

# Terminology

Two distinct groups of Indigenous Australians are officially recognised in Australia: the people of the Torres Strait Islands and those Aboriginal people of the mainland and Tasmania. The term Indigenous Australians is used to embrace both Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. As this discussion centres mainly on the geographical area of New South Wales I have used the term 'Aboriginal people'. I have only used the term 'Indigenous' when referring to the whole of Australia. I have occasionally used the term 'Aborigine' if appropriate to the context. Where appropriate I have used a language name such as Wiradjuri, or a clan name such as Cadigal. When quoting directly from primary source material, the more offensive terms such as 'full-bloods', 'half-castes', 'octoroons', 'quadroons', 'blacks' and 'natives' have been retained.

An Aboriginal 'station' was run by a station manager who was usually the teacher at the station school. His wife acted as the matron, whose duties were to 'exercise oversight of all women, with special charge of girls and young children' and oversee all domestic duties. Some large stations, like Cumerogunga, had extra help through an assistant manager or a nurse, and, on occasion, 'general employees are also engaged'.<sup>1</sup>

An Aboriginal 'reserve' was dedicated land for the use of Aboriginal people. Some reserves had an Aboriginal school, staffed by a teacher-matron who was 'almost entirely' under the control of the Department of Education.<sup>2</sup> There were no permanent managers on the reserves and

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1 *Aborigines Protection, Report and Recommendations of the Public Service Board of New South Wales*, 4 April 1940, Government Printer NSW, 6/4501.1, 11.

2 *Aborigines Protection, Report and Recommendations of the Public Service Board of New South Wales*, 4 April 1940, 11.

the Aboriginal Protection Board provided the residents with rations and supplies if required. All general oversight responsibilities were undertaken by the local police.

The term 'mission' was used, predominately by Aboriginal people, when referring to their time spent on either a station or a reserve and does not necessarily refer to a place that was begun by missionaries such as Warangesda or Cumeroogunga. Aboriginal camps were found in many places across New South Wales but primarily on the outskirts of country towns close to amenities. Most residents of these camps refused to reside on supervised stations or the reserves.

This text is taken from *Power and Dysfunction: The New South Wales Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1883–1940*, by Richard Egan, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.