

“I cannot say the numbers that were killed”: Assessing Violent Mortality on the Queensland Frontier.

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This paper suggests that there is a way to arrive at a proximate, dependable estimate of the number of Aboriginal frontier casualties at the hands of colonial Queensland's Native Police Force. By using data that provides accurate information on the number and duration of 'police' camps, the frequency of patrols, the surviving records of clashes and dispersals of Aborigines, as well as some reported body counts, it is possible to arrive at a defensible mathematical estimate of the quotient of state sponsored frontier killings across a half century span. Furthermore, this makes it possible to suggest a better estimate of the total Aboriginal death toll.

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“I cannot say the numbers that were killed”¹: Assessing Violent Mortality on the Queensland Frontier.

Raymond Evans and Robert Ørsted-Jensen

Attempts to assess Queensland’s frontier mortality rate due to inter-active racial violence date back to early colonial times. Though it was always easier to keep track of non-Aboriginal casualties, the Aboriginal death rate remained something of a mystery. There was, however, a general impression that this figure must be large, given the reality of a “never ceasing war”, prosecuted with unflagging zeal by white colonists.² During the 1860’s, before this conflict had peaked, colonial observers agreed that “hundreds and hundreds were shot every year”. By the 1870’s, they were speaking in terms of “thousands”.³

Impressions grew hazier in the early twentieth century as the frontier experience faded and Australian nationalism demanded a cleaner slate. Nevertheless, in 1935, the eminent social anthropologist, Alfred Radcliffe Brown estimated that, during the early colonial years, the Aborigines of Southern Queensland had suffered “an enormous mortality ... as the result of massacres by settlers and police”. “There is abundant evidence,” he wrote: “that many thousands were shot in order that the white man might enjoy undisturbed their tribal lands.”⁴

The first attempt to place an actual figure on the carnage, however, did not occur until 1972, when Henry Reynolds, writing in *Meanjin*, provided a “conservative” guesstimate of 5 000 Queensland Aborigines dying violently. Such was the infancy of the debate at this point that Raymond Evans in 1975 described this figure as “sufficiently startling”. Yet he went on to suggest that, based upon his own empirical research, his “calculated guess” would be a death rate of “almost double” this.⁵ By the early 1980’s, after Noel Loos and Reynolds had determined a rough total of 1 000 non-Aborigines killed in Queensland frontier conflict, the well-known 10:1 mortality ratio was suggested and soon became the new consensus. Queensland Aboriginal deaths from frontier violence were now set at 10 000 – half the agreed Australia-wide figure of 20 000 killed from 1788 to 1930.⁶

Although Reynolds was at pains to emphasize that this estimate was both “little better than an informed guess” and an irreducible minimum, it began to be widely quoted either as a maximum figure or a barely debatable constant.⁷ It is instructive to ask why a 10:1 ratio was so unproblematically accepted, given that other colonial assessments were also on record. For instance, in 1870, colonial commentator, A. Carr claimed that for every infraction against whites, Queensland Aborigines were “... hunted like wild beasts ... [and] decimated by being shot down by twenties or fifty at a time.”⁸ Writing in 1889, Archibald Meston, soon to become Southern Protector of Aborigines, concluded, after interviewing members of 60 to 70 “tribes”, that the kill-ratio was “at least” 50:1.⁹ Why were such ratios never considered? Too far-fetched, perhaps? Well, we shall see.

In 1982, Loos, echoing the impression of Revd. J.E. Tenison Woods a century earlier, stated that the 10:1 ratio for North Queensland was “so conservative as to be misleading”.¹⁰ And, tellingly, when Reynolds, in 1987, advanced the Australian settler mortality total to 3 000 killed and 3 000 injured, the associated Aboriginal casualty rate remained stubbornly fixed at 20 000. It was not accordingly calibrated upward to 60 000 dead and wounded.¹¹ Richard Broome’s influential overview, *Aboriginal Australians* (1982&subs.), with its multiple editions, would also help to cement the 20 000 figure into an almost fixed state of consciousness.¹²

Yet it was eventually challenged as being, in Reynolds words, “thought too high by some, too low by others”.¹³ Among the former was Aboriginal academic, Gordon Briscoe who, in an extraordinary article published in the prestigious *British History Workshop* journal in 1993, claimed only 404 non-Aboriginal fatalities on the Queensland frontier, offset by “approximately [sic] 381” Aboriginal deaths. Historians who alleged “exaggerated ... widespread killings”, Briscoe maintained, in an arresting precursor to Keith Windschuttle’s approaching pre-emptive strike, were simply “political opportunists”, promoting a deluded myth about frontier “wars”.¹⁴ Such reductionism reached its absurdist nadir in 2000, when Windschuttle himself charged that Reynolds could show only five actual Aboriginal deaths at the hands of the Queensland Native Police.¹⁵

On the other hand, David Day, in his race-based, general Australian history, *Claiming a Continent*, charged that the 20 000 bench-mark “stretched credulity to the limit”, considering that only around 60 000 Aborigines had survived the dispossession process by Federation out of an estimated original population of 750 000 to 1.5 million. A “guestimate” of “somewhat more than 50 000” deaths Australia-wide - “a figure approaching that of Australians killed in the First World War” - might be more accurate, though still conservatively drawn, he concluded.¹⁶ Finally, in 2001, Evans suggested that the national 20 000 figure could “possibly” be accounted for by Queensland’s frontier violence alone.¹⁷

Where do all these ‘guestimates’ leave us? Frontier records are so purposefully incomplete as to render an overall body-count impossible; and the 10:1 ratio is so malleable and questionable as to be severely flawed. Furthermore, crucial Native Police files, dealing with field activities, have gone mysteriously missing from the Police Department archives where they should have been stored.¹⁸ Yet a more exacting methodology is still possible. For surviving Native Police records do provide us with a framework that is far more dependable than mere guesswork and ratios.

The exhaustive archival research of Jonathan Richards to locate extant official documentation, outlined in his doctorate of 2001 and his 2008 publication, *The Secret War*, has allowed for a coherent understanding of the Native Police as an institutional force.¹⁹ Richards lists 85 Native Police barracks established at different times between 1859 and 1898 across the vast expanses of Queensland as the colonial frontier advanced.²⁰ By 1869, such camps, begun in the early 1850’s, had spread from Sandgate in the south to Burketown in the north. During the 1860’s, there were 25 in existence and as the frontier spread into Cape York and the far west in the 1870’s, that number almost doubled to 42.²¹ As the camps expanded, so too did the firepower of an increasing number of Aboriginal

troopers and white officers. Breech loading Snider rifles, supplied from 1873, multiplied by a factor of five to ten the firepower of the previous muzzle-loading Yeomanry Pattern carbines, issued from 1848 and the Cape Mounted Corps double-barrelled carbines, in use from 1859. Sniders, with their .577 calibre cartridges, capped with a soft leaden head, could, to quote historian, Tony Roberts, “kill an elephant”.²² During the 1880’s, there were still 30 barracks in operation, mostly in the far north and the Gulf country as troopers were increasingly armed with the more effective Martini-Henry rifles, which outperformed the Sniders. By the 1890’s, there were only 20 camps, shrinking to 6 in Cape York by 1898 as the frontier wound down.²³

Most crucially, Richards has also supplied duration dates for each camp. In composite, the 84 camps that were in operation between 1859 and 1897 cover an aggregate period of 596 years – or around 7 years per camp. Writing in 2010 in the anthology, *Passionate Histories*, Evans married these statistics to intelligence about the force’s monthly patrols, conducted to pre-empt or avenge alleged Aboriginal depredations within their geographical ambits. In pure mathematical terms, this creates a total of 7 152 patrols. In order to account for periods of illness, climatic disasters, trooper desertions etc., he then stripped this figure back to 6 000 patrols – or an average of 10 per year. The guarded tenor of this assessment is enhanced when it is realized that, in many barracks, double or even triple monthly patrols might at times be conducted or, in periods of crisis, continual patrolling by so-called “Flying Detachments” might be instituted.²⁴

The next thorny question involves the average number of collisions with local Aborigines inflicted by each patrol. Assessing this is, of course, highly problematical as the vast bulk of the routine Monthly Reports and Officer Diaries have gone missing. Yet Reports and even Diaries have occasionally survived in holdings other than the Police Department – for instance, in Colonial Secretary’s, Governor’s, Attorney General’s or Colonial Office files. In 2010, Evans was able to locate only 22 of these documents; but since that time he and Ørsted-Jensen have assembled a more robust and dependable sample of 111 monthly patrol accounts, across a chronological frame from 1860 to 1897. From this far larger sample, facilitated by the early research of amateur historian, Alan Hillier, we are able to construct a more nuanced interpretation of the dispersal rate per patrol. Evans’s earlier sample produced an average of 2.6 dispersals per circuit, or 57 dispersals overall. In order to proceed cautiously, he then stripped that average back to two collisions per patrol. Yet this new compilation has rendered that figure an inflated one. We now have a new aggregate of 85 dispersals across the 111 patrols, or a 0.78 average per patrol.²⁵ Yet we believe that this assessment is still too high.

This becomes clear when the sample is divided into 86 sequential reports (ie those available across more than one month consecutively) and 25 non-sequential reports (ie. stand-alone files lifted from an unknown sequence of monthly totals). The contrast between the two series is stark. For the more normative sequential reports, the collision average is 0.36; yet, for the non-sequentials, it rises sharply once more to almost two. Clearly the latter reports, although indicating some of the more ferocious peaks in Native Police violence, are the exceptional ones. They reflect the kind of murderous frenzy that usually

erupted around such events as the Wills party massacre in 1861, the killings of Native Police officers, Acting Sub-Inspector Cecil Hill in 1865, Sub-Inspector Henry Kaye in 1881 and Cadet Marcus Beresford in 1883 by resisting Aborigines, the Maria shipwreck tragedy of 1872, the Palmer gold-rush of 1873-76, the Strau, Conn and Molvo group killings of 1874, 1875 and 1878 respectively and the violent deaths of pastoralists, James Powell and Edmond Watson that led to massive reprisals against the Kalkadoons in 1884 and 1889.²⁶

The exceptional non-sequential reports (which register as high as 5 or 7 dispersals per patrol) deal with only a fraction of such events, as the official censorship of excessive reprisals has been substantial. Yet, if we stick with what we know, and incorporate these 25 reports as special cases, we can use them to plot a mean average between our overall dispersal estimate of 0.78 monthly and our sequential report estimate of 0.36. This averages out at a conservative 0.57 collisions per patrol. So we now have a cautiously determined 6 000 patrols and 3 420 dispersals.

How many Aboriginal people on average died violently during each dispersal? Of course, we again have only the numbers provided by white contemporaries to assess this and these numbers are usually hesitantly given. In 2010, Evans provided the questionably low summation of only two killed during each clash, arriving nevertheless at the arresting estimate of 24 000 killed by Native Police under Queensland colonial jurisdiction between 1859 and 1897.²⁷ Further consideration has now found these figures to be too low. Ørsted-Jensen has compiled a range of accounts of 75 official dispersals where a numerical total of Aborigines killed is provided. Such mortality numbers range from one to 75, averaging out at 12.7 – more than six times higher than Evans allowed. If we again pare that number back to 12 killed per patrol, we arrive at the sobering total of 41 040 Aborigines killed during 3 420 official frontier dispersals across almost forty years of conflict.

This mortality figure of roughly 41 040 is a mathematical and statistical projection, produced by cautiously sampling the fragmentary evidence left to us about the severe degree of destruction accompanying the long project of land dispossession in colonial Queensland. It is not and can never be a precisely accurate figure, nor is it a confidently absolute or maximal one. That number will never be known. Perhaps, if Aboriginal people had really been treated as other “British subjects” were, and each massacre site, killing field or individual murder location treated as a conventional crime scene, and evidence to secure convictions assiduously gathered, and the contemporary legal documentation had all managed to survive the test of time, we now might have the kind of evidence that could ‘stand up in court’. But these mass killings were profligate, furtive and unprosecuted. No perpetrator was ever legally punished for killing an Aborigine in Queensland frontier conflict. Indeed, paramilitary state functionaries, designated loosely as ‘police’, were the actual perpetrators. No wonder the story and the statistics have lain fallow for so long.

Such estimations no doubt appear radical and iconoclastic – even extreme. They certainly detonate the consensual 20 000 Australia-wide figure, allegedly tabulated over 140 years of conflict. They also shred the estimates that the Queensland Aboriginal total killed by Native Police -or anyone else - was 24 000,

20 000, 10 000, 5 000, 381 or five. Yet the methodology employed here has been uniformly conservative throughout. Each considered estimate in the compilation has been assiduously pruned and discreetly diminished. This is a cautious, minimal assessment rather than one that is excessive or capriciously assembled.

Furthermore, let us be entirely clear about what we are claiming here. The 41 040 death rate does not represent anywhere near a full quotient of those who fell on the Queensland frontier. It is merely a Native Police statistic that does not even cover, at this point, official dispersal activities across the prior decade of 1849-59.²⁸ These may well have accounted for another 3 000-4 000 deaths. Nor does it include the “invader casualties”, which Ørsted-Jensen has recently calculated to be in the vicinity of 1 500.²⁹ Nor does it include any incorporation of non-lethal casualties, as other war statistics do, though a 1:0.5 ratio may be tentatively suggested. Nor, of course, does it cover any of the Aboriginal casualties during private vigilante actions by non-Aboriginal settlers. Such figures begin to mount in the Queensland region from the 1820’s.

It is again impossible to provide an accurate head-count of these latter casualties, as once more the process was secretive and unprosecuted at law. We can find, however, numerous contemporary assertions that suggest equivalence between private and official kills. Some prominent observers even suggest that private parties destroyed more.³⁰ And, beyond this empirical residue, we can once more offer some degree of numerical verification. Ørsted-Jensen has compiled an archive of 644 frontier collisions of all types, whether official or private. Some 275 (or 43%) of these incidents are settler attacks and 369 (or 57%) involve troopers. Allowing this to be a representative sample, we can suggest that, if the aforementioned 3 420 Native Police collisions equate to 57% of the total, then the settlers’ 43% must approximate to another 2 580 attacks.

The average number killed per private assault is 8.3 (based on figures provided between 1824 and 1898 in 113 settler accounts). If we again scale this back to an average of eight, it provides us with the tentative figure of another 20 640 violent deaths at private hands. This average is feasible, if not understated, given the settlers’ notorious reticence in reporting their dispersal activities as well as a high level of assault, as recorded recently by Timothy Bottoms in *Conspiracy of Silence* (2013).³¹ Together, then, our two totals of Native Police and settler inflictions amount to 61 680 in 6 000 attacks. Adding in an estimated figure of 3 500 deaths associated with Native Police activity in the 1850’s as well as the 1 500 enumerated “invader” deaths, we arrive at an aggregate of 66 680 killed. This gives us a rough overall tally of human destruction from both sides of the frontier in colonial Queensland. Incidentally, it also provides us with a ratio of Aboriginal to settler deaths of around 44:1, indicating that contemporary reporters such as Carr, Meston and his Aboriginal informants were a lot closer to the mark than later historians have been.

Students of World War One will also notice that the figure of 66 680 is remarkably close to the Australian combat death rate of 62 300 in that war. Queensland, with the largest total of pre-contact Aboriginal peoples (34-38%) and the largest habitable territory to be usurped (almost half the size of the present-day European Union), clearly must be viewed as the epicentre for Australian frontier struggles. The bulk of the casualties occurred here. Yet, if the

mortality figures across the other five colonies and one territory were now added, the total death-rate for all the Australian frontiers would rise even further above that of the Great War. Of all the historians making earlier 'guesstimates', it would seem that David Day was the one who was on the right track. Significantly too, this figure returns us to the veracity of ethnographer, Edward Curr's 1887 claim that: "Fifteen to twenty-five percent fall by the rifle". Curr had extensive pastoral frontier experience from Tasmania to Queensland and had corresponded with squatters like himself across all the colonies.³² As Reynolds concludes, "[He] ... probably knew as much as anybody about conditions all over Australia."³³ If we take the Aboriginal mortality figure of 65 180 as a percentage of the estimated original pre-contact population for Queensland of 250 000-300 000, we arrive at a range of 22% to 26%, very close to Curr's estimate.

We are fully aware of the implications of our findings. We have been incrementally conducting this research during a time when conscientious historians have been pilloried for even suggesting that a range of serious massacres once occurred in Australia. We are acutely sensitive to the wider denialist mood in some sectors of Australian society and its mainstream media.³⁴ And so we proceed with caution and conservative assessment, even as we wear the derisively placed "black armband" with conviction. We research, calculate and write in order to return to history the full ledger of those who, long ago, died protecting their sovereignty, their cultures, their home-lands and their peoples; but whose deaths were more often hidden than acknowledged by a society that made furtiveness its watch-word. Our allegiance is towards identifying, as best we can, historical precision and accuracy, however disturbing this may be, rather than polishing the national escutcheon to a gratifying sheen.

We appear to be looking at an important series of prolonged wars fought against the hundreds of Aboriginal First Nations. They are admittedly unusual wars, where the winning side managed to define both protagonists as "British subjects"; where there were no declarations of hostilities, no agreed rules of engagement, no careful body-counts, no conventions for the treatment of prisoners, no armistice, no surrender, no settlements, no treaties, indemnities or reparations and, afterwards, no recognition of a gallant foe. They were largely unpublicized, guerilla-style wars, without "the more defined, structured pattern of the clash of conventional armies." Their "arbitrariness was monumental".³⁵ And when the struggle was over, the account of only one of the protagonists was recorded as hard copy: Imagine attempting to understand the Pacific War of 1941-1945 with only uncontested Japanese documentation.

Yet, as Reynolds has recently pointed out, these were also a set of "singularly Australian wars" about "purely Australian questions" – primarily control of land and territorial sovereignty. "So if we are talking about war," Reynolds surmises:

It was clearly one of the few significant wars in Australian history and arguably the single most important one. For Indigenous Australia, it was their Great War. How could any other compare?³⁶

The statistical contribution we make here to the debate concludes that for all participants, this was also, in immediate terms, *our* Great War – a war for both the defence and conquest of Australia. Though the Australian War Memorial

presently evades the issue with an ideological obduracy, it must eventually be faced. For only then, armed with an encompassing integrity, can we move forward to a process of nation-building that is ethically-based rather than being, as at present, merely ethnically constructed.

¹ These are the words of Sri Lankan ex-convict, George “Black” Brown who was present in a Yuggera encampment near the Darling Downs in October 1841 when it was attacked by white squatters and their workers and a massacre occurred. G. Brown, Deposition, 13 and 19 January 1842, Moreton Bay Book of Trials, Oxley Memorial Library, quoted in R. Evans, *A History of Queensland*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.53. For more details, see R. Evans, ‘“On the Utmost Verge”: Race and Ethnic Relations at Moreton Bay, 1799-1842’, *Queensland Review*, vol 15, no 1, 2008, pp.23-29.

² *Brisbane Courier*, 25 March 1865 (quoting the *London Times*)

³ *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 15 January 1868 and 21 July 1875; *Port Denison Times*, 1 May 1869 quoted in R. Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited. Colonial Queensland and the ‘History War’*, Brisbane: Lux Mundi Publishing, 2011, pp. 171-73; *Rockhampton Bulletin*, 30 May 1865, quoted in H. Reynolds, *Frontier. Aborigines, Settlers and Land*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1987, p.49; K. Wills, Reminiscence 1895, Brandon Papers, Oxley Memorial Library 75/75/3, pp. 106-07, quoted in R. Evans and B.Thorpe, ‘Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History’, *overland*, Winter 2001, pp. 31-32.

⁴ A. Radcliffe Brown, ‘Black Sunset’, *Sunday Mail Magazine* (Brisbane), 8 September 1935, Hayes Newspaper Cutting Books, Fryer Memorial Library, University of Queensland.

⁵ H. Reynolds, ‘Violence, the Aborigines and the Australian Historians’, *Meanjin*, December 1972 and R. Evans’s response in R.Evans, K. Saunders and K. Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination. Race Relations on Colonial Queensland*, Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co, 1975, p.128, fn.129.

⁶ N. Loos, *Invasion and Resistance. Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861-1897*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1982, pp.189-248; Reynolds, *Frontier*, pp. 29-30, 50 and his *The Other Side of the Frontier*, Townsville: James Cook University, 1981, pp. 99-100. See also N. Loos and H. Reynolds, ‘Aboriginal Resistance in Queensland’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 1976. Pp. 214-26.

⁷ Reynolds, *Frontier*, p.50.

⁸ A, Carr, *Where Not to Emigrate: Queensland as it is*, London: T.Cooper, 1870 pp.24-25.

⁹ A. Meston, ‘Report on the Government Scientific Expedition to the Bellenden-Ker Range (Wooroonooran). North Queensland’, Queensland Legislative Council, *Votes and Proceedings*, 1889, Vol. II, p. 1213. See also J,C, Byrne’s assessment of “at least fifty natives [killed] for every white that falls” in New South Wales, including Moreton Bay, in *Twelve Years’ Wanderings in the British Colonies*, vol.1. London: Richard Bentley, 1848, p.276 and the *Port Denison Times*, 2 March 1867 advocating that, for every white killed, “we take, say fifty?”

¹⁰ *Queenslander*, 25 February 1882; Loos, *Invasion*, p. 190. Interestingly, Richard Broome gives a ratio of between 12 and 17 to one for Victoria, as well as 40:1 for Gippsland, while arguing that this colony was “arguably less violent than some”, including Queensland. Yet he then stays with the ratio of 10:1 for the whole of Australia. R. Broome, ‘Statistics of Frontier Conflict’, in B. Attwood and S.G. Forster (eds), *Frontier Conflict. The Australian Experience*, Canberra: National Museum of Australia, 2003, pp. 90 and 95-96.

¹¹ Reynolds, *Frontier*, p. 30.

¹² R. Broome, *Aboriginal Australians: Black Response to White Dominance*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1982, p.55. Nevertheless, Broome had again written that although he was placing Aboriginal violent deaths at “about 20 000, yet it could be much more”. He also placed the European death rate at a low 1000-1500, Australia-wide.

¹³ Reynolds, *Other Side*, p. 100-01

¹⁴ G. Briscoe, ‘Aboriginal Australian Identity: the historiography of relations between indigenous ethnic groups and other Australians, 1788-1988’, *History Workshop Journal*, 36, 1993, pp. 136, 145-46. Briscoe mentions “three writers in particular who have promoted such ideas [as ‘frontier war’]: Rowley, Reynolds and Loos.”

¹⁵ H. Reynolds, ‘The Perils of Political Re-interpretation’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 2000.

¹⁶ D. Day, *Claiming a Continent. A New History of Australia*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1997, p.130.

¹⁷ R. Evans, ‘Across the Queensland Frontier’ in Attwood and Forster (eds), *Frontier Conflict*, pp. 73 and 75; also R. Evans, “‘Plenty Shoot ‘Em’”. The Destruction of Aboriginal Societies along the Queensland Frontier’ in A. Dirk Moses (ed), *Genocide and Settler Society. Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2004, p.167.

¹⁸ R. Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp. 253-56.

¹⁹ J. Richards, “A Question of Necessity”: The Native Police in Queensland, Ph.D thesis, School of Arts, Media and Culture, Griffith University, 2005 and *The Secret War. A True History of the Queensland Native Police*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 2008. This assessment is possible, notwithstanding the recent opinion that “... there is too little systematic data to draw much more than speculative conclusions as to the scale and incidence of killings and other violence” on the Queensland frontier. See: M. Finnane and J. Richards, ‘Aboriginal Violence and State Response; histories, policies, legacies in Queensland 1860-1940’, *ANZ Journal of Criminology*, vol 43, no 2, p. 442.

²⁰ R. Evans, ‘The Country Has Another Past: Queensland and the History Wars’, in F. Peters-Little, A. Curthoys and J. Docker (eds), *Passionate Histories: myth, memory and indigenous Australia*, Aboriginal History Monograph, 21, 2010, p.29. Significantly, in 1983, Noel Butlin had also suggested that the Aboriginal violent death-rate on the Queensland frontier might be “perhaps 20 000” on the basis of 400 killed per annum on average over a 50 year period. He also placed the non-Aboriginal death-rate at 2000. See: N.G. Butlin, *Our Original Aggression. Aboriginal Populations in Southeastern Australia*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1983, pp. 110 -11.

²¹ Richards, 'Native Police Camps 1860-1898' in "A Question of Necessity", reproduced in R. Evans and L. Day, *Discovering Queensland Resource Manual*, John Oxley Library, Heritage Collections, March 2009, p. 64. We have removed the Frome Native Police barracks from our calculations as it was established in 1898, leaving 84 camps under consideration.

²² R. Evans, *History of Queensland*, p. 96; S. Whiley to R. Evans, 8 May 1995 (private correspondence); Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp. 37-38, 175-76; Evans et al., *Exclusion*, pp. 57 and 129; T. Roberts, 'The Brutal Truth', *The Monthly* November 2009, p. 48. Roberts also notes: "... British .577 calibre Snider military rifles ... fired a massive lead bullet designed to mushroom upon impact, leaving a gaping hole. These bullets had a hollow internal chamber in the nose and would therefore be illegal in modern warfare." In T. Roberts, *Frontier Justice. A History of the Gulf Country to 1900*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 2005, p. 13.

²³ Richards, 'Native Police Camps' in Evans and Day, *Discovering Queensland*, p.64; Whiley to Evans, 8 May 1995.

²⁴ Evans, 'The Country Has Another Past', p. 30; Richards, *Secret War* p. 17; A. Hillier, "If You Leave Me Alone. I'll Leave You Alone". Biographical Sketches, Reports and Incidents from the Myall Wars of the Queensland Native Mounted Police Force 1860-1885, unpublished ms., nd., p. 263.

²⁵ Evans, 'The Country Has Another Past', pp.30-31; Hillier, "If You Leave Me Alone", *passim.*; Ørsted-Jensen, Computer file archive. (in possession of this author).

²⁶ T. Bottoms, *Conspiracy of Silence. Queensland's frontier killing times*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2013, pp. 1-72, 108-09, 119, 124, 134-35, 147-48, 162-64; Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp. 37, 50-51, 55-57, 199-200; Evans et al, *Exclusion*, pp 44, 52-53; Hillier, "If You Leave Me Alone", pp. 20-21. 142-43, 157-75, 192-94, 230; Richards, *Secret War*, pp. 22-23, 25-26, 61-62; R. Armstrong, *The Kalkadoons. A Study of an Aboriginal Tribe on the Queensland Frontier*, Brisbane: William Brooks, nd., pp168-72.

²⁷ Evans, 'The County Has Another Past', p. 31; Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp. 16 -21. On the matter of colonial suppression of this issue: See, for instance, J. Harris, 'Hiding the Bodies: the myth of the humane colonization of Aboriginal Australia' *Aboriginal History*, 2003no 27, pp. 79-104 and R. Evans, 'Done and Dusted', *Hidden Queensland, Griffith Review*, Spring 2008, pp. 183-198.

²⁸ For an overview of frontier mayhem in the 1849-59 period, see P. Collins, *Goodbye Bussamarai. The Mandandanji Land War, Southern Queensland 1842-1853*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 2002; M. French, *Conflict on the Condamine. Aborigines and the European Invasion*, Toowoomba: Darling Downs Institute Press, 1989; G. Reid, *A Nest of Hornets. The Massacre of the Fraser Family at Hornet Bank Station, Central Queensland 1857 and Related Events*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1982; L. Skinner, *Police of the Pastoral Frontier. Native Police 1849-59*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1973; R. Evans, 'Queensland 1959: Reflections on the Act of Becoming' *Queensland Review*, vol. 16, no.1, pp. 1-14; R. Coffey, Frontier Violence at Gin Gin, BA (Hons) thesis, History, University of Queensland, 2010, Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp.114-16; Evans, *History of Queensland*, pp. 70-75 and Bottoms, *Conspiracy of Silence*, pp. 12-45.

²⁹ Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, pp. 16-21, 187-251.

³⁰ Jacob Low of Welltown station near Goondiwindi, while admitting that he “had killed many blacks himself” on various occasions, was clear that whites were responsible for “more bloodshed” than the Native Police. See *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 21 July 1875. James Kerr Wilson, the founder of Callandoon station, also stated that the whites would shoot “5 or 6 whenever they met [Aborigines]” and poison them wholesale. See his evidence before the *Select Committee in the Native Police, July 1861*, p. 72, q. 23-24. The early Queensland politician, James Watt also stated that “hundreds” of Aborigines had been murdered “in cold blood by giving them arsenic and strychnine in their food” alone. Settlers, armed “to the teeth”, he concluded, also “tended much more to the destruction of the blacks” than the police. See *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, as reported in the *Brisbane Courier*, 27 July 1861. The explorer, A.C. Gregory, the squatter and premier, R.R. McKenzie, the pioneer settler, Thomas Petrie and the Parliamentary Sergeant at Arms, Captain Richard Coley, among numerous others, all agreed with this in sworn testimony before the 1861 *Select Committee* (see pp. 19, 116, 135, 138, 151 and 155 especially). In the *Queenslander*, 21 September 1867, a Burnett squatter, calling himself “Scrubber”, disclosed that “...men, women and children were slaughtered indiscriminately during the settlement of the Darling Downs ... I have often heard men, who call themselves gentlemen, advocate the shooting of the gins. I could also point to instances where gins have actually been shot, when the police were accompanied by a number of white men. It is because the police can be controlled in this respect and white men cannot ...”. See also *Brisbane Courier*, 7 and 12 September 1867; and *Queenslander*, 12 February 1876.

³¹ Bottoms, *Conspiracy of Silence*, passim.

³² E. Curr, *The Australian Race: Its Origins, Language, Customs*, vol 1, Melbourne: John Ferres, 1886, p. 209.

³³ H. Reynolds, *Forgotten War*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2013, p. 122.

³⁴ T. Taylor, *Denial. History Denied*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008, pp. 174-225; L. Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines. A History since 1803*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2012, pp. xvii-xxvi; Evans ‘The Country Has Another Past’ pp. 9-13; Ørsted-Jensen, *Frontier History Revisited*, passim.

³⁵ R. Evans, *Fighting Words. Writing about Race*, St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1999, pp.23-24.

³⁶ Reynolds, *Forgotten War*, pp. 248, 254.