

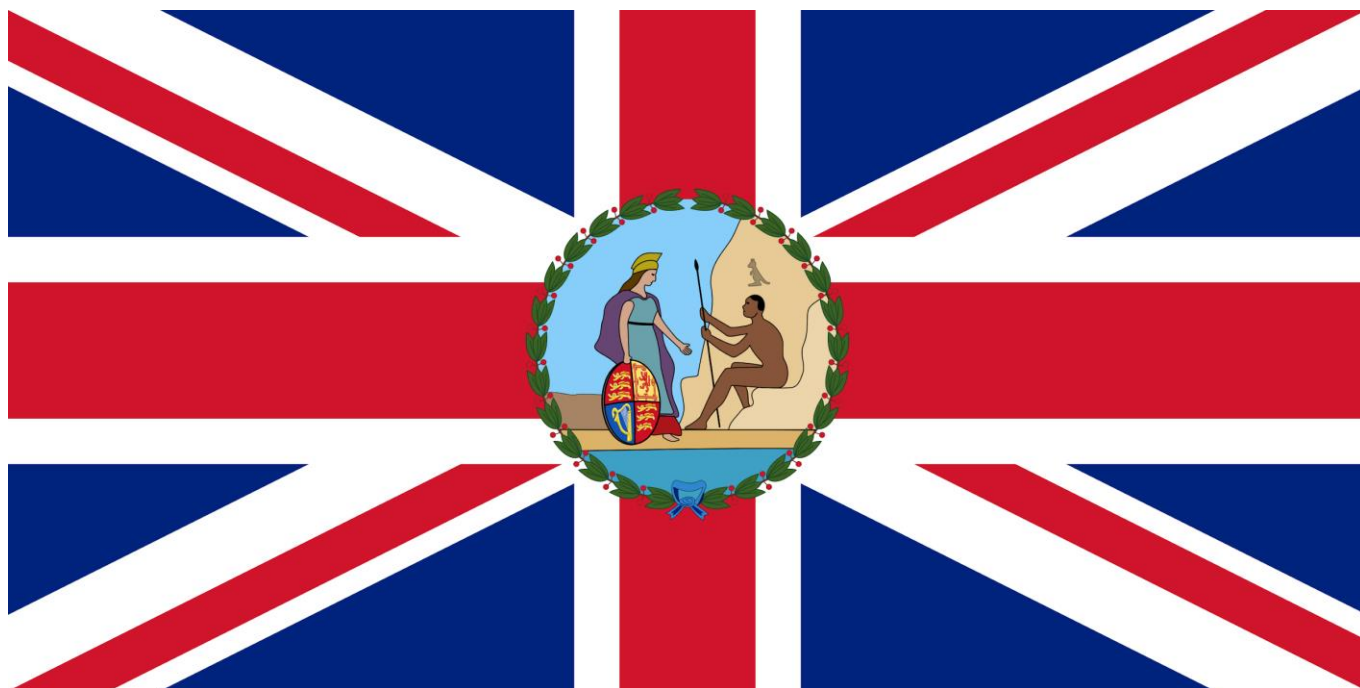
Napoleon on the Frontier

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Edward Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove is an almost legendary figure in the Catchlove family. His life as a police trooper on the colonial frontier in some of the most remote landscapes in South Australia and the Northern Territory holds an enduring fascination for family members and historians, with the surviving fragments of his diaries and notebooks providing an insight into his life and experiences.

Even for a relatively well-documented figure such as Edward, trawling through newspaper accounts highlights the challenge of assembling a life and character from fragments. For every mention there are years that are undocumented and forgotten, so we will never fully know who Edward was or what he was like. Fascinated by the experience of the frontier, and in particular the meeting of colonial and indigenous cultures, I have often wondered what Edward's role in this interaction may have been. He spent much of his career in remote landscapes where the colonial presence was tenuous at best, and at key moments was at the edge of colonial expansion, such as his time in Palmerston, Andrewilla and on the Arltunga goldfields.

On one hand, Edward may have believed in his role as an organ of British justice, including the protection of the rights of Aboriginal people to access their land as described in the 1836 Letters Patent establishing the Province of South Australia, a commitment illustrated in the flag of Governor of South Australia from 1876-1904 (see below). At the same time, the role of the police was undoubtedly to protect colonial interests. Indeed, Edward came from an entrepreneurial settler family with economic interests throughout the state, sometimes active within his own jurisdictions. While Edward was posted in the Mid-North, his older brother George Henry appears to have had a number of economic interests in brewing, hotels, mining and agriculture in the region, likewise while posted at the Arltunga goldfields, other members of the Catchlove family actively pursued mining interests in the region.



Flag of the Governor of South Australia, 1876-1904, Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_the_Governor_of_South_Australia_\(1876-1904\).svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_the_Governor_of_South_Australia_(1876-1904).svg)

Warwick Thornton's film *Sweet Country* provides a powerful insight into colonial and indigenous relations on the frontier. In particular, it illustrates how the prejudices and prevailing attitudes of a community contain and limit the behaviours of its members, including that of a police trooper, played by Bryan Brown. In reviewing newspaper accounts of Edward's career and context, the prevailing prejudices and attitudes of the time are striking. Aboriginal people are typically described in derogatory terms, and like women, are rarely named and when they are they are given diminutive, English names such as Jacky or Billy. While it's likely that many of Edward's duties would have been relatively mundane infringements and health or livestock inspections, naturally the stories reported are more sensational. Likewise, the crimes that make the papers tend to fit the colonial narrative, focussing on the perceived barbarity of Aboriginal culture and customary law, the fear of getting lost in the bush, and, in the absence of journalistic codes of ethics, gory and detailed reporting on the suicide of those too "feeble-minded" to cope with the deprivation, isolation and brutality of frontier life. In the spirit of the enduring media principle of "if it bleeds, it leads", any sufficiently gruesome act is reported on, particularly if it involves Aboriginal people committing acts of violence against colonists. While Aboriginal retaliation is noted with calls for "further protection against encroachments by the natives, who have of late been exceedingly troublesome," strikingly absent is documentation of colonial responses. The memory of these attacks endures, however, in the memories and oral histories of the survivors and their descendants.

When considering Edward's conduct on the frontier, it is worth noting that at all postings Aboriginal people were present, and in some cases, such as at Arltunga, he was appointed following escalating conflict between colonists and Aboriginal people. In particular, when stationed at Andrewilla police camp, in South Australia's far north-east, he was entering the region during a highly charged period of frontier conflict. As documented in the *Heritage of the Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks*, "The Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks region was to see a bitter inter-racial contest for land and water resources, and the most violent race relations in South Australia." With the first documented conflict occurring in 1865, when station workers burnt Aboriginal camps and "cleared the country" of Aboriginal people following Dieri people spearing cattle at their waterholes, skirmishes and massacres continued for decades afterwards, with Aboriginal people being simultaneously "demonised in print to justify their treatment by settlers." Linguist Luise Hercus documented six major massacres in the region, with the Karangura people specifically targeted in three of these until they were virtually wiped out, the few survivors taking refuge at the Killalpaninna mission and the depopulated region becoming known to surrounding Aboriginal nations as *Ngura-warla*, or "empty camp". The Karangura were the Aboriginal nation on whose land the Andrewilla waterhole, and stations such as Pandie Pandie, locations that would have been familiar to Edward, were located.

One major massacre that may have occurred during Edward's 1887-1892 tenure at Andrewilla was that at the Koonchera waterhole, on the Clifton Hills station a short distance from the police camp. As documented in the

region's heritage survey, "As far as the facts can be pieced together from conflicting accounts, it took place in the 1880s or 1890s - Hercus suggests about 1885 - and 200 Aboriginal people are said to have been killed; one account says perhaps as many as 500 ... The killings took place in a surprise raid on members of the Yandruwandha, Ywarrawarrka, Karangura and Ngamini peoples camped along the southern shore of the waterhole in large numbers for the Mindiri ceremony. The event seems to have been in retaliation for a stock-spearing incident, and the perpetrators were apparently South Australian police troopers from Andrewilla Police Station near the Queensland border..."

While acknowledging the many unanswered questions about his character and conduct, the fragments below provide some insight into the daily life and experiences of Edward Napoleon Bonaparte Catchlove.

Joel Catchlove, 2019

Reference

Historical Research Pty Ltd., Leader-Elliott, L. and Iwanicki, I 2002, *Heritage of the Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks*, Department for Environment and Heritage, accessed 21 April 2019, <https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Content/heritage-surveys/2-Birdsville-and-Strzelecki-Tracks-Heritage-Survey-2002.pdf>

Timeline of the life of Edward Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove

1842	Born to Henry and Emma, 14 March 1842, in Adelaide	
	Schooled at St. Peters College, Adelaide	
1858	Works as a farrier on John Chambers Bobmooney Station, northeast of Blinman	Working at Bobmooney Station
1861	Eliza Jane Roberts born, 21 December 1861, Charlestown, SA	
1863	Joins the SA and NT Police Force	Stationed in Adelaide
1870	Appointed to Northern Territory Police, stationed in Palmerston	Stationed in Palmerston, NT
1872	Resignation from Northern Territory Police	
1872	Begins courting Lilly Fiveash, sister of his friend Robert Fiveash, relationship ends in 1873	
1872-1874	Forms a business partnership with Robert Fiveash, focussing on provisioning the settlement at Palmerston, together with interests in the North Point Reef Gold Mining Company, based in the Northern Territory. Partnership dissolves, and returns to Adelaide	
1875	Rejoins the SA Police Force, Third Class Trooper, stationed in Adelaide and the mid-north. Meets Eliza Jane Roberts in Waukaringa	Stationed in Adelaide and the Mid-North
1877	Marries Eliza Jane Roberts, daughter of William Roberts, teamster, in Waukaringa, 6 September 1877	
1879	Henry Edward born, 20 January 1879, Waukaringa	
1881	Charles Henry born, 7 July 1881, Waukaringa	Stationed in Waukaringa, 1880-1884
1882	Charles Henry dies, 16 March 1882, Waukaringa	
1883	Ernest William born, 19 February 1883, Copperhouse, Burra	
1885	Henry Edward dies, 1 May 1885, Yongala Edward Hurtle born, 3 May 1885, Yongala	Stationed in Yongala, 1884-1885
1887	Emily Ediva born, 8 June 1887, Farina	Stationed in Farina, 1885-1887
1889	Albert Harold born, 22 October 1889, Hampton, Burra	Stationed in Diamantina, 1887-1892
1891	Francis Gordon born, 5 November 1891, Birdsville	
1894	Emma Jane born, 25 November 1894, Beltana	Stationed in Beltana, 1892-1897
1896	Lionel Clarence born, 26 September 1896, Beltana	
		Stationed in Port Augusta, 1897-1898
1899	Cecil Horace born, 15 May 1899, Fowlers Bay	Stationed in Fowlers Bay, 1898-1903

1901	Elsie Maud born, 17 July 1901, Port Augusta
1903	Roy Oswald born, 20 April 1903, Fowlers Bay
1907	Retires from the SA Police Force, 31 March 1907
1920	Dies, 20 June 1920, 28 Medway Street, Fullarton
1949	Eliza Jane dies, 16 June 1949

Stationed in Arltunga (Winnecke's Depot),
1903-1907

Waukaringa - 1880-1884

'Inquest at Waukaringa', *Evening Journal*, Thurs 8 February 1877, p. 2

"On Saturday, February 3, Mr. T. D. Jackson, J.P., held an inquest at the Alma Hotel, Waukaringa, on the body of John Dickinson, who accidentally fell into the well known as the Waukaringa Deep Well. Mr. Rickhards was chosen Foreman of the Jury. From the evidence it appeared that the deceased was getting water from the well, apparently for mine purposes, when from some cause not clearly known he staggered and fell into the well, which is 240 feet deep, and contained 42 feet of water at the time of the occurrence. Trooper Catchlove went down the well, but found that the poor fellow was quite dead, the skull being battered to pieces. The Jury returned the verdict of accidental death and added a rider ascribing great praise to Trooper Catchlove for his courage in going down such a deep well to rescue the body, and to Messrs. H.W. Gawen and Peter Couch for assisting the trooper."

'Serious accident at Waukaringa', *South Australian Register*, Mon 1 October 1877, p. 6

"... Ward, who was left in charge up here by Mr. Gaven, met with a severe accident last Tuesday. He took a horse and cart to get some sheep, and on his return while he was backing the cart the horses bolted between the Alma stables and shed built by Mr. Catchlove. Ward was driven against a log and one of the wheels caught him on the back. Two or three of his ribs were broken and some of the splintered ends were forced into his right lung, causing severe internal hemorrhage. I do not think it is possible for him to recover..." It was later noted in the *South Australian Register* on 22 October that "the man Ward who was crushed by a cart at Waukaringa some time since is recovering."

'Country News', *Weekly Times*, Sat 27 Oct 1877, p. 14

"A man named John Bradley ... was admitted to the Burra Hospital last night, having been brought by Trooper Catchlove from Baratta [homestead and mining district north of Waukaringa, east of Hawker] on remand, to the Burra, by Mr. J. D. Jackson, J.P., of Waukaringa, for attempting to commit suicide. He made a determined effort to cut his throat, and presented a most distressing spectacle, the gash being 6 in. long and a proportionate depth. The only wonder is how he could have survived. Bradley had been working at the Waukaringa Reefs for some time previously, but had recently gone to Baratta Station. Mr. Jackson and Trooper Catchlove had both gone there on hearing of the case, and found him with his windpipe cut through just above the apple of his throat, so that breathing in or swallowing the air and drink came through the wound. He had also tried to open an artery in his arm. By the time Messrs. Jackson and Catchlove arrived his throat had been exposed about eighteen hours. They contrived to sew the throat up with common needles, managed to give him a little food, and although he is still in a very precarious state, the wound is contracting and healing. He has been low-spirited for some time, but has not tasted grog for months."

'Country Letters', *Port Augusta Dispatch*, Fri 28 Nov 1879, p. 4

"Williams Evans, who looks after the mail horses, met with a rather serious accident this morning. He was thrown from his horse on to the metal, on his head and was found on the road in an insensible state. P. T. Catchlove and Dr. Giehke were soon on the spot, and brought Evans into the Mount [Melrose]. He is progressing favourably, but has two nasty wounds on his scalp."

'Magistrates' Courts, Orroroo: Wednesday August 16', *South Australian Register*, Sat 18 August 1882, p. 2

A James Arthur Courtenay was charged with the stealing and killing of a sheep belonging to George Hills, of McCoy's Well Run. Numerous witnesses described the incident, disputing whether the sheep had been killed by the accused or

by a kangaroo dog that the accused was using in an unsuccessful kangaroo hunt. Edward N B Catchlove was called in his capacity as mounted trooper to give his account of the arrest of the accused and was “several times cautioned by the Bench, as from his manner and frequent interruptions he was evidently under the influence of liquor, and the Bench requested his removal from the court.”

‘Magistrates Court, Waukaringa: Saturday January 26’, *South Australian Register*, Wed 30 January 1884, p. 2

In a matter of debt owed by John Masterman, contractor, to Henry Elliot, carpenter, “the court was unable to proceed with this case as the appointed time owing to the non-attendance of Trooper Catchlove. At the adjourned sitting a letter was received by the Court from him explaining his non-appearance. When the court was about to deal with the matter, the trooper informed the Magistrates that the Court held on the 24th was illegally constituted and consequently the Magistrates had no power to adjudicate in the case Elliot v. Masterman, the trooper citing as authority clause 23 of the Masters and Servants Act 1878, but the letter of apology was considered an aggravation of the offence, and Catchlove was fined £1 for “neglect of duty”.

Yongala - 1884-1885

‘Police Court - Port Adelaide’, *South Australian Register*, Thurs 11 Dec 1884, p. 6

“Richard Howell, carter, of Queenstown, was charged with unlawfully and indecently assaulting Maria Quelch, a widow, at Port Road, Alberton, on December 6. Edward Catchlove, mounted constable, stationed at Yongala, deposed that in consequence of information received, he arrested prisoner at Petersburg. Told him the charge and cautioned him, but he made no statement.”

‘Another Criminal Assault’, *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 13 Dec 1884, p. 32

The “diabolical outrage” of 25 year old “rough-looking fellow” Richard Howell’s assault on “elderly woman” Eliza Quelch at Port Adelaide. Following the assault, “on the subsequent movements of Howell being traced a descriptive telegram containing the nature of the charge against him was sent to Mounted-constable Catchlove, stationed at Yongala, who smartly arrested the prison at Petersburg. The trooper brought him to Port Adelaide by the last train from the North on Tuesday night...”

‘To Correspondents’, *The South Australian Advertiser*, Mon 26 Jan 1885, p. 4

Edward Napoleon’s abilities as a trooper are drawn into a heated exchange regarding the “extraordinary blackguardism” witnessed in the main street of Yongala by the *Advertiser*’s “Yongala correspondent. In support of their claims, the correspondent notes that the *Terowie Enterprise* newspaper describes, in reference to the “tall amount of booxing [sic] done”, “Our local trooper took two or three of them in hand, and I daresay if it had not been that he had his own domestic troubles to engross him would have run in a few more.” The correspondent goes on to say, “I can also prove that Trooper Catchlove complained to residents that Mr. Stoneman [an aggrieved writer to the paper] remarked to him that the late trooper arrested more loafers in a week than Mr. Catchlove had done since he had been here.” Another writer, “Contradiction”, leapt to the defence of the *Advertiser*’s concerns and Trooper Catchlove, “upon the efficiency of Mr. Catchlove and his attention to his duties there can scarcely be any difference of opinion, and I, with most residents of the place, would regret to have the telegram in question regarded as a reflection on an able and energetic officer.” A. D. Bruce continued, “Without expressing an opinion as to the efficiency or otherwise of Trooper Catchlove I beg to state that your correspondent’s telegram was perfectly correct. Although I am not aesthetically delicate, I was on several occasions during Saturday afternoon thoroughly ashamed that persons standing under my verandah should be compelled to hear the unusually foul language that was being shouted in the street.” “Onlooker” concluded the discussion noting the “recent unusual rowdiness”, and “an unusual number of swipers” “rolling about the street”.

‘Central Board of Health’, *The South Australian Advertiser*, Thurs 30 July 1885, p. 5

Constable Catchlove notified that “seven residents of Yongala had complied and one was complying with the boards orders.” In the same meeting, there was much concern raised about the disease risk associated with “stagnant water”, the “deposit of filth” in waterways, and the “discharge into the public street of foul liquids”, so presumably the works were to address something of this nature.

Farina - 1885-1887



B 9329

Photograph of Farina, approximately 1880 by Samuel White Sweet (State Library of South Australia)

'Discovery of Human Remains in the North', *Evening Journal*, Wed 17 Feb 1886, p. 2

"The Commissioners of Police have received a letter from M. C. Catchlove, dated Farina, February 13, stating: "That on the 9th inst., while mustering sheep in the Leslies Well paddock, on the Mount Lyndhurst Run, Mr. A McCourvelle found the remains of a dead horse, with a saddle a few yards from it, with waterbag attached, and about four miles further north came across the remains of a man in the same paddock and about 16 miles west of Mount Lyndhurst Station. Hearing this, I proceeded there on the following morning and found the remains of a man. The bones were separated, and were quite white from exposure, the head laying west and facing south, and about 18 miles southeast of Farina. The skull was quite sound, the right leg extended, and the left one drawn up and lying over it. The deceased was dressed in a brigantine shirt, white moleskin trousers, blucher boots, white socks, and soft felt half Yankee black hat. I removed the bones and found embedded in the ground a pair of spurs, almost eaten away with rust, and in the pocket, which was embedded in the ground, I found two half-sticks of tobacco, half a crown, some matches, and a leather purse, which was hard and brittle, and on breaking it open with a knife I found a dog register ticket and an old bill, very much discoloured, but both bearing the name William Murray, and dated 1880, the year when Murray was missed or last seen. The bill was made out at Moolooloo, and the dog ticket was issued at Blinman. I also found, a few yards from the remains, half a bridle and a saddle strap. From the appearance of the remains I should think they had been lying there a number of years, and from the situation I feel almost confident that deceased died from want of water. I then went through the ranges about four miles south of where the body was found, and saw the remains of the horse and saddle, and from the appearance of the bones should think that the horse perished about the same time as the man. The saddle, water-bag, and leather spandell girth all quite useless and rotten. I would also beg to mention that I buried the remains where they were found, also reported the particulars to Mr. J. D. Lawlor, J. P., who gave the usual certificate for burying."



PRG 701/26

Camp near Farina, Oct 4th 1883, watercolour sketch by Edmund Gouldsmith (State Library of South Australia)

‘Saved from the Gallows’, *The Mail*, Sat 4 Jan 1919, p. 2

In reference to the discovery of the remains above, a writer recalled the incident in reference to another case at the time, “I recall the case of ‘Billy’ Murray, a conscientious old boundary rider many years ago, who kept a keen lookout for a gang of horse duffers who were about in those days. He was supposed to have been murdered and his body burned. I remember one night in camp a man in drink saying to another, “If you don’t shut up I’ll tell them what you did to ‘Billy’ Murray, and how you burned him.” For many years those men were looked upon as having ‘done for’ him, and were shunned. Some six years later, however, while out mustering on Mount Lyndhurst Run with Mr. H. P. Ive (now resident superintendent of the Abattoirs), I came across the remains of a horse, and within 4 ft. found a saddle which had been removed, with the girths unbuckled. This went to show that Murray, while in search of water, had ridden his horse to a standstill, and then removed the saddle to give the horse an opportunity of getting away on its own...”



B 8007

Storekeeper's premises, Farina, 1882, (State Library of South Australia)

'Farina', *The Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle*, Fri 30 April 1886, p. 3

ENBC appeared on a team for married men during an Easter Monday "Married v. Single" cricket match, scoring 4 runs towards the married teams 41 runs to 25 victory. "In the evening a ball was given in the Assembly Room, which was well attended, dancing being enthusiastically kept up till about 3 am. At 11 o'clock, supper was provided at the Exchange Hotel where about 60 persons sat down to an excellent spread." The same article notes that Farina was at the time the "largest trucking depot in North", with 35,000 head being "trucked" from the town between March 1885 and March 1886. To address this, there was a proposal to expand an existing waterhole into a dam for watering livestock. "Our population is increasing by ones and twos, in fact Farina may be considered a rising place. Rain is badly wanted."



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Township of Farina, 1897-98 (State Library of South Australia)



B 64274 Reproduction rights: State Library of South Australia

Premises of the police station, Farina, South Australia, 1900 by Sydney Phillips (State Library of South Australia)

South Australian Weekly Chronicle, Sat 4 Dec 1886, p. 23

“M. C. Catchlove, stationed at Farina, having learnt from a man named Silas Varcoe, that a number of human remains could be seen at some distance from the township, proceeded to the place and found there the bones of a man. He put them together and came to the conclusion that the main had been about 5 feet 5 inches in height and about 30 years of age. There were found near the body a pair of tweed trousers and a waistcoat of a dark colour, a crimean shirt, and elastic braces, while a saddle strap had apparently been tied around his waist. His boots were of size 8. The trooper concluded that the man died from want of water about 1882. No inquest was deemed necessary, and the remains were buried.”

‘Our Intelligent Bobbies’, *Yorke’s Peninsula Advertiser*, Tue 14 Dec 1886, p. 3

“Rambler” an incredulous detractor, wrote that “Surely the time has come for Mounted-Constable Catchlove, of Farina, to be promoted. It would hardly be too much to ask that he should be appointed demonstrator of anatomy to the Police Force or articulator of skeletons to the Adelaide Museum. From information received the other day this exemplary officer paid a visit to a spot situated a little distance from the place where he does the honors of the mounted force, and found there some human bones. He forthwith put the remains of the defunct together ... and concluded, after a bird’s eye view of the skeleton, that the owner of these bones had been a man 5 feet 5 inches in height, 30 years of age, and that he died “from want of water in 1882.” A Baron Cuivier might have arrived at the height and age of the man albeit I am sure not without some difficulty; but I dare be sworn that no living man but M. C. Catchlove could have decided that the man died from want of water in 1882. The chances are equally great that he died of an overdose of bush grog. In these days when the “force” are so often at fault in determining how, when and by whom a burglary has been effected, I really think the anatomical attainments of the astute officer referred to are worthy of immediate and substantial recognition...”

‘Boards of Health’, *South Australian Register*, Thurs 6 Jan 1887, p. 7

“Constable Catchlove reported that four residents of Farina had neglected to comply with orders of the Board to pave and drain pigsties, & c.”

Diamantina - 1887-1892



Natives of the Andrewilla tribe, Diamantina, (GRG52-45-0-1-5) State Records of S.A

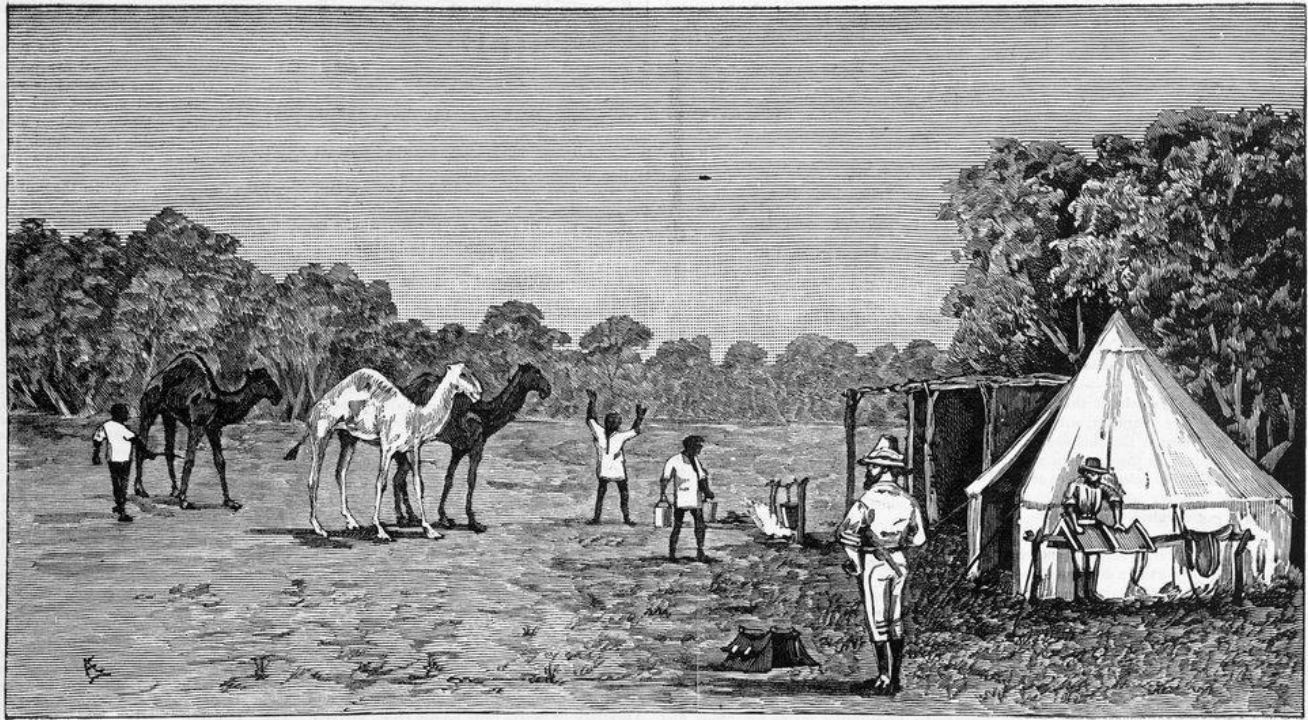
‘Norman Richardson looks back’, *Chronicle*, Thu 16 Aug 1934, p. 8

“Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove was another of the early northern police. One of his back-country camps was at Andrewilla water hole, on the track from Hergott (Marree) to Birdsville, about 40 miles from the Queensland border. In a dugout he and Trooper Albert Williams resided, and studied nature, and from the water hole close hand caught many good fish.”

'Murder of Two Natives', *Evening Journal*, Thu 17 May 1888, p. 4

"The Commission of Police has received a report from Mounted-constable Catchlove, the officer in charge of the police camp at Diamantina, dated April 30, to the effect that about 10.30pm, on the night of the 22nd ... a number of the Pandy Pandy natives stealthily went to the native camp, situated about a quarter of a mile from here, and frightened an old native named Billy out. The latter ran to the stockyard, about 400 yards from the camp, but there the natives, who pursued him, caught and murdered him in a brutal manner. It was done so quietly that neither the police nor the mailman, who was putting his horses in the coach about the time, heard anything of it. About 9 am the next morning a lubra named Topsy asked the officer in charge if he had heard that a blackfellow was killed by the Pandy Pandy blacks on the previous night. On being asked where the dead man was, she replied, "All about, gins buried him on the sandhills during the night." Mounted-constables Catchlove, Chance and Read went to the sandhills and found the spot where the man had been buried. They exhumed the body, and found numerous deep spear wounds all over the back, one through the thigh and into the abdomen, and one right through the body, entering just below the left breast, coming out under the right breast; also five severe scalp wounds exposing the skull, and varying from 1 ½ to 2 ½ inches in length. The police then went to the yard and saw numerous tracks of blood stains on the sand where the murder was committed. They also found pieces of broken spears and waddies with hair and blood stains on them. The murdered man's shield was discovered broken to pieces, several of the pieces having deep indentations, showing the terrific blows the deceased had tried to guard. On going to the natives camp they found that all the native men, including the police tracker, had started during the night in pursuit of the murderers. The officer in charge questioned the lubras as to the number and names of the murderers, but he did not get any information. The women stated that the deceased had given one of the Pandy Pandy natives a "bone", which had caused the native's death. A practice exists among the natives that if one of them is taken ill another is accused of giving the deceased a "bone". The women further added that they were all asleep when the murderers frightened the old fellow out of the camp. M. C. Read was sent to report the matter to Mr. Turnbull J. P., at Clifton Hills. This gentleman, finding that there were no witnesses of the murder to be had, and it being almost impossible to get a Jury together, did not hold an inquest. On the next day Read was sent in pursuit of the offenders to get their names and arrest them if possible. On arrival at Pandy Pandy he found that the police camp natives had had a fight with the murderers, and that the murderers had fatally wounded another of the camp natives named Jimmy, who afterwards expired. The murderers then ran away. Mounted-constable Read getting on their track followed them to within a few miles of Birdsville, and then lost them. He reported the matter at Birdsville, and not being able to get any further trace of them returned to the camp."

In September 1888, a published report from the SA police commissioner alluded to the escalating cost of dealing with Aboriginal groups whose resource base was being eroded by settlement, together with attempts to make Aboriginal customary law answerable to colonial law, "From the far north urgent demands are made for further protection against encroachments by the natives, who have of late been exceedingly troublesome, a prominent cause of their depredations, no doubt, being the increased difficulty they experience in finding native game, the supply of which is being steadily lessened by the gradual settlement of the country. In addition to trouble with the settlers, the tribal customs and superstitions of the natives frequently necessitate interference, and the expense incurred in dealing with some of these cases constitutes a very serious item in police expenditure. ... Another case had just occurred, the expenses in connection with which will not be less than £150 to £200, there being 14 natives now under committal for the murder of the one of the Pandi Pandi blacks, whom they believe to have caused deaths in their tribe by witchcraft." 'Natives in North Australia', *The Telegraph*, Thu 27 Sep 1888, p. 3



POLICE STATION, DIAMANTINA RIVER, QUEENSLAND.

Image from The Illustrated Australian News, 1889 (State Library Victoria)

‘A Trip to the North’, *The Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle*, 27 Dec 1889, p. 3

“On approaching Mungaranie, on the first box wood tree we came to, was a board with the very legible notice painted on it “Beware of Poison”; this with the public house looming up in the distance, was to say the least, very suggestive, and tended somewhat to damp the ardour of our aspirations (spirituous), however, on arriving at the hotel our doubts and fears were dispelled, for we found that the house was very creditably kept... After partaking of dinner and enjoying a camp under the trees until the heat of the day had passed, a fresh team was yoked up and another move made onwards, and after travelling over the same monotonous stony tableland (interspersed with occasional patches of sand, all well scrubbed with cotton and salt-bush, and in places fairly well grassed) at a distance of thirty-six miles we reached “Cowarie station”. The head station is situated on the bank of the “Derwent River”, better known as “Cowarie Creek”, and consists of the usual station buildings, viz, Government House men’s kitchen and hut, dairy &c.; to the west is a huge sand hill, whilst on the east the creek is bounded by stony table land. The creek is lined on both sides with splendid boxwood trees, and for some distance up the creek, a string of grand water holes is to be met. On the west side a little above the station and close to the bank of the creek is a well of good water; this of course is used after the waterholes are dry. In the garden close to a large waterhole, some fine cabbages and tomatoes were growing; a large stack of bush hay was also seen - in fact taken altogether Cowarie is a very pretty place and evidently the pick of this part of the country. It is a cattle and horse station and judging by the stock I saw, the horses are not be surpassed in South Australia. We camped here for a night and were hospitably entertained by the manager and part-owner Mr. August Helling. There was a large mob of blacks camped there and we were introduced to a gentleman of color named Pom Pompana, a peculiar specimen of humanity. He is reputed to be considerably over one hundred years of age (the oldest native in the place can only recollect Mr Pom Pompana as an old man), and is believed to possess the power of making rain at any time; he cannot speak one word of English, and his only apparel was a dirty shirt, or rather what appeared to be one; his height is about 4 feet 4 inches, his nose inordinately broad and his mouth simple immense - he appears to have been a very powerful man, and in spite of his age has comparatively few grey hairs; the tribe are very proud of him, looking upon him as a kind of king. There is a small fortune in Pom Pompana for some enterprising colonial Barnum.

After having partaken of a good breakfast, we started onwards with a fresh team of five spanking horses; traveling over the same kind of open country - with plenty of feed; at five miles from Cowarie we got on to the Berlino run, and caught the first glimpse away to our left, of the great Callie Cooper, better known as the “Diamantina River”; about eight or ten miles from Cowarie we passed a small mob of blacks camped under the trees beside a water hole, all

garbed in “nature’s” darkest robes. Six or eight miles further on we left Berlino and again emerged on to Cowarie. Here we met an old identity, Mr R. F. Sullivan, who had come over from Berlino station to get his mails. We pulled up under a shady tree and had a drink all round of “Burke’s three star”, a chat and a smoke and then “off again”; 18 miles farther on we reached Canartucka otherwise “Yellow Waterhole”, a large waterhole in the creek; in a brush yard close handy we saw our fresh team awaiting us, brought in ready for the mail by a blackfellow and his gin, who receive for their labour the magnificent allowance of ten pounds of flour, two of sugar and quarter of tea, per week, and seems quite happy withal, strikes and unions never troubling them.

Sandy country here and very fair picking. We boiled our pots, or rather the water in them, and had dinner - then off again; the Diamantina still being a good distance to our left; after a long and heavy drive of 35 miles, we arrived at our camping place, Darkognurer-gnurer, better known as the Seven Sandhills, a favourite camping place. There is a lot of boxwood about here and a regular jumble of white sandhills, a good place for feed after rain, also a nice water hole in which we had a bathe - away to the west we could see in the distance the trees around another large waterhole named Yalpawarraline where there are large cattle yards erected, for the mustering of the Cowarie stock. The water hole there is three miles long, and never known to be dry. Niggers and flies vied in their attention to us at this camp. From here we followed along the main channel of the Diamantina for about two miles in and out, and over sandhills and then along the overflow course of the river, the only vegetation visible, being the immense growth of giant salt bush (which grows from six to eight feet high) and the lignum bush. Sixteen miles farther, we crossed the seven mile creek, evidently a favourite camping place for teamsters and drovers, and a grand place for feed, it is also I believe the site for a Government well. Five miles farther on we met the Police camel-caravan, trooper Bannigan in charge, and two other troopers with him, bringing down the now well-known nigger criminal “Jacky”, who was recently convicted of murdering his mate Marrach. The prisoner had handcuffs on, a chain round his neck, and was locked on to the camel’s neck; a chain also from leg to leg under the camel’s belly made the idea of escape somewhat ludicrous; a more miserable and dejected specimen of humanity I never remember seeing.

About two miles farther on we reached Goyder’s Lagoon Station where we were very kindly and hospitably entertained by the Manager, Mr Kircaldy. This is also a cattle station. The house is very nice, comfortably furnished, and has a splendid thatched verandah on three sides, which is a great improvement in this almost tropical climate ... From there we had a dreary drive across the big plain (27 or 28 miles) with nothing to break the monotony of sameness; we travelled along the overflow country of the Diamantina the most of the way, a black loamy kind of soil showing, which I believe would grow anything if irrigated - very dead pulling for the horses though ... We were told that here, in flood time, the width of the flood waters is some twenty odd miles with a depth of five feet all over the plain ...

Twenty-one miles from Goyder’s Lagoon we get on to the Clifton Hills run, and at 36 miles reached our camping place, Burt’s Hole. There was plenty of water in the creek, and thousands of “goolahs” or pink cockatoos in the trees, that kept up a continual din all night ... Fifteen miles from our last camp we arrived at that magnificent and imposing place, “The South Australian Police Camp.” It is truly a disgrace to the Government that men should be allowed to live in such hovels; in any town that habitations would be condemned as unfit for human dwellings. The main building, occupied by M. C. Catchlove, looks more like a blackfellow’s wurly, with a tarpaulin thrown over it, or rather a big hole with a bit of tarpaulin round it; this is where a man is supposed to keep his wife and family. The “barracks” consists of a dug out (otherwise a hole in the ground) where two troopers are supposed to live, cook &c. It is a great pity the Commissioner cannot be sent up to live here for a few months. However, we were hospitably entertained by M. C. Williams, who, although his own cook, dished us up a good savory meal; some splendid young onions grown on the spot proved very delicious to our travellers’ palates and helped us to thoroughly enjoy our dinner. The camp is situated alongside the Elleanor River and near a beautiful water hole; at the time of our visit it was about five miles long and nine feet deep, and we were told it have never been known to be so low before. The police have a boat here, and there is plenty of fish of good quality. A fresh team was harnessed up and we made a start, following up the Ellenor, keeping it on our right; seven miles on we met a party of three “whites” and two blackfellows driving a mob of packhorses. Amongst this motley company, we were informed, was the Sergeant of Police from Birdsville who has a strong antipathy towards South Australians, or as we are commonly called “White-eyed Crow-eaters”; the other two whites were Customs officers from Queensland, *en route* for Innamincka...

'Queensland Border Railway Route from Hergott Springs', *The Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle*, 8 Jul 1892, p. 3

"Andrewilla is a large waterhole situated on the Eleanor Creek. There is a police station here in charge of M. C. Catchlove, who has two assistants; they have snug little houses, built by themselves. Their gardens would take first prize for good vegetables a fact which speaks well for the soil of Andrewilla, which is on the Clifton Hills run... Clifton Hills head station is situated on a sandhill, so as to be above flood water mark; it is seven miles east of Andrewilla. The native name is something like Uranikeera. ... A ride through part of Clifton Hills in flood time is a charming sight. Imagine yourself seated in the saddle, and on the top of a high sandhill; away down at your feet lies a lake, the trees half-covered in water, and as far as the eye can see, extends the water; as you ride round the lake through the luxuriant grass, your horse trampling the sweet smelling wild flowers, can be heard the screaming of the frightened water fowl, and seen the graceful movements of the many swans, ibis, pelican and bronze-wing ducks. As you ride along here and there small lots of half frightened cattle are startled and make off for a short distance, from whence they turn and gaze on you with astonishment. They are well bred and beautifully clean in appearance. A little further on you spy a sneaking Dingo, but not before he spies you... Truly in flood time it is a land teeming with water and feed; some pioneers have termed it the "Promised Land"."

'Native Charged with Murder', *South Australian Chronicle*, 26 Nov 1892, p. 7

"At the Port Augusta Police Court on Friday, before Mr. John Rudall, S. M., Jimmy Thalpalinna Moodlaparra, an aboriginal native, was charged on the information of M. C. David Dittmer, of Hergott, with the murder of Jimmy Minnalonna Caldee-Caldee, an aboriginal, at Cowarie, on October 5. The evidence of several aboriginals was taken by means of an interpreter.

Georgie (Wallacoonanna) said he knew the prisoner Moodlaparra and Minnalonna. On the night the latter was killed he saw the prisoner running about with a spear in his left hand and two spears in his right hand. He said, "Where is Minnalonna." No one spoke. Jackey (Yeralonna), Minnalonna and the witness were in the camp. There was another camp close by. The prisoner ran into their camp, and threw a spear at Minnalonna, which entered the latter's body on the front left side. He did not speak after he was speared. The spear was drawn out of the wound, and the prisoner caught hold of it again. The wound bled freely, but no attempt was made to stop the bleeding. Minnalonna never spoke, and died about the middle of the night. A lot of natives were present when he died, and the body was buried just before sunrise. There had been no previous quarrel between the deceased and the prisoner. The prisoner said, "You been giving my father a bone and burnt it."

Jackey (Yeralonna), another aboriginal, made a similar statement. The prisoner said to Minnalonna, "You been give my father a bone for nothing. I will take my father's part." The prisoner's father was Mammummarra, and he died about two years ago.

Mounted Constable Edward Catchlove, of Diamantina, said he proceeded to Cowarie station and arrested the prisoner, Jimmy Thalpalinna, for the murder of Jimmy Minnalonna. He made no statement. He exhumed the body of Minnalonna, which was buried in the sandhills, but it was impossible to say where the wound was situated as decomposition had set in. There was an opening on the left side, but he could not say if it was a wound. The body was identified by the natives at the grave, and the two previous witnesses identified the spear produced as the weapon used against the deceased.

The prisoner was committed for trial at the next Circuit Court at Port Augusta.

At the close of the evidence Mr. Rudall asked M. C. Catchlove, which has had a long experience in the bush, if in his opinion the prosecution of natives under English laws for following tribal customs had a deterrent effect?

M. C. Catchlove, in reply, said such proceedings had no effect. If the prisoner went back after serving a sentence he would do the same thing under similar provocation. He also volunteered the information that if the prisoner was discharged, and returned to his tribe, he would assuredly be killed by Minnalonna's relatives on the first opportunity. The S. M. regretted there was not some way of the dealing with the natives in cases of this kind other than that of sending them on for trial, and putting the country to great expense."

'Out among the people', *Chronicle*, 15 Sep 1949, p. 47

"...Ernest William Catchlove (Capper Street, Camden) came in to tell me that his father, Edward Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove, went up to the Diamantina as officer in charge of the police station at Andrewilla in 1887, stayed there five years.

He was there for 12 months before his wife and two sons - Will (4) and Edward Hurtle (2½) - joined him. Constable Wells (finally Registrar of Motor Vehicles) and Birt were his assistants.

MC Catchlove subsequently was at Beltana (5 years), Fowler's Bay (6), Winnecke's Depot, Arltunga (3½), when the White Range gold rush was on. He died in 1920 at 79 years. His widow (87) died at Norwood last month."

It is interesting that Constable Wells mentioned above was a self-proclaimed admirer of Aboriginal culture, "Contact with the Andrewilla natives led to the writing of an interesting pamphlet, which Mr. Wells was asked to incorporate in the 1893 report of the Association for the Advancement of Science. He has a great admiration for the aborigines, believing them to be "all right if let alone."

'Shipwrecked in Boyhood', *The Mail*, Sat 19 Jan 1929, p. 10

Beltana 1892-1897

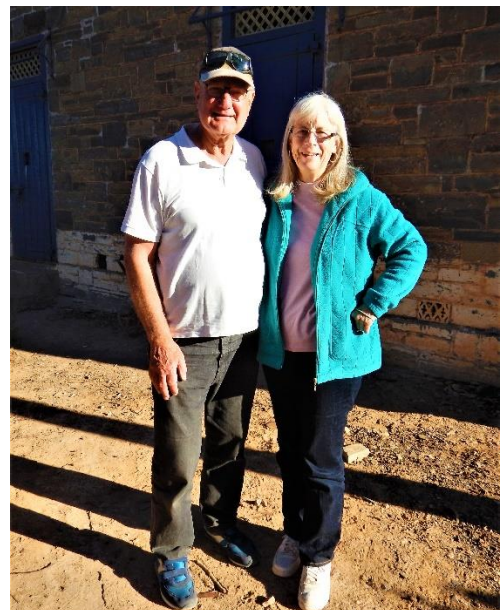


PRG 1610/11/99

Police station at Beltana, 1897-98, photograph by Robert Mitchell (State Library of South Australia)



The old Beltana Police Station in 2019



On the right are ENBC's great-grandson Jeff Catchlove and great-granddaughter Glenys Aird (who lives in ENBC's former workplace)

'Current Topics', *Burra Record*, Wed 13 July 1892, p. 3

"Rough weather. On Tuesday night, July 5, one of the most terrible storms ever witnessed in Burra passed over the town, doing considerable damage. Several fine gum trees were uprooted and fences blown down. The windmills in Messrs. Catchlove and Co's paddock and at Mr. J. M. McBride's farm were blown over, receiving much damage. Several houses in the district were unroofed..."



Township of Beltana, 1897-98, photograph by Robert Mitchell (State Library of South Australia)



Buildings at Beltana, 1897, photograph by Robert Mitchell (State Library of South Australia)

'The Sad Fatality at Leigh's Creek', *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 9 Nov 1895, p. 30

"The Commissioner of Police has received a communication from Mounted-constable Catchlove, of the police station at Beltana, stated that he had received a telegram from Leigh's Creek on November 1 informing him that a digger named John Peterson had been killed that afternoon through several tons of earth and huge boulders falling on him. Constable Catchlove proceeded to Leigh's Creek and interviewed Mr. G Lennon, who had been working about fifty yards from Peterson. Mr. Lennon stated that he heard a noise like the fall of earth, and went to the place where he last saw Peterson working. As he could not see the man he concluded that he was buried. He called for assistance and at once began to dig for Peterson; and after about an hour's work they came upon the body, which was bent double..."

'Far North Mysteries', *The Register*, Mon 24 Jan 1927, p. 7

"A few more words to show how near a lot of men can be to the site of a tragedy without knowing it. The name of the man concerned was Charlie Modorstrom, a Dane, by occupation a blacksmith, and a splendid mechanic. He was a digger on the Angipena Goldfield at the time of his death. He was working with a mate on a big ironstone reef at a Beltana Mine. Their camp was close to the road; the background to the tent was a forest of young pines on the slope of a low hill. On the crest of this hill stands an old pine tree, on ... side of which was a pathway, cut by the men on the iron reef. Neither of these paths was more than about 60 yards from the old pine. Charlie was very eccentric at times, but usually normal. He was very natty and clean about his camp, and he had the best camp on the alluvial end, with a bush shack over his tent, and a bush shed and a bush break all round the camp. One morning Frank Denford and I rode up to the top end. We had some men putting a shaft down on the iron lode. On getting near where Charlie's camp had been, we saw it had been burnt down. Some of the timber was still burning; we thought the fire had been an accident. We had a look at the shaft, and as it was too early for the miners to be at work we rode down to the store there kept by Mrs. Davis, and had a drink of tea. A number of camps were about. Denford was in a hurry to get home, being manager of Mount Serle Station at the time. I stayed and had breakfast, and we spoke about Charlie and the fire. They had seen him going over towards Golden Gully, carrying a rug or blanket slung over his shoulder, and jumping down some of the shallow holes on his way. He disappeared over Windlass Hill, and they saw no more of him. I said, "This is a strange and new caper of his," but as all knew him so well, very little notice was taken of his latest escapade. I left after a while for my camp, and about half-way I met Charlie's mate, Dick Baker... he told me that Charlie had left the camp very early, and said he would meet him at the workings. Dick had gone to work after breakfast, Charlie was not there... I advised Dick to report the matter to Charlie Perry, who was a justice of the peace. I suggested that Charlie might turn up at the camp at any time. "I don't think so," said Dick, "he has been damned queer this last couple of days." Dick went up and reported to the J.P., and also to the police at Beltana. Catchlove came out, and a search was made around the diggings. The deep ground was searched, but no sign of Charlie... The general opinion was that he had "done a get." ... it was just accepted on account of his known peculiarities. But we were all wrong; one man had a different opinion. This was Bill Martin. He and I were driving down on a Saturday evening from the top end in a little sulky he had. Just after passing Dick and Charlie's tent there is a small blind gutter emptying into the Gum Creek close to the main camp. My dog, Jim the Rabbiter, as he was called, made a rush up this gutter. Bill said, "If Charlie is found, it will be up that creek. I have noticed a smell coming down that for the last three days. Don't you notice it?" I did, and it was very pronounced. I said, "It must come from some of Jim's rabbits that he has killed in the gutter. Charlie could never be there, Bill, so close to us all." I thought no more about it until next morning ... Dick Baker came to the window of my cabin and said "We have found Charlie." I exclaimed, "Where?" "Just behind our tent, under the old pine tree. He shot himself. Where is Rumball?" This was the other constable from Blinman. ... He found him and took him to the spot where the body was. ... We found that Charlie has chosen a picturesque spot for his last resting place. He was lying on his back on a rabbit burrow, with his head towards the old pine tree, and surrounded by young pines. There was a large hole showing right over the heart, and a corresponding hole in the singlet. His single-barreled shotgun was lying close to his right side, and his right arm was close to the gun. The only evidence that took a little consideration was a letter of farewell, which Charlie had pushed under the door of a certain person's camp, then living on the goldfield. The act was done in the very early hours of the morning of his disappearance. The letter simply showed that the writer's mind was unbalanced. He had made up his mind to commit the act on the morning that he burnt his camp."

Chronicle, Sat 23 Nov 1895, p. 17

"A report has been received from M. C. Catchlove, stationed at Beltana, to the effect that John Edward Deed, a fruit and vegetable hawker, had died suddenly at the Royal Victoria Hotel on November 5. The occurrence was reported to Mr. T. Bee, who deemed an inquest unnecessary."

'Victim of the Lure of Gold', *Chronicle*, 28 Jan 1937, p. 17

"How the lure of gold can become an obsession until it is the sole interest in a man's life to the exclusion of all others is strikingly shown in the story of Ned Irwin, the man who first discovered gold in the Yudnamutana Range... Ned gave himself up to gold after his first success. He threw up his job, and getting another supply of rations, went again into the range, this time for many years ... He found coarse gold in several of the gullies, and his head became completely turned. He was never the same man afterwards. ...

He spent most of his time searching for a particular gully where he believed gold was plentiful. He became obsessed with the idea that such a gully existed, and that if he could only find it his fortune would be made. As time went on the copper mines closed down and Ned had the ranges to himself. He was king of the hills, with wild donkeys, wild dogs, emus and rock wallabies as his only companions. ... He was no longer young, nor spruce. He became careless about his clothes. He was given blankets, but at his first camping place he left them, preferring to make shift with the clothes he wore. His usual outfit at this time was a five gallon drum, a bag, an old shear blade, and a couple of meat tins made into billycans.

On one occasion he turned up at a miners' camp where there was a big heap of ashes. Each afternoon and evening he would make a fire on the ashes and get them warmed through, and they became his bed, with the result that his clothes became covered with them... An old friend of Ned's came along in a few days, and gave him some money and a month's supply of food. He did nothing until his supplies were nearly finished. ...

He was sawing away at some twisted coils of his hair with an old shear blade. The coils had twisted round so tightly on to his scalp that they were hurting him. He was a spectacle, with his much-patched trousers held together with string and wire, and his clothes covered in a coating of ashes. When asked how he was getting on he replied, "All right." He said that he had sufficient tucker, as he had found a nest of young rabbits. The nests then used to be made near the surface and were easy to find, but when the foxes came the does went to the deepest burrows to have their young. "The wild peaches are getting ripe, too," he added, "I have had a couple of feeds of them."

... After some years Ned was getting too old to be left in the ranges by himself, and Mounted-Constable Catchlove and a black tracker went out from Beltana to take charge of him. They were in uniform, but Ned saw them and hid where they could not find him. The constable subsequently returned in plain clothes and persuaded Ned to go into the township for some rations. A good feed was prepared for the old fellow at the store. He ate this ravenously ...

The constable said, "I am going to arrest you, Irwin."

"What are you going to arrest me for," asked Ned, quite calmly, "I am doing no harm to anyone."

"Look at the state you are in."

"That's no one's business but my own. I have a miner's right, and as I don't trouble any of the other diggers, I don't see why you should arrest me."

The constable, momentarily nonplussed, then told him he would arrest him as a vagrant. Ned shook hands with them all and went off with the constable on a spare horse which had been provided. He served two months in gaol, and that was the last seen of him in the north."

'Country News', *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 20 Feb 1897, p. 10

"A man named Charles Lipscombe, a carpenter at Parachilna in the employ of Mr. McDonald, cut his throat yesterday morning. Drs. Bruehl and Smeaton saw him as he passed through Hawker on the train, but could do nothing for him. Inspector Catchlove brought him on to Port Augusta, but he died on the train prior to reaching the Port. He was about forty-five years of age, and has relatives living at Norwood."

'Boards of Health', *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 20 Nov 1897, p. 29

While ENBC was now stationed at Beltana, his former posting of Yongala reported cases of diphtheria, and nearby towns of Hamley and Koonunga had cases of typhoid. Meanwhile, ENBC was appointed "Sanitary Inspector" as part of his duties as Mounted-constable in Beltana. The township consisted of "about twenty houses, most of them of a temporary description, as are also the closets and other outbuildings. The Sanitary Inspector, Mounted-constable E. N.

B. Catchlove, carries out his duties in an effective manner. He exercises strict supervision, and by inducing residents to use plentifully simple disinfectants - such as ashes, lime &c., - in their privies he obtains very satisfactory results, the township comparing, in the Chief Inspector's opinion, favourably with others in the North having greater advantages."

'Country News', *Chronicle*, Sat 1 Jan 1898, p. 5

"Mr. A. E. Williams, our local trooper, who has been in charge of this station [Oodnadatta] for upwards of five years, and who during that time has gained the esteem of the whole of the inhabitants through his obliging manners and his efficiency as an officer, was made the recipient of a handsome tea and coffee service on his departure for Beltana, where he proceeds to relieve M. C. Catchlove, prior to taking charge of the Georgetown station."

Port Augusta 1897-1898

No records found for this period.

Fowlers Bay 1898-1903



Anne and Thomas Richards outside their police house, Fowlers Bay, 1883. (State Library of South Australia)



Aboriginal people outside a dwelling, Fowlers Bay, 1908 (State Library of South Australia)

'Sassiety, scandals, suppositions and statements', *Quiz and the Lantern*, Thu 17 Feb 1898, p. 13

"Mounted-constable Edward Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove, of Fowlers Bay, ought to be a terror to evil does if he only lives up to his name."

'The Denial Bay Murder', *The Express and Telegraph*, Tue 21 Nov 1899, p. 2

"The Commissioner of Police, Colonel Madley, received a report from M.C. Catchlove on Monday in reference to the recent murder of an Indian hawker at Denial Bay. ...

On November 1 Kaiser Singh, a storekeeper and hawker, residing at Denial Bay, went to Mr. McKenzie's house in an excited condition and stated that, "one Indian was chopping down another." Mr. McKenzie at once proceeded to the place indicated and found a van standing a short distance from Kaiser and Poken Singh's store. The dead body of Sunda Singh was found lying a few yards from the van in a pool of blood. An American axe covered with blood and hair was also discovered near the spot. On examining the body it was found that the man had apparently been dealt a blow on the back of the head, as the skull was knocked in. There was also a wound about eight inches long and an inch deep, running from above the left ear across the back of the head. Four fingers of the left hand had also been partly cut away. Lollie Kaiser Singh was at the time sitting in the van, and was at once taken into custody. Mr. McKenzie, being a justice of the peace, immediately arranged for an inquest, which was held on November 13. Blood stains were also discovered on the turban worn by Lollie Kaiser Singh. When asked by the constable where the blood came from the prisoner stated it was the blood of the "man I kill." In the course of his evidence Kaiser Singh mentioned that the two men arrived with the van on October 31. On the following morning they had some words about something which the accused could not find in the van. After hearing the evidence the jury returned the verdict of murder against Lollie Kaiser Singh, and he was committed for trial. The constable also stated that when questioned on being taken into custody the accused admitted that he had killed the deceased ... The prisoner, who expressed no regret at the deed, was subsequently removed by M.C. Catchlove, and is now lodged in gaol at Fowler's Bay. The prisoner, who speaks poor English, remarked, 'Him plenty growl. I kill him, no more growl.'

Lollie Kaiser Singh was later found guilty and sentenced to death, although the defence put forward a number of arguments including his opium and alcohol use, his "very excitable temperament" and being "a man of a low order of intellect".

'The Murder Case', *South Australian Register*, Thu 21 Dec 1899, p. 11



PRG 280/1/5/95

Jetty and surrounding buildings at Fowlers Bay, 1905. The building on the upper left is the original post office and continues today as a private residence. All other buildings are now buried beneath sand dunes. (State Library of South Australia)

Arltunga (Winnecke's Depot) 1903-1907



B 18372

Two Aboriginal and one white member of the police force, Arltunga, 1892 (State Library of South Australia)

‘Arltunga’, *The Advertiser*, Fri 17 Apr 1903, p. 6

“Several representatives of syndicates seem to be afraid to go out prospecting farther than the immediate vicinity of Winnecke’s Depot and the White Range. Plenty of country is available which needs systematic prospecting, but no one has been out west of Alice Springs ... It was reported some time ago that blacks were killing horses at Ruby Gap. Mr. Albert Wallis, of Love’s Creek station, accompanied by Corporal Nalty, went out to try and capture them, but were unsuccessful. They came upon their tracks, and found where they had killed two horses, but could not see the brands owing to all the flesh having been cut away. They met a lubra, who told them that the blackfellows wanted her to eat some of the flesh, which she refused to do, and also that they were riding horses bareback, with bridles made of hide and bits made of fencing wire. The pursuers followed the tracks for some miles, and left them, as they were making into Queensland. The blacks are notorious characters, and have in their possession a stolen rifle and seventy rounds of ammunition.”

‘A Crowded Train’, *Chronicle*, Sat 16 May 1903, p. 34

“One of the largest mixed trains ever seen locally arrived [in Quorn] from the south last night, carrying a large number of passengers for the head of the line. The town was unusually lively during the evening, the crowd being somewhat rowdier than the previous ones. The station platform was so crowded that one could almost imagine himself in some large mining centre. This morning the scene was repeated, and the heavily laden train left with nearly 100 passengers, mostly for Oodnadatta. About 50 of them were on the way to Arltunga. Mounted-Constables White, Williams, and Catchlove were on board...”



B 29531

Police Camp, Arltunga (Winnecke's Depot), 1903. It is thought that Edward Napoleon Buonaparte Catchlove is seated at far right, beside his sons Ernest William (left) and Edward Hurtle (right) following their ride from Oodnadatta (State Library of South Australia).

Note the two neck chains attached to posts in the foreground. Although at Winnecke's Depot these are only alluded to on one occasion in the media in relation to a white person being detained overnight, neck chains are also strongly associated with the subjugation of Aboriginal people on the frontier. As detailed in Kristyn Harman and Elizabeth Grant's paper "[Impossible to detain without chains](#)"? The use of restraints on Aboriginal People in Policing and Prisons, incarceration became a tool of dispossession with 19th century colonial expansion in South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory with neck chains the preferred method of containment. They remained in widespread use in Australia until the 1940s, and informally in some regions until the 1960s.



B 29532

Tent accommodation at Police Camp, Arltunga (Winnecke's Depot), 1903 (State Library of South Australia)



B 29533

Police camp at Arltunga (Winnecke's Depot), 1903 (State Library of South Australia)

'Chained to a Post', *Evening Journal*, Sat 22 Aug 1903, p. 1

"Winnecke's Depot, August 3 - The first police case was heard last Tuesday, when a man named Sanderson was brought before Dr. Shanahan and Mr. H Sutherland charged with having stolen certain cheques from the store of Mr. F. Wallis. There was no evidence to support the charge and the accused was discharged. The accused was arrested about 3 o'clock the previous afternoon, and chained to a post firmly placed in the ground, to which was attached a strong iron ring. The post is close to the police camp, and near to a much-used road, and in full view of the passers-by. This man, though innocent, had to submit to this indignity until about 9.30 next morning.

The residents here ask why this barbarous system of securing prisoners is allowed to exist in the present state of civilisation. Surely it would not be a great expense to erect a tent over the post, or even a bough shed would afford a little protection to a prisoner from the cold and from the gaze of the public. Surely when a man, whoever he may be, is arrested and secured in this or any other way, he is entitled to protection from the elements. Even a blackfellow, seeing the accused on the chain, asked a white man - "How long him stop along chain?" Upon receiving the answer he remarked - "A - shame; all same dog."

'Death from Starvation', *The Express and Telegraph*, Fri 23 Oct 1903, p. 1

"M.C. Catchlove has telegraphed to the police authorities from Winnecke's Depot as follows: "Just returned from Alice Springs, and recieved report from Thomas Fletcher, a prospector, that the blacks had found remains and effects of a white man in Hart Range, 60 miles from here, and from memorandum found in billycan he died about August 12 from want of food. Name, Albert Muhlenbeck, native of Paris. Am proceeding tomorrow with justice of peace to investigate and bury remains."

'Pathetic death in the bush', *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 21 Nov 1903, p. 31

"... while an aboriginal named Ted was out searching for game about 60 miles from Winnecke's he discovered a dead body, and within a few yards two billycans, one of which contained two leather pouches, two memo books, and other articles. On October 23 M.C. Catchlove and Mr. Sutherland, J.P. left to investigate, and saw the body at the place indicated by the native. The deceased was about 6 ft. high, and 35 years of age. In his pocket, the constable found letters from Paris written in French, and a plan of Queensland on which was marked the route by which the unfortunate man had travelled. The belt he was wearing concealed nine sovereigns. Skin and bone were practically all that remained of the body, the flesh having been eaten away by insects, but the features were still recognisable. From notes in a diary picked up near the billy, the constable inferred that the deceased left Longreach, Queensland, with the object of walking to Alice Springs, a journey of about 1,000 miles. He was without water for four days at different times, and must have been almost starving for nearly a month before the date of his death, which apparently occurred about August 12. The last entry in the diary, dated August 11, consisted of the words: "Am still living." Mr. Sutherland gave a certificate to the effect that death was due to starvation and thirst, and the body was buried near the locality where it was discovered. The burial service was read by Mr. Sutherland."

'Lost in the Bush', *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 19 Dec 1903, p. 43

On Wednesday the Commissioner of Police recieved from M.C. Catchlove, stationed at Winnecke's Police Camp, a report concerning the timely rescue of William Royaltoa, an old man, who almost perished from hunger and thirst in rough country. The report states that Royaltoa left his tent, near the main camp at Sliding Rock on November 15, for the purpose of obtaining water from a rockhole. As he had expressed his intention of going to another waterhole about a mile further up the creek, the men in the camp did not take any notice of his prolonged absence. When they found he had not returned at night, however, they went out to search for him, but were unable to find him. One the following morning they followed his tracks for a considerable distance. His waterbag was picked up, but after further search, the party lost the missing man's tracks. The police were communicated with, and M.C. Catchlove set out with a blacktracker to endeavour to pick up the tracks from the place at which they had been lost. The country was so rough in places that the trooper experienced great difficulty in getting his horses through it, and as the missing man had evidently been wandering about in almost all directions it was almost impossible to follow the trail. On the morning of the second day after he left the camp, the trooper saw Royaltoa coming towards him while he was watering his horse at a "soakhole" in a creek. He was so much exhausted that he could scarcely speak, and he appeared to be almost dead. He was supplied with food, and after he had rested for a while he remarked: "You have saved my life. If I had £20 you

should have it.” He was taken back to the camp, and had almost recovered when the report was written. He admitted, however, that he could not have existed for many hours longer without food and water.”



B 29529

Aboriginal warriors, Arltunga, 1903 (State Library of South Australia)

‘In Dark Australia’, *Adelaide Observer*, Sat 23 Apr 1904, p. 39

“Setting out eastward from Alice Springs through Undoolya Station, Arltunga was reached in 70 miles. A wayside eating and drinking house was the only solid building, though the outline of a big store loomed against the horizon, awaiting the iron which never covered it; and a few tents and a hessian building completed the township. In the creek which bears the name of Paddy’s Hole for many years a fair amount of alluvial gold was found, but the irregularity of its occurrence was the drawback to its yielding a regular livelihood... When the reefs were pronounced sufficiently important to warrant the erection of the Government battery and cyanide works, some of these “fossickers” set to work to raise stone. The methods were as unique as they were economical. Their employees, native men and women, required no wages, or, if they did, often got none. Hundreds of drillholes have been “belted out” by natives, and hundreds of tons of ore has been brought to the surface by them on their heads in prospectors’ dishes... That the life had a charm for some was evident. Among these quartzite hills small houses, ranging from the size of tents of 6 x 8 to two-roomed dwellings, all built of stone, savoured of permanent occupation and of powerful dusky odours. The lubra evil was pronounced - in some cases openly so. The writer, happening to visit a claim in the absence of the owner ... a messenger was sent to beg him to return, to which call he was gracious enough to respond. How far the lubra question had taken possession of this worth was evident from his requiring one dusky belle on each side to support his erratic footsteps in the return home...”

‘Eleven months on Central Australian Goldfields’, *The Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle*, Fri 9 Sep 1904, p. 3

“You can grow almost anything at the [Winnecke’s] Depot. W. Summerfield has a garden at the Depot Well, and I have seen other gardens where tomatoes of first-class quality and many other kinds of vegetables are raised. ... There are a couple of stores there - Mr. F. B. Wallis’s and Mr. Wilson’s. The population, of course, is mostly housed under canvas.

As to general features, etc. Well, Winnecke's Depot is situated at the foot of a big, quartzite range. The scenery is wild and rugged. Game, in the shape of wallabies, etc., abounds in the locality. ... Arltunga, of course, is merely the name of a township near the famous White Range - otherwise the White Range township, where a Government battery - 10-head stamper (with Mr. O'Grady in charge) is located. ... There is a Post Office at Arltunga and, if you want a nobbler [a serve of alcohol] - a Mr. Rodda there has a permit."

'Out among the people', *Chronicle*, 15 Sep 1949, p. 47

"Will Catchlove recalled yesterday how in 1903 he, when 20 years, and his brother, 18, cycled from Oodnadatta to Winnecke's. People called them a pair of fools. Spencer Williams, jackerooing on his Uncle Albert's Nidri station, chased them for 10 miles to try to induce them not to go on.

"We underwent great hardships," he said, "went short on water and tucker, but landed at Alice Springs and Winnecke's as fresh as dogs. We went straight over the Depot sandhills, let the air out of our bike tyres, and walked all day 20 miles through the soft going. My brother and I often laugh about it now; he lives at 22 Augusta Street, Maylands.

Mr. Catchlove has been on the land at East Brookton (WA), Upper Sturt, and for 20-odd years was a MTT motorman until he retired."



B 18351

Battery works (left), assay and cyanide houses (right), Arltunga mine works, 1899 (State Library of South Australia)



B 18361

Bush barber, in front of a typical dwelling, Arltunga, 1898 (State Library of South Australia)



B 22570

Typical dwellings for employees at Arltunga, 1898 (State Library of South Australia)