or mending gates, or cleaning out the goat yards.' How could this be as important as 'research into the mysteries of the language and its texts and chants for an effectual

criticisms of Love should probably be taken in the context of his friendship with Trudinger, whose attitudes they almost exactly reflect. That is not necessarily to say that those criticisms, or some of them, were not valid, although it is tempting to suggest that when subordinate staff complain that 'helpful advice' is not taken, it is often because it is *their* 'helpful' advice that is rejected, and it is this that hurts. It is not possible of course to establish any certainty on this matter, but it is my suspicion that this was behind some of the criticism of Love during these years, as well as the genuine ideological or discursive fault lines that existed on the mission site.

²⁶ Eric J. Owen, "A Visitor's Diary: Ernabella Patrol 1943", (Melbourne, Presbyterian Church of Australia, Board of Missions, 1943), p. 8.

²⁷ Presbyterian Church of Australia, "BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 1/1939-46": Matthews to SA Education Department, 4 Jun 1943.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Folder 4/1943: Love to Matthews, 6 Oct 1943.

understanding of the people's heart and mind? Could not this matter be made definitely clear [to Love]?', wondered Trudinger to the Board.²⁹ Frustration was clearly building on the mission site. Cooperation on the work of Gospel translation was difficult. Trudinger was privately contemptuous of Love's efforts: 'his 'draft' [of the Gospel of Mark] is a travesty of Pitjantjatjara...in parts unintelligible to natives.'³⁰ While Love was keen to complete the St. Mark translation, Trudinger was sure that it would take longer than Love thought, and it would be preferable to produce something more 'elementary and more immediately useful to the natives' such as a Primer Reader of Bible stories, a small Catechism, and an expanded Hymnal.³¹ Cooperation on the joint translation was clearly difficult. In 1945, Trudinger complained of a 'false impression' given in the Presbyterian Church newspaper *The Messenger* that Love's earlier translation of St. Mark was being 'revised' by Love and Trudinger. The teacher asserted that the result of their joint venture was in fact not 'a mere revision' but 'an entirely new translation':

Mr. Love and I have got on amazingly well in our translation but on the understanding, voiced at the outset, that generally he is the authority on the meaning of the text to be translated, and I have the better knowledge of the language we are translating into.³²

He conceded that both men had been 'complementary' to each other in this work, and that 'one without the other could not have produced a translation worthy of being printed.'³³ In the event, one might say that it was perhaps a miracle of sorts that a translation by Love and Trudinger of the Gospel of Mark into Pitjantjatjara was published in the year of their Lord 1945.³⁴

²⁹ Ibid., Folder 1/1939-46: Trudinger to Matthews, 1 Mar 1944.

³⁰ Ibid., Trudinger to Matthews, 14 Dec 1944.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., Trudinger to Matthews, 7 Jul 1945.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ 'Last week I completed the typescript of St. Mark in Pitjantjatjara, to send to Rev G. Anderson by mail leaving here this week via Finke. Mr Trudinger and I have worked on the revision of this through the year, to get it away by the end of the year. The job is done': Love, "Logbook": 30 Dec 1945. The whole area of the dynamics of the translation project, as well as the representations involved in 'converting' the English Bible (itself translated at least once, and that not from the 'original' texts) from a coloniser's language to a colonised one, is a fascinating one: see Anna Johnston, "The book eaters: textuality, modernity, and the London Missionary Society", *Semeia* (2001): 13-28. Roland Boer notes incidentally in his perceptive examination of early attempts to translate the Bible into Pitjantjatjara that 'Bob Love and Ronald Trudinger seem to have fought bitterly over most of their time together in the 1940s': see Boer, *Last Stop*, pp. 173-179.

the great compromise

The Board of Missions was eventually forced to accommodate the strongly expressed views of its superintendent on language policy. A compromise was reached. While the native language was to retain its priority, the Board was now convinced that 'we must do more to prepare these children for the inevitable conflicts with the white population' and directed that English be taught as a 'secondary' language. The Board also suggested that at the 'tortuous' English services, at least a prayer should be offered 'in the vernacular', and that, pending the translated book or books of the New Testament, that translations of 'familiar Bible stories' be made available for 'the natives'.³⁵

Yet just as this 'great compromise' was constructed, the controversy over the vernacular was revived by an intervention by Duguid towards the end of 1944. Love's comment in the June 1944 Ernabella Report that he was 'not satisfied with the progress in the use of English by the native people' was the apparent trigger for Duguid's reaction.³⁶ Duguid, after all, was the father of the native language policy and it was probably inevitable that he would enter the lists against his superintendent on this issue. It might also be remembered that the underfeeding controversy was brewing at this time so the feisty Duguid was undoubtedly bristling for a fight, although he went about it in a curiously indirect way. He asked the Board of Missions to get answers from Love to four questions he asked.³⁷ Matthews then was given the unenviable task of being the intermediary in this contretemps between the former partners in the imagining and establishment of the mission station. Duguid first asked: 'as the natives at Ernabella have not been taught English, what does Mr Love wish to convey by writing: 'I am not satisfied with the progress in the use of English by the native

³⁵ Presbyterian Church of Australia, "BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 1/1939-46": Matthews to Trudinger, 9 Jun 1944. Trudinger did complain to Matthews a year after the 'great compromise' (my phrase) that little had changed: 'every Sunday morning service...is entirely in English' and a Board directive that more native hymns be made use of had been 'refused' by Love on the ground that (according to the teacher) they did not have the 'dignity' of 'English hymns': *ibid.*, Trudinger to Matthews, 7 Jul 1945.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Folder 2/1938-46: Ernabella Mission Report for Year Ending 30 June 1944.

³⁷ These questions were contained in a letter [Matthews to Love, 25 Sep 1944] that I have not been able to locate but is referred to by Love in his response of 2 Nov 1944 [see next note]. Duguid's uncharacteristic indirectness here may be an indication of the deteriorating relationship between the founder of the mission and his superintendent.

people?’ Love, in response, reiterated his view that ‘knowledge of English is essential for [the native people’s] progress, in meeting the new conditions of life and contacts with white civilization outside the Mission.’³⁸ Again, he reflected on his experience at Kunmunya where he claimed that children learnt English easily and quickly:

Yet, after 3 years here, I found almost no progress in this direction, on the part of the children. The young men and women have had to acquire their English as they worked with the rest of the staff, after leaving school. There is a fault somewhere. The average intelligence of the children seems to be equal to that of the tropical tribes. Where is, or was, the fault? I was not satisfied that the children had been getting the right opportunity to acquire a working knowledge of English.³⁹

Duguid then wanted to know how many children on the mission site could read and write in the native tongue. Love’s response, again, was pointed and powerful:

All the children who attend school are gradually learning to do so. This is excellent. To ask two further questions, ‘What can they read?’ and, ‘To whom can they write?’ is to reveal the fact that the gate of knowledge remains closed to the schoolchildren of Ernabella, does it not? This is not to disparage the valuable work done. It is to point out that the children have a right to more.⁴⁰

The last two questions related to the use of the native language at services: ‘How often is a service conducted wholly in the native tongue?’ to which Love answered, curtly: ‘One Sunday afternoon per month, by Mr. Trudinger.’ And to the query: ‘In what way and in what degree are regular services conducted in the native tongue?’, Love explained:

The remaining Sundays, New Testament lesson and address in the native tongue, by me; singing of one of Mr. Trudinger’s hymns in the native tongue; a reading and psalm in English also. Daily morning prayers: a short prayer in the native tongue, followed by the Lord’s Prayer in English.

Love added, in wry acknowledgement of the difficulties between the superintendent and the teacher: ‘the Lord’s Prayer in the native tongue will be

³⁸ Ibid., Folder 4/1944: Love to Matthews, 2 Nov 1944.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

spoken when Mr. Trudinger and I can arrive at a rendering that will satisfy us both.⁴¹

In a 'review' of five years of school work, RM Trudinger in June of 1945 expressed satisfaction that the 'original policy' to 'introduce the Christian Gospel...as quickly and as thoroughly as possible' without interfering with 'the tribal habit and habitat of life' had been adhered to 'despite considerable opposition'. The teacher directed another pointed reference at his superintendent's attitudes when he listed the achievements of the school over the period: over two hundred attendees, eighty with some literacy in their language, no deaths or serious illnesses: these results were, he claimed defensively, carefully choosing his words, 'far from disappointing'.⁴² He anticipated that by 1947 'every family would have a copy of a Gospel and a member able to read it.' He defended the use of the native tongue as the medium for conversion:

whatever the advisability of English instruction in other realms, the spiritual, being a deep, sacred matter of the inner mind and soul, is only apprehended through the native's habitual thought medium. There is no Divine premium on English.⁴³

To the young evangelical, the primary purpose of the education of 'natives' was to bring forth 'the first fruits of the Gospel teaching here'. It was not 'the making of semi-civilized sophisticates'.⁴⁴ Despite the 'great compromise' of 1944, the battle lines between discursive combatants on the mission site remained drawn.

industrial training or the nomadic life

During 1944, as if it were not enough to have ideological dissension on feeding, rations, payment of wages, and language policies, Love became involved in prickly discussions with Matthews and the Board of Missions regarding appropriate employment for the young people of the mission station. The underfeeding controversy now underway had brought a number of these interrelated issues to the surface. Matthews had put to Love the idea of adding

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See n. 18 above.

⁴³ Ibid., Folder 2/1938-46: Report on the Ernabella Mission School June 1945 (RM Trudinger).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

annexes to the school to train adolescent boys and girls.⁴⁵ Love responded negatively to the idea, on the grounds that this 'industrial training' ought to be kept separate from the school and its work. However, Love took issue with the Secretary on the important question he had raised:

You see the great failure of aboriginal missions to find an occupation that the mission-trained men and women could earn money on the Mission. What industry do you visualize for Ernabella? Please do not think me just an obstructionist. Far from it. I want to do every thing possible to elevate our people here. On the other hand, I believe that de-tribalisation will mean extinction. How far do you wish to go in the way of bringing the young people away from their life as nomad hunters?... shall we try and take these youths away from their tribal discipline, and coax them to live at the mission and be fed by the mission? ⁴⁶

Love conceded that 'it is a difficult problem' to which he had 'given much thought' and he proposed they 'continue the discussion' at a later date. In his reply on behalf of the Board, Mathews said the Board agreed with Love on the question of detribalisation: 'the Board desires Aborigines to be saved and not die out'. But more should be done for adolescents. While the Board agreed that they should retain their nomadic life for as long as possible, important questions had been raised:

if the young are going East and forsaking the nomadic life, and losing their hunting skills, the only people who are concerned to save them, to put something into their life which will meet the unrest or the craving for change or whatever it is which takes them to stations or places east of Ernabella, are the Missionaries at Ernabella. Therefore must not the Mission at Ernabella not try to supply some work- interest or life-interest as means of keeping the young men, particularly, satisfied with the nomadic life and life on Ernabella Mission Station....[But] what if not they are not satisfied with nomadic life? Where do we begin to meet their needs? What are those needs?⁴⁷

The Board wondered whether Ernabella could be more fully developed as a sheep station to provide employment and 'interest' to the young Aborigines, especially the males who, after their period of initiation when they were 'lost' to the Mission,

⁴⁵ 'My own concern is for the adolescents, male and female: there seems so little we can do for them to bridge the area between their own tribal life and the new life': *ibid.*, Folder 4/1944: Matthews to Love, 8 Jun 1944.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Love to Matthews, 31 May 1944.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Matthews to Love, 11 Sep 1944.

were able to return to normal life within the tribe and the Mission? Did they retain their skills in hunting? Could the Mission teach them other things? Matthews explained to Love that the Board and he were simply asking questions: 'Perhaps they are the wrong questions. But they are asked to discover the best policy for Ernabella as a Mission Station and the best means to carry it out.'⁴⁸

Matthews was sufficiently concerned about the problem of 'adolescent employment' and Love's apparent position on the matter to write to Dr. Ronald Trudinger, the teacher's father who conducted a medical patrol of Ernabella in 1944, that 'Love contends that there is no industry we can establish at Ernabella to absorb the young men especially.'⁴⁹ However, Matthews insisted that 'we should arouse the creative faculty in them.' He thought it may be easier to initiate 'work' among the young indigenous females, as 'they are not secluded as the men are' [referring to the male initiation period] and suggested that the mission 'should start some hand-craft work among them.'⁵⁰

the future of Ernabella

The Board wanted to know what Love's 'model' was for the future of Ernabella. To answer the Board, Love penned his 'Policy of Ernabella' in 1944.⁵¹ Prefacing his remarks with the observation we have already noted that the missionary had a 'special duty' to save the race 'from extinction', he put forward a complicated vision that held two seemingly incompatible goals together in what Matthews came to see as a sort of unstable tension. He wished to retain the traditional nomadic life for the native at Ernabella: 'All people at Ernabella are nomadic.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Dr. Trudinger (my grandfather) was a Australian medical missionary of considerable experience in the Sudan and some in Central Australia, assisting on occasion with the 'medical patrols' at Ernabella.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Folder 2/1939-1946: Matthews to Dr. Trudinger, 4 Aug 1944. The suggestion regarding craft-work was in fact adopted, initially from the late 1940s under June Trudinger (Mr. Trudinger's wife from 1948, and my mother), and then with considerable success from 1954 when Winifred Hilliard came to the Mission beginning her long and distinguished service as the art and craft manager/advisor until 1986: see Hilliard, *The People In Between*; see also (compiled by) Ute Eickelkamp, *'don't ask for stories': The Women from Ernabella and Their Art* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1999); and now see David Kaus, *Ernabella batiks in the Hilliard Collection of the National Museum of Australia* (National Museum of Australia Press: Canberra, 2004).

⁵¹ Presbyterian Church of Australia, "BM correspondence: ML MSS 1893/Folder 2/1938-46": The Policy of Ernabella (JRB Love, 1944).

None stay here for a long time. Let them continue to be nomadic.⁵² He wished to continue the feeding regime extant at Ernabella; rations to the needy, food and goods exchanged for scalps, reliance on bush tucker when available, and mission assistance during drought and famine. At the mission and in the hills of the Reserve, they would be protected from the corrosive effects of white civilisation. As regards employment, he did not think that Ernabella would be able to employ permanently more than a comparatively small proportion of the people:

They do not want to be permanently employed. Let them go off to the bush again, and give them opportunities to take their share of the work done for the good of each. My present system is 3 months work, then off bush.⁵³

Love asked, can a nomadic hunter be a Christian? Along with his affirmative answer to this, he cautioned, especially in regard to Matthews's adolescents:

Their years of adolescence are under the charge of their tribal elders rather than of the missionaries. I think we must acquiesce, for some years to come, at least, and never seek to break the authority of their elders: but in due time to win the elders, too, to the way of Christ. I think I could work up enthusiasm and have a large number of men and women baptised soon. And what would be the good of that? This plan is not spectacular...but we may, by restraint and Christian example, gradually guide the tribe upward, gradually to drop some of the coarser features of tribal life, instill a hope of higher living, and not bring the tribe crashing down into destruction and extinction by making them dependents of the Mission, feeding them all in return for a show of conformity to religious teaching.⁵⁴

The other side of Love's vision, balancing the idealism of his 'nomadic' and sheltered future for the Aborigines of the Musgraves, was a tough-minded and realistic view that the indigenes had to develop the means to withstand the potentially fatal impacts of the encroaching European civilization. One means lay in learning English. Another lay in utilizing their land sufficiently in order to 'earn the right' to retain it against what Love knew to be a voracious and ruthless civilization. It was in this context that Love came to believe, after the Board, that the development of a sheep industry was the appropriate economic 'model' for

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

the mission, but always subordinate to while complementing the hunter-gatherer economy of the Aborigines.⁵⁵ Love's 'model' for Ernabella was for the retention of the traditional economy only as far as possible and only for as long as possible. He always conceded that the impact of white civilization was inevitable and that the black man would need to adapt to that impact if he was to survive. In a letter to Matthews just before his departure from Ernabella in 1946, he wrote:

If the people are to survive, they have to be prepared to adapt their lives to the impact of civilization, [and] under the guidance of the Mission, to hold their country for themselves. Failing this, the country is in danger of being alienated, and the native people dispossessed.⁵⁶

a pastorate of productivity

About this time, as Love and Matthews were debating the future prospects of the mission, and as if to proclaim the possibility of Love's vision, shearing was in full swing and the superintendent enthused that 'Ernabella is a hive of activity'. The woolshed was 'the best in the country'; the wool was dirty but plentiful ('it is wonderful what sheep have produced on 2 inches of rain'); all the staff were sharing in the extra work; 'several of our [Aboriginal] men are shearing and shearing well'; after school, the woolshed was invaded by happy schoolboys: 'the work will be their most likely source of civilised living in years to come'. The scene is represented by Love in a letter to Matthews as a pastorate of purposive activity, interrupted only occasionally: 'a kangaroo came hopping by, and all shed hands rushed out to try to catch and kill it.' The whole exercise, as well as being 'our annual revenue producing time' was also 'our most useful training time for our men, who are very proud to be earning some money, to spend at their own choice.'⁵⁷ Over eighty bales were produced at the end of the exercise, and Love declared it a huge success: 'I look forward to the day when we shall not employ any outside labour for this work, but let our native men do it all, as they

⁵⁵ Love eventually advised the Board that Ernabella should carry about 5,000 sheep. He also thought the blocks between Ernabella and the Reserve should be stocked and worked from the mission station, solely for the 'future living of Aborigines', with profits retained within the mission for its improvement. Love encouraged the Board to continue to make every endeavour 'to settle this question of the three blocks – and to have them held in perpetuity for the Aborigines.' He saw the sheep industry as being 'the salvation of the people from an industrial point of view': *ibid.*, Folder 4/1946: Love to Matthews, 14 Feb 1946.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Love to Matthews, 25 Sep 1944.

will in time...[the] men are getting more and more skilled and realizing the value of steady work on a well-paid job.⁵⁸

not the good shepherd but merely a keeper of sheep

Despite the shining optimism of this sunny 'pastorale', storm clouds were gathering for Love. The contradictions and complexities within the discourses on Aborigines that flowed between the metropolitan centres and the isolated mission station and its different missionaries were beginning to take their toll. There had always been problems with staff members. The schoolteacher was not the only one with grievances. Stephen Ward had been at Ernabella from 1939 to 1943. He had been employed to look after the stock. He felt a parental affinity with the people: 'I have a very very soft spot for these people. They recognize that, as children do, and I can do almost what I like with them.' He had felt the powerful influence of Duguid in the first year or two: 'I seemed to be battling against Dr. Duguid so much.'⁵⁹ He confided to Matthews in 1940 that Ernabella had 'really very few troubles' except for the ones 'that have their source in Adelaide'.⁶⁰ Then, in 1941, came Love with his tight, stern administration, with lines of responsibility clearly delineated and closely monitored. It was eventually too much for Ward. In his 1943 resignation letter to the Board, he wrote sadly:

May I say that when first coming here, my chief thought was that I might be able to tell these people the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I find that I cannot do that. I have come to be merely a keeper of sheep, and I have no wish to stay longer.⁶¹

The crow sends the rain

Another who found 'a missionary vision' lacking at the mission was Mr. R. Henderson, who was appointed as a missionary assistant (tradesman) from 1945. His early suggestion of a weekly prayer meeting for the staff was apparently rejected. By 1946, he was pessimistic regarding the prospects for

⁵⁸ Ibid., Love to Matthews, 11 Oct 1944.

⁵⁹ Ibid., Folder 5: Ward to Matthews, 19 Jun 1940.

⁶⁰ Ibid., Ward to Matthews, 24 Mar 1940.

⁶¹ Ibid., Ward to Matthews, 25 Jan 1943. Matthews, in advising Love of Ward's resignation, noted that it was not unexpected given his 'hopes of direct evangelistic work among Aborigines.' Perhaps wanting to make further a point to Love, he added gently: 'Our first concern always is not the sheep, but the Aborigines, but we are thankful to have the sheep': *ibid.*, Folder 4/1943: Matthews to Love, 12 Feb 1943.

christianization of the native: 'the knowledge of God as the One who forgives and finally merits judgement on sin is, I am sorry to say, yet to be learnt. I think we are still at the starting point despite the previous years of labour.' While he acknowledged that 'Mr. Trudinger has done his best to ever maintain his testimony', he feared that 'the conviction of sin' on the part of the native 'is yet future'. As final evidence of indigenous incomprehension: 'Not long ago my house girl who has been here since Mr. Taylor's day told me that the crow sends the rain.'⁶²

Some saw in the brush and spinifex structure that was Ernabella's first 'church' a (bad) sign of the times. One tradesman at the mission called it 'a disgrace to ourselves and an insult to God' and complained to Love, who pointed out that the structure was only temporary. This man also complained to Matthews about the Sunday services being in English: 'Can we be said to be preaching the Gospel...when what is said does not convey one single idea to those present?'⁶³ A moderate-evangelical divide had developed at Ernabella mission. By 1945, the evangelicals were strengthening their forces behind Trudinger. The Board had positioned him as the successor to Love and even Love himself, tired and disillusioned by 1945, seemed so resigned to the fact that he had suggested the school teacher to the Board as 'the man for the position'.⁶⁴ It was looking very like the evangelicals were winning the day at Ernabella.

enforcing loyalty pledges

Matters came to a head during 1945 as the repercussions of the underfeeding controversy continued to reverberate through the Ernabella missionary community. Duguid had not been satisfied at Love's responses to his 'four questions'. The Adelaide Committee, chaired by Duguid, had asked to meet with the Board, and Matthews and two other Board members had flown to Adelaide. Matthews communicated the Committee's concerns to Love. These included matters such as sheep quality, whether numbers at the school were dropping, and whether numbers of scalps had fallen. The most sensitive issue raised was

⁶² Ibid., Folder 5: Henderson to Matthews, 31 May 1946.

⁶³ Ibid., Brown to Matthews, 10 Jan 1944 and 16 Jan 1944.

⁶⁴ Ibid., Matthews to Wright, 3 Dec 1945.

the language policy. Concerns had again been raised about the use of English at services. The Board had even been asked if it was prepared to order the discontinuance of daily services in English. It refused to do so. However, Matthews indicated that the Board had re-affirmed its policy that as the missionaries at Ernabella became more proficient in the native language the daily services should be increasingly in the native language: 'That is how the Board interpreted its discussions with you during your furlough.' Matthews concluded awkwardly that he thought 'the Adelaide Committee wants to be helpful and constructive' and yet 'it is difficult for us all to know how we can be most helpful...' ⁶⁵

Love immediately levelled his weapons at the Duguid-led Committee and accused it of having gone outside its 'proper function of auxiliary to the Board of Missions.' ⁶⁶ He advised Matthews that, on receipt of his letter, he had insisted on a loyalty pledge from his staff at a meeting at Ernabella. Love had suggested at the meeting that if any of his colleagues felt unable to give him their 'loyalty and cooperation', they might seek 'a more congenial field of labour'. The staff had apparently assured Love of their eagerness to co-operate, even, he added pointedly, Mr. RM Trudinger. ⁶⁷ Love then proceeded to answer all the queries put to him, and elaborated, again, on the matter of the use of English at services:

Here I think we come to the chief difference between me and some others. We're back where we were last year when I met the Board...I repeat: The people must have the Gospel in their own tongue. They are getting it. English is indispensable. Without English the school would be futile. I repeat: this is not to decry good work done, but to insist on its inadequacy. ⁶⁸

the burden is passed

Love now fired off a last plea to the Board of Missions: 'Now, brethren, will you decide by whose experience, knowledge and judgement you shall be guided in the

⁶⁵ Ibid., Folder 4/1945: Matthews to Love, 8 Mar 1945.

⁶⁶ Ibid., Love to Matthews, 28 Mar 1945.

⁶⁷ Being an obvious 'suspect', Trudinger apparently had indicated to Love that he had not been present at the crucial meeting of the Adelaide Committee on December 8, and Love noted that 'he has been loyal since receiving the instructions of the Board last year, carrying out the instructions to teach English': *ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

management of Ernabella?⁶⁹ But in fact he had had enough. Soon after penning these words, Love decided to retire from the mission field. He notified Matthews and Duguid (on what he noted characteristically was the 30th Anzac Day) that he would make this term his last. He calculated that he had done 'about 30 years of work for the Aborigines.' His wife had been with him for 23 years. The time had come 'to hand on the burden to another man' and he wished to spend the rest of his life 'working for my own race'. He was giving long notice so 'the work of Ernabella may go on without any break in continuity.'⁷⁰ His work was done. The 'work of Ernabella' would go on, attempting to find the difficult balance Love had been seeking, between protecting the Aborigines from the usurping white world while preparing them for entry into it.

The Board, according to Matthews, heard the decision with 'surprise and shock' and with 'great regrets', and expressed the hope that Love would reconsider his decision.⁷¹ It passed a Resolution to this effect.⁷² Matthews told Love that 'a heavy-hearted group of men' had passed it: 'we knew that you had come to your decision because of two people with whom you have been closely associated in the work at Ernabella.' He also noted that some on the Board wished to 'get rid of' these two if they were 'to cost us our Superintendent' at Ernabella. However, this did not get majority support:

What we all felt about it was that we all disassociated ourselves from those who, in your judgment, regarded you as a failure at Ernabella. We were all emphatic, and indeed some were angry, about such a judgment. We all felt further that these two had no right to direct the work and policy of the Board and resented that they should have such power as to cost us a Superintendent in whom the Board had the utmost confidence.⁷³

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., Love to Matthews 25 Apr 1945.

⁷¹ Ibid., Matthews to Love, 4 Jun 1945. In the curious and cumbersome way in which communications were conducted between these mid-century missionaries, Matthews swiftly follows this response to a defining moment in the life of the Mission with the granting of a wish by Love to change the mission truck from dual back tyres to single back tyres!

⁷² Ibid., Matthews to Love, 30 Jul 1945. The 're-constitution of the Mission Stations under the Board's control' referred to in the Resolution was in fact a strategy partly designed to reduce the interventionist power of the Adelaide Committee, which was now perceived as a major factor in Love's resignation. In his response, Love noted this 'with relief and full agreement': 'Only in this way will you be able to get the work of the Mission carried on': *ibid.*, Love to Matthews, 10 Aug 1945.

⁷³ Ibid., Matthews to Love, 30 Jul 1945.

Again, Matthews passed on the Board's wishes that Love's decision would be reconsidered and withdrawn. Love responded gracefully that he had read the 30 July letter with his wife and found it difficult to answer. He was deeply grateful for the expression of confidence. He acknowledged that 'the immediate cause' of his resignation was his 'inability to win the complete confidence and full co-operation of two men' but that behind it lay a realization that he was tired, the physical demands of the job had become too heavy, and that he and his wife 'have done about as much as we can in this field.' He was loath to leave the Board 'with any unfair burden' but his decision was final.⁷⁴

In the event, Love left Ernabella earlier than he had intended. The Presbyterian Church of South Australia honoured the exemplary missionary with election in 1946 to its highest post of Moderator. This was the position Duguid had held some eleven years earlier and which he had utilized, with Love's support, to push through the establishment of Ernabella Mission against the resistance of Flynn's forces. He bid 'an affectionate farewell' to the Secretary of the Board of Missions, HC Matthews, whom he had known for many years, and who was himself retiring from his post. Love's final words to Matthews catch the man and his discourse:

I hope you have many happy years down by the sea, to watch the ships come and go, carrying future missionaries going out to duty and coming home to their own people for refreshment, and to turn over many happy recollections.⁷⁵

JRB Love had been 'out on duty' and now he was going home 'to his own people'.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid., Love to Matthews, 10 Aug, 1945.

⁷⁵ Ibid., Love to Matthews, 12 Mar 1946.

⁷⁶ JRB Love was not destined to see out the full year of his Moderatorship. He died after a short illness in 1946.