

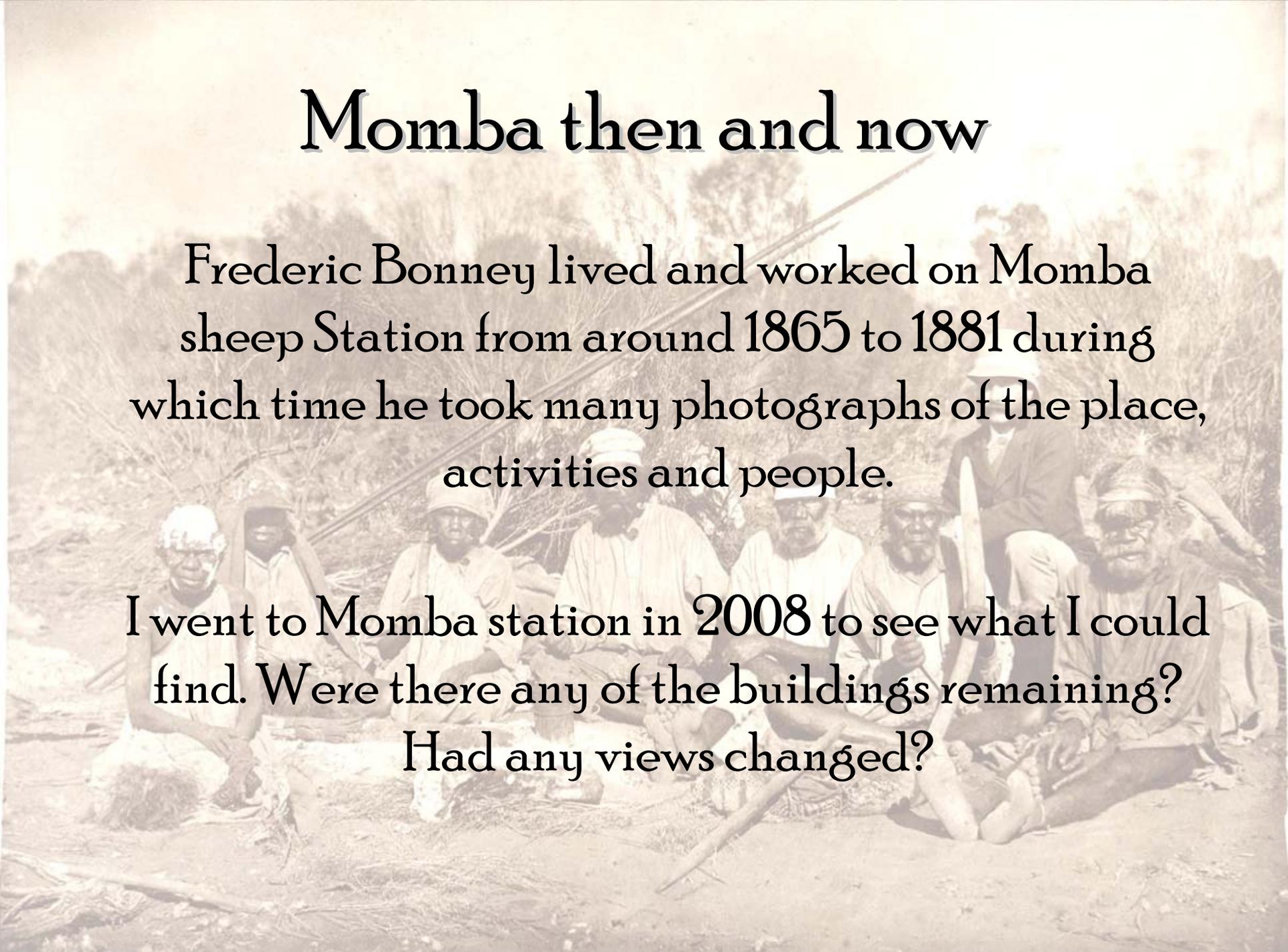
Visit to Australia

In the footsteps of
Frederic Bonney

Momba then and now

Frederic Bonney lived and worked on Momba sheep Station from around 1865 to 1881 during which time he took many photographs of the place, activities and people.

I went to Momba station in 2008 to see what I could find. Were there any of the buildings remaining?
Had any views changed?

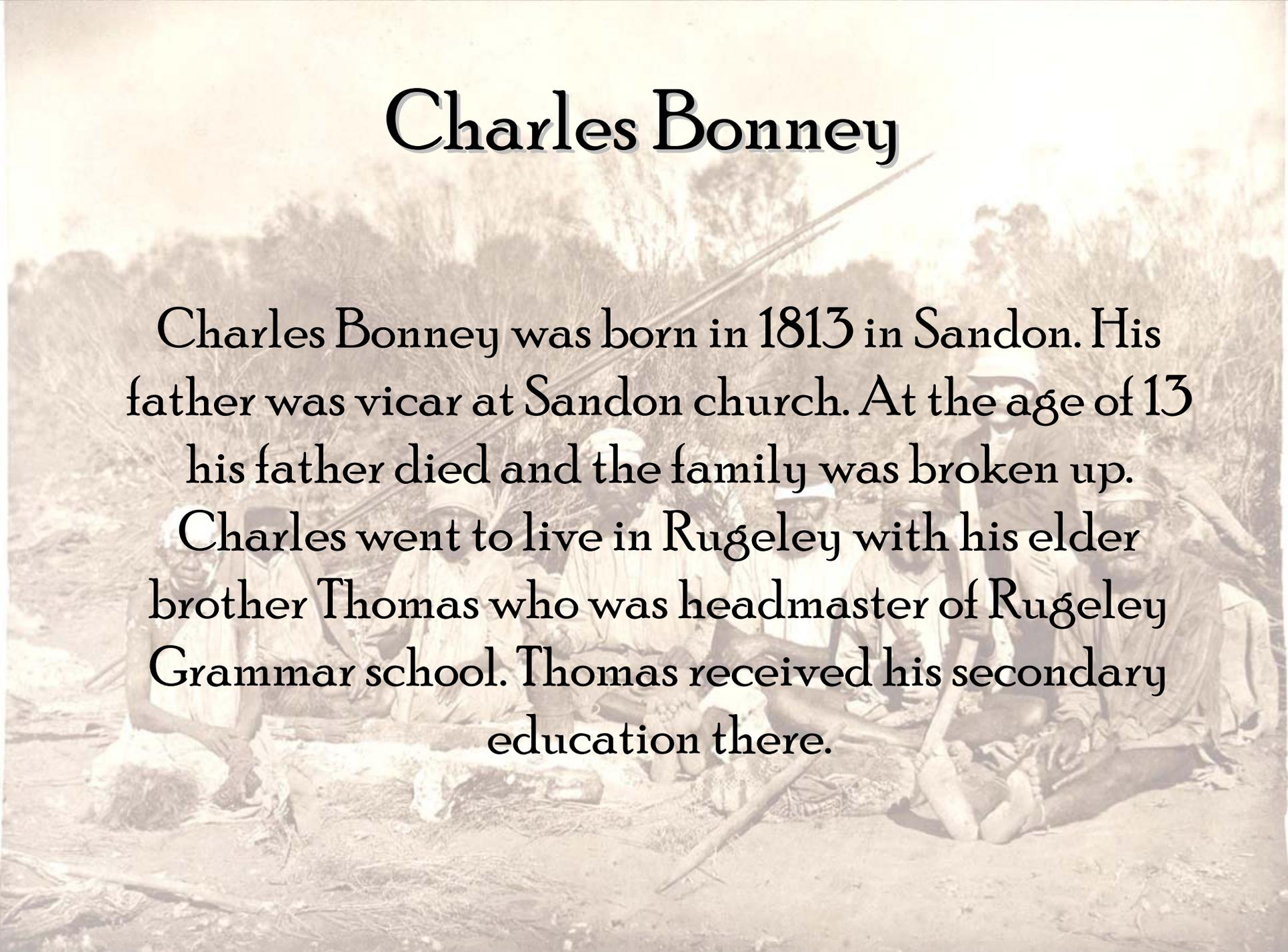








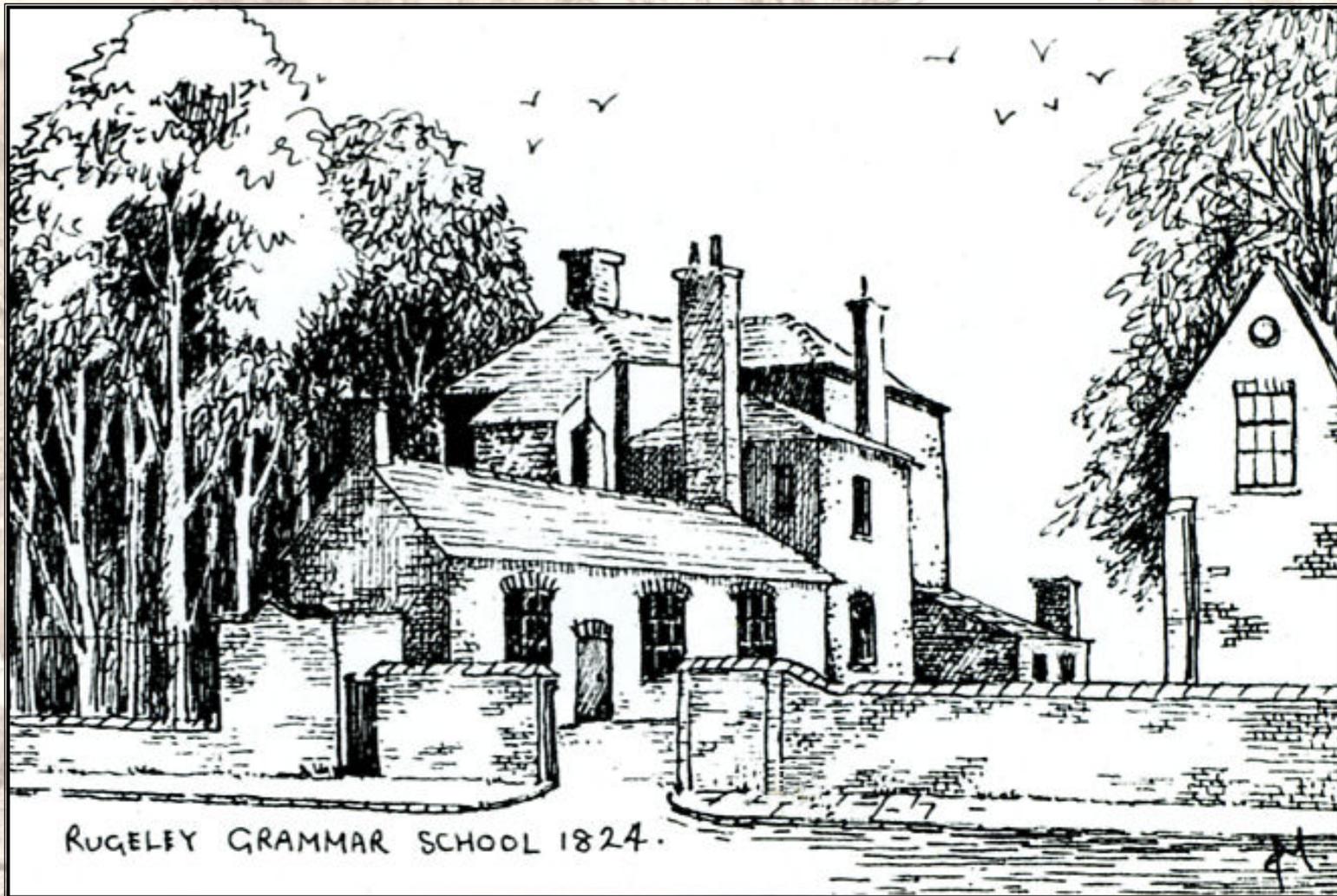
Charles Bonney



Charles Bonney was born in 1813 in Sandon. His father was vicar at Sandon church. At the age of 13 his father died and the family was broken up.

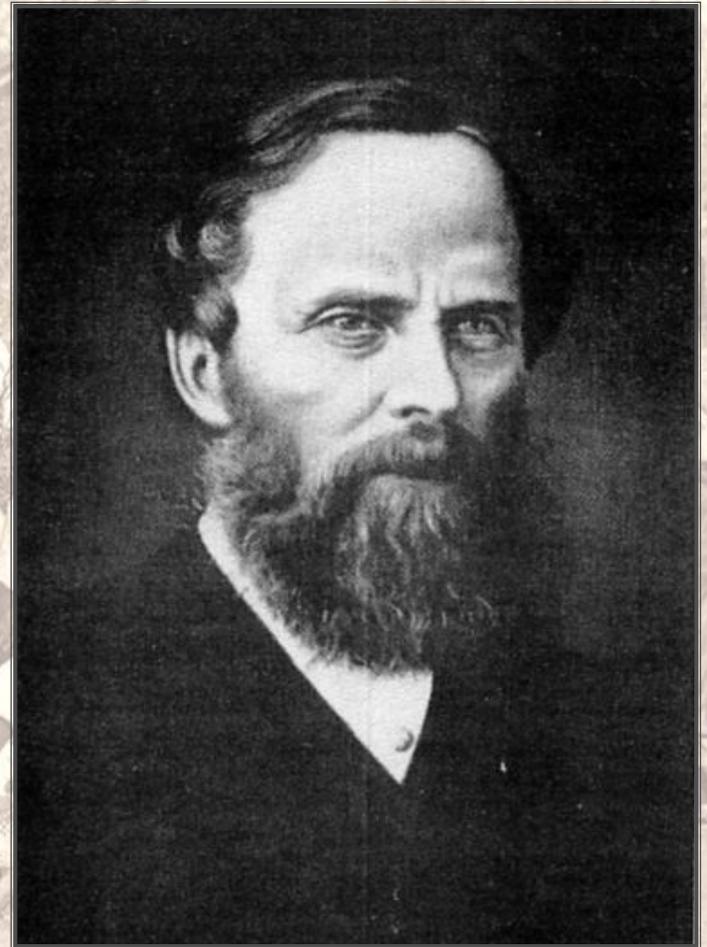
Charles went to live in Rugeley with his elder brother Thomas who was headmaster of Rugeley Grammar school. Thomas received his secondary education there.

Rugeley Grammar School as it looked when Charles Bonney was a pupil



Charles Bonney

- Charles Bonney (Frederic's Uncle) left Rugeley and arrived in Australia in 1834.
- He became a famous Overlander taking the first ever cattle drive to Adelaide in 1838. He helped save the founding city from starvation
- Did he inspire Frederic to follow him out there?



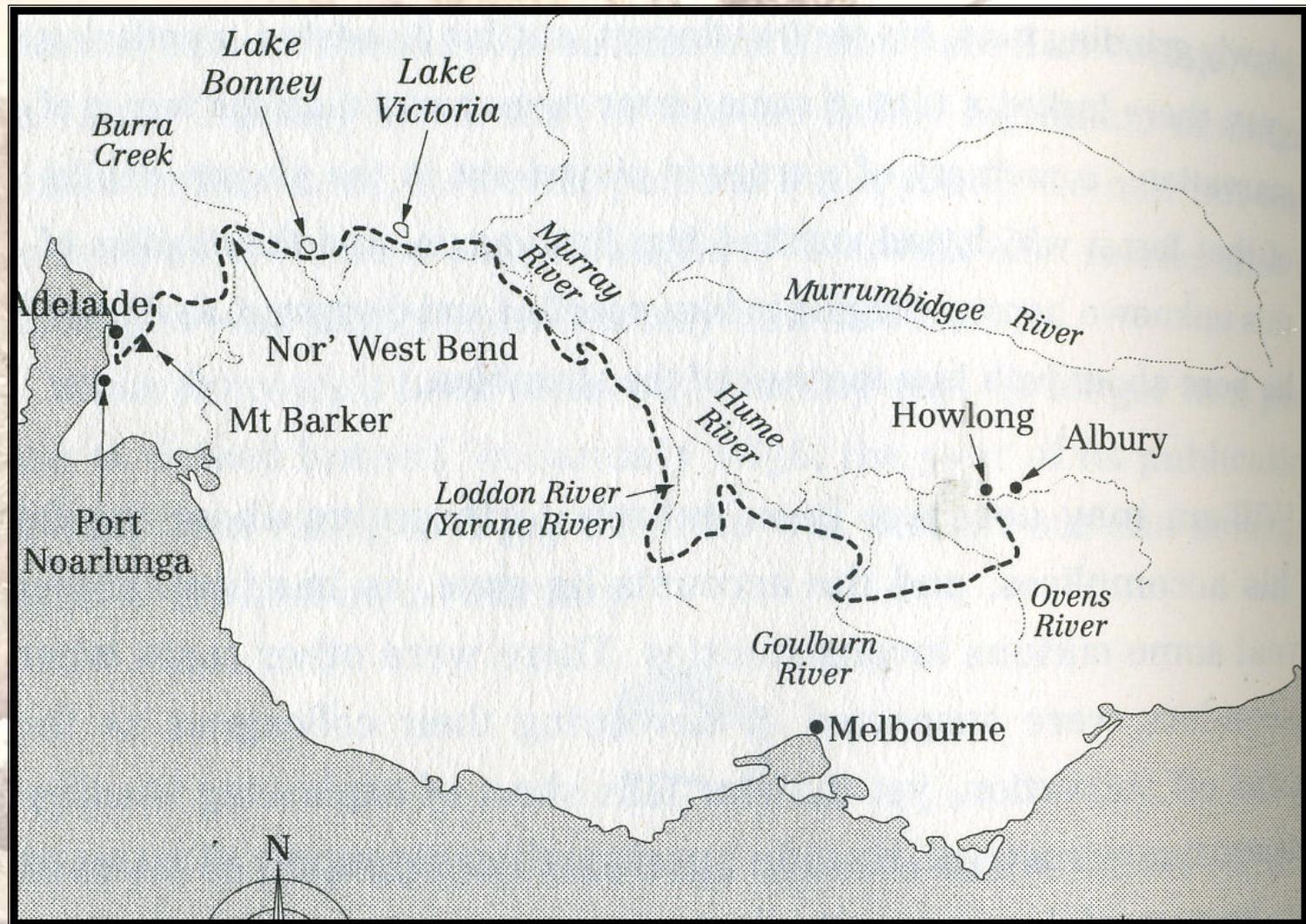
Charles Bonney travelled to Australia in
barque the “John Craig” in 1834



Charles Bonney and Joseph Hawdon drove cattle across country from Melbourne to Adelaide. No white man had ever done that before. It opened up that part of Australia to pastoralists and helped in Australia's development



The route Charles Bonney took



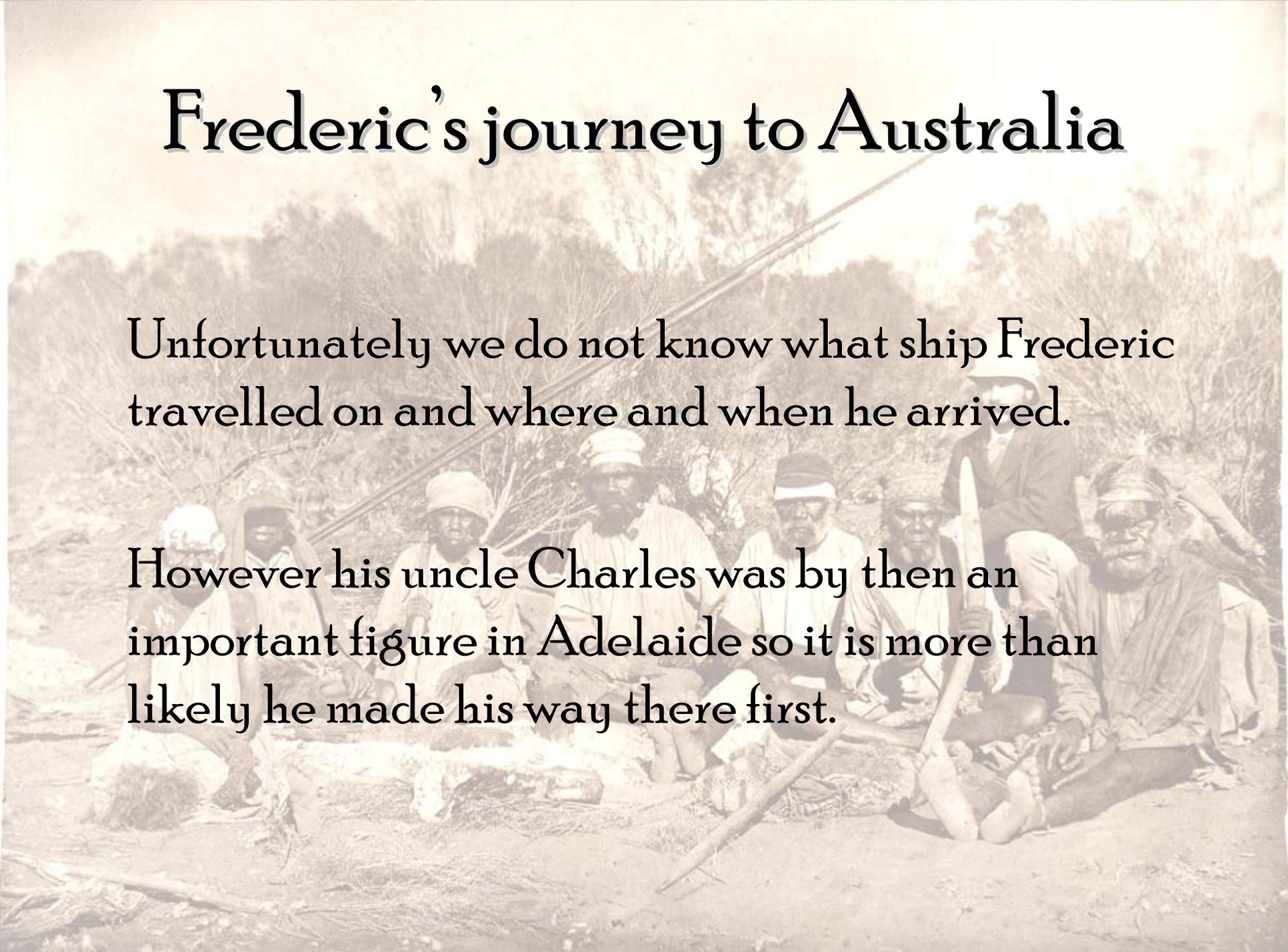
Adelaide in 1839 a year after Charles Bonney and Joseph Hawdon arrived with the first cattle drive



Frederic's journey to Australia

Unfortunately we do not know what ship Frederic travelled on and where and when he arrived.

However his uncle Charles was by then an important figure in Adelaide so it is more than likely he made his way there first.



Rundle Street Adelaide in the 1870's when Frederic photographed it

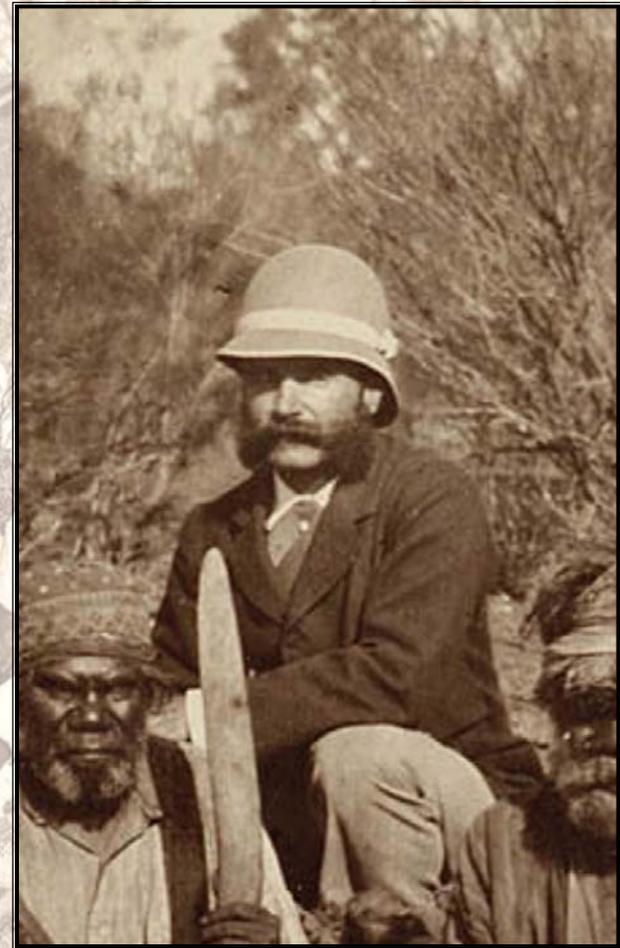


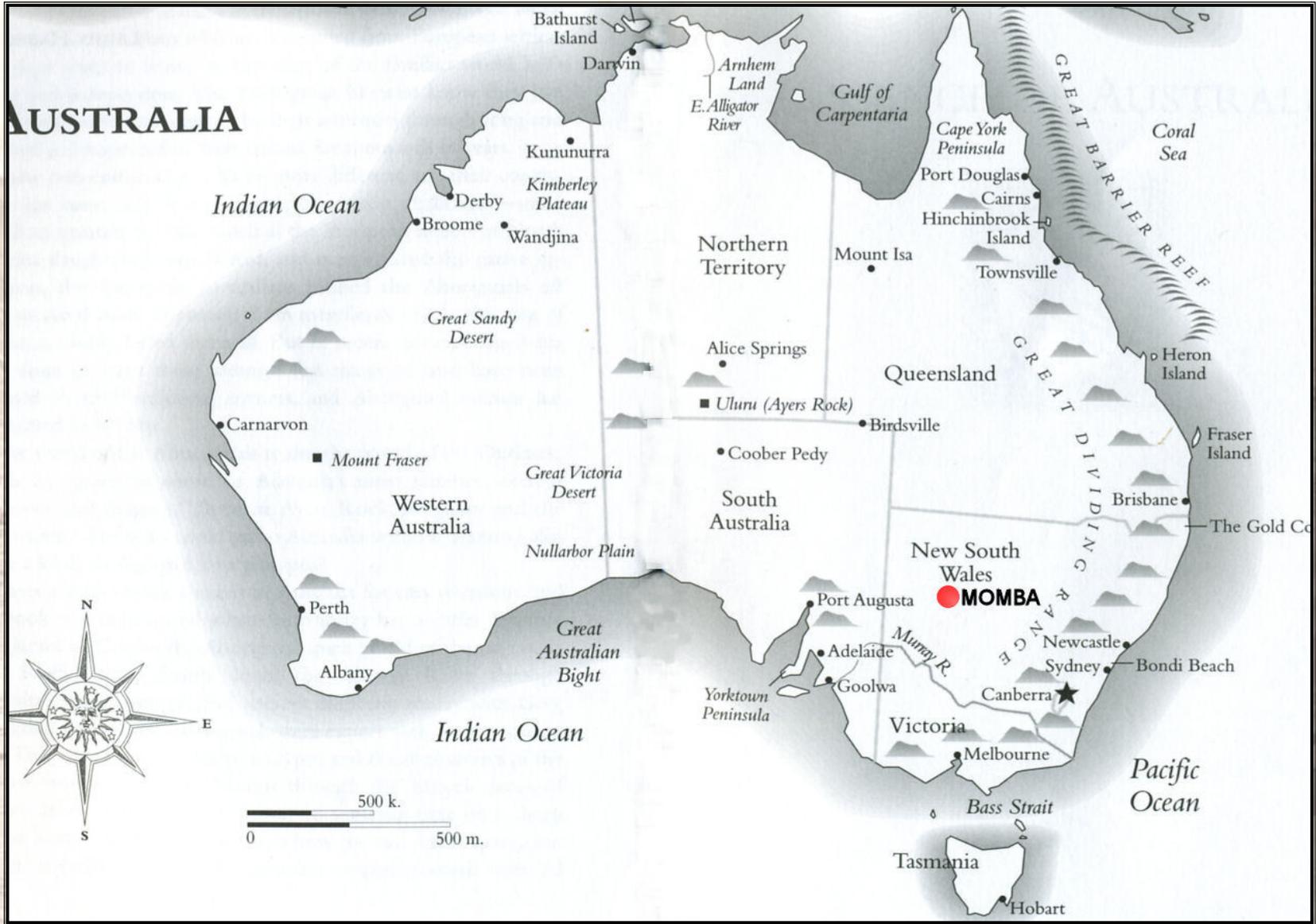
Rundle Street Adelaide as it appears in 2008

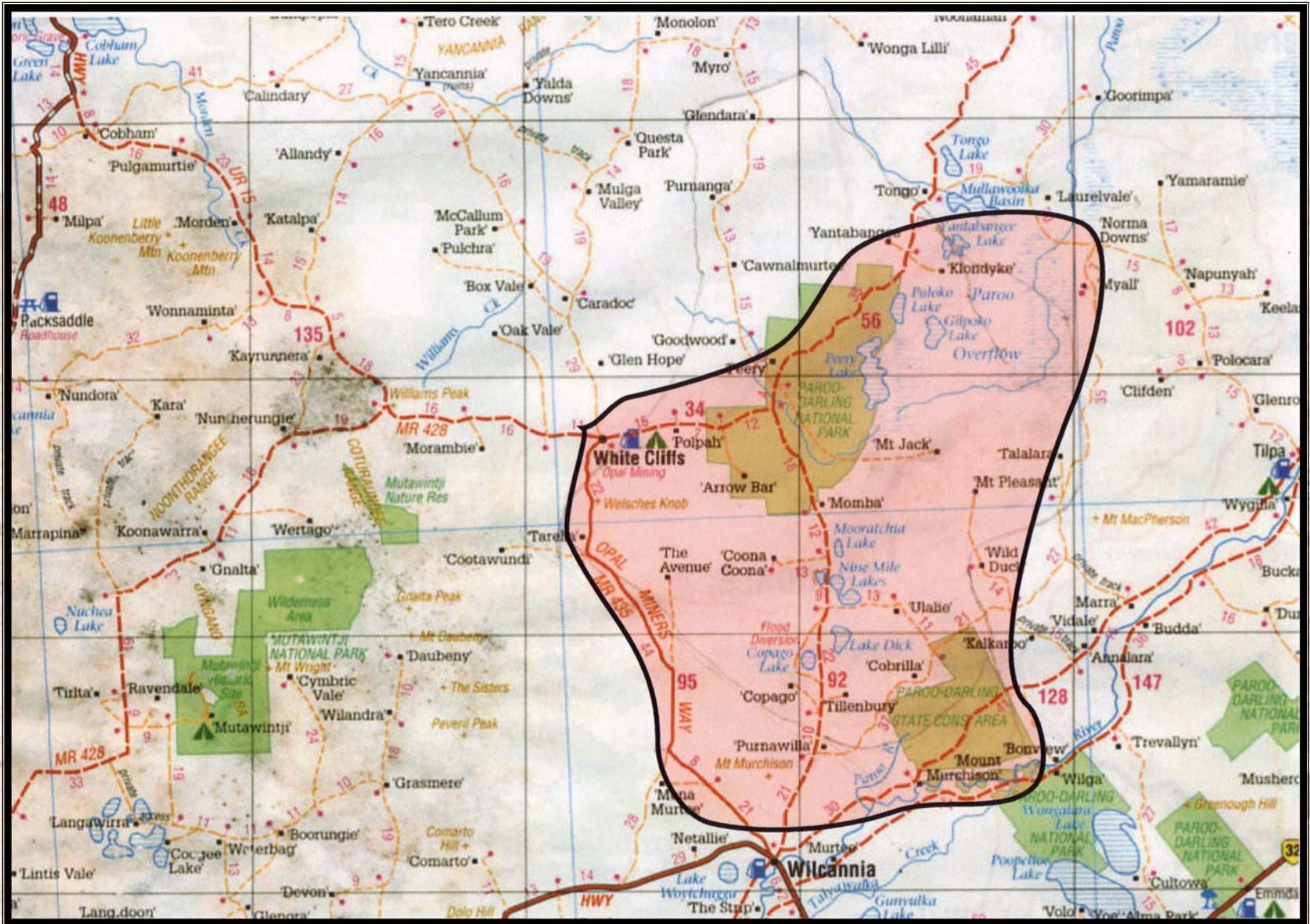


Frederic Bonney

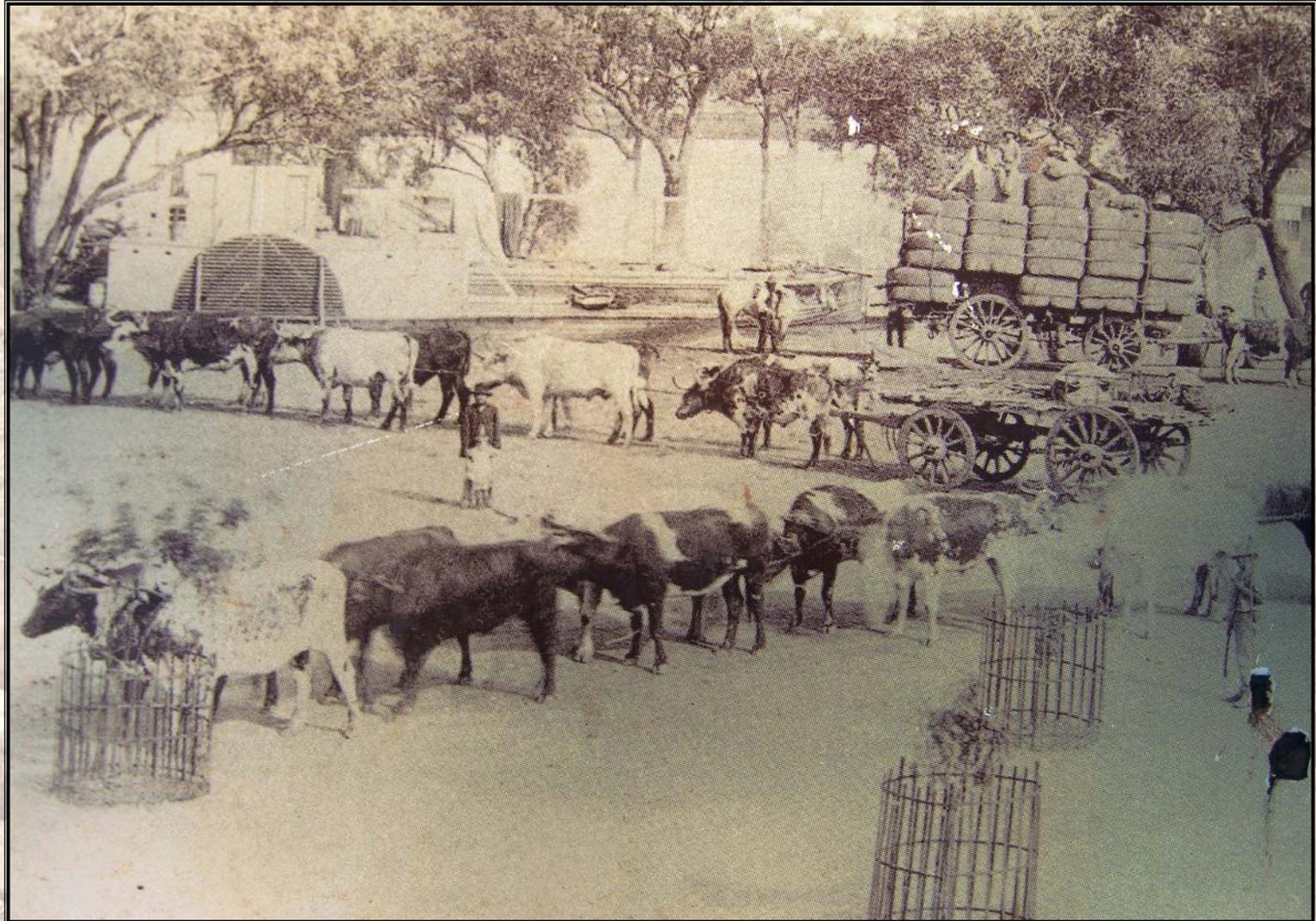
- Frederic arrived in Australia in the early 1860's
- He went to help manage Momba sheep station with his brother Edward







How Frederic may have arrived in Wilcannia in the 1860's



How we arrived in Wilcannia in 2008



As you approach Wilcannia you cross the Darling River. In Frederic's day it was often in flood. Now more often than not it has almost dried up



Darling river in flood late 1800's



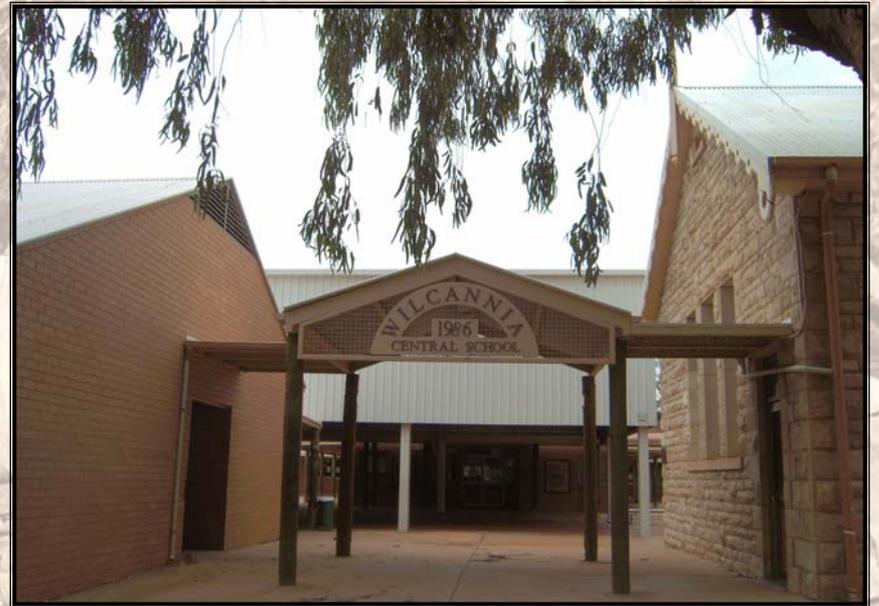
Darling river in 2008

Wilcannia main street

In Frederic's day a thriving town on the Darling River, now a town of around 3,000 people, mainly Aborigines

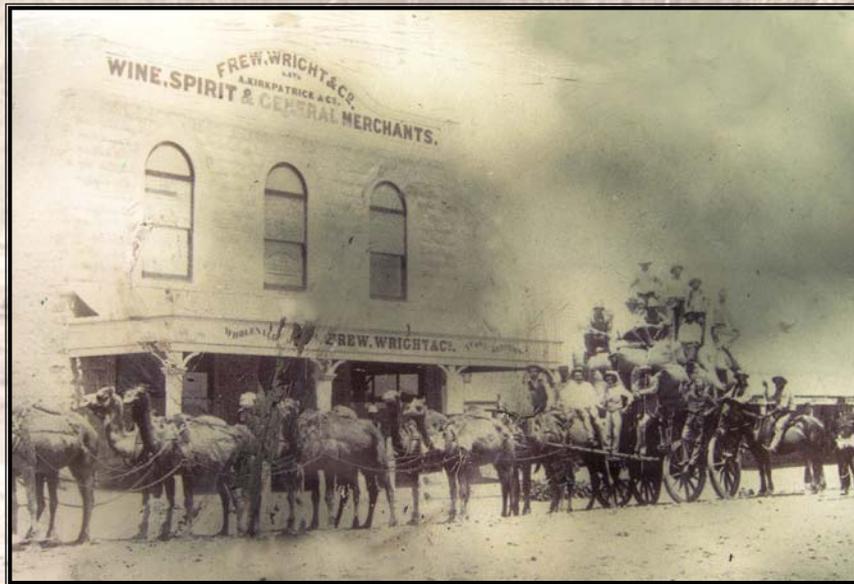


Wilcannia School



The Main Stores

In the late 19th century and in 2008



Late 19th century



2008

“Good night, sleep tight, don’t let the bugs bite!”



Road to White Cliff from Wilcannia looking across to Momba Station. Momba is about 100 miles from Wilcannia

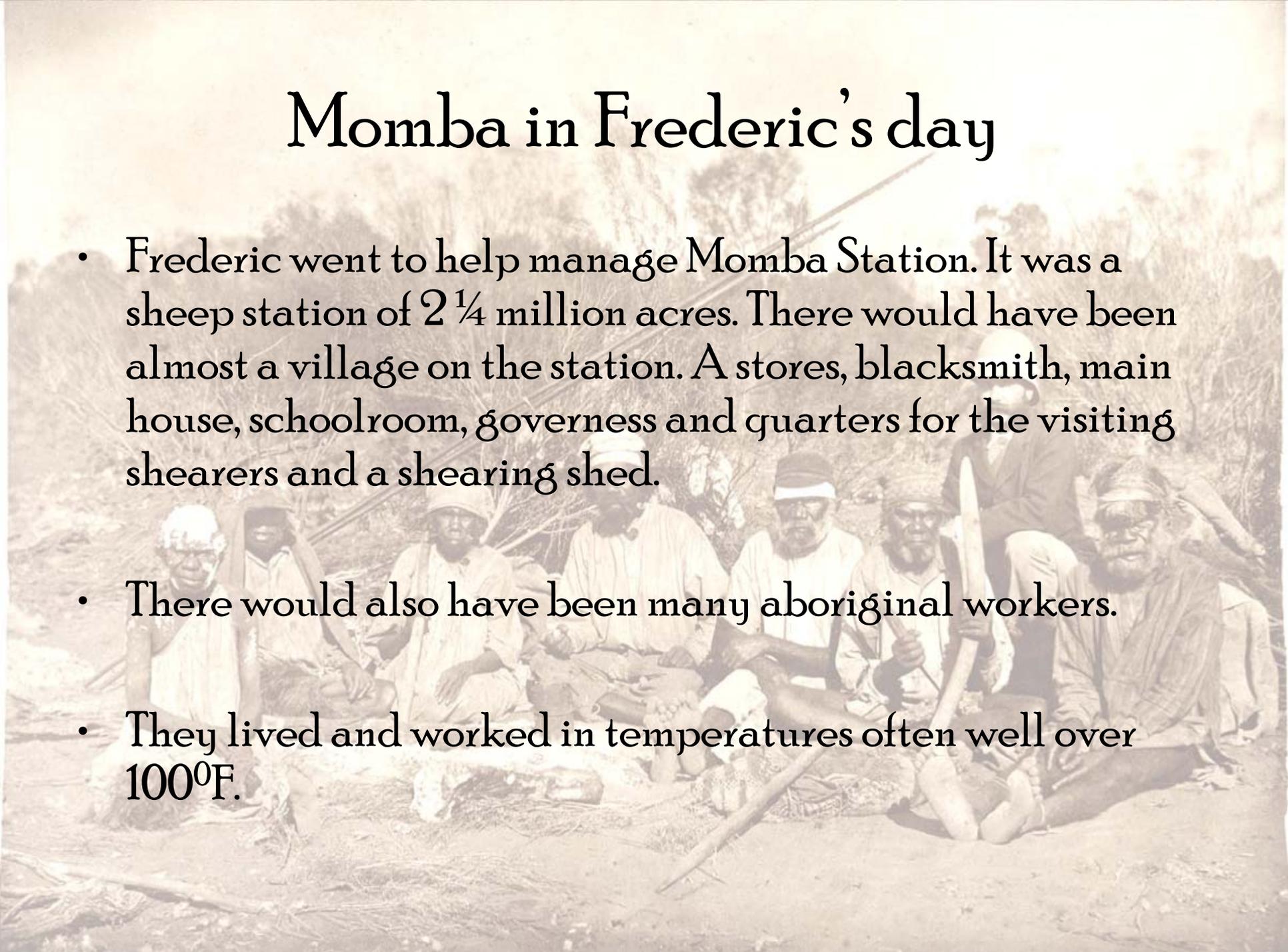


White Cliff the opal mining town on the edge of what used to be Momba Station



Momba in Frederic's day

- Frederic went to help manage Momba Station. It was a sheep station of 2 ¼ million acres. There would have been almost a village on the station. A stores, blacksmith, main house, schoolroom, governess and quarters for the visiting shearers and a shearing shed.
- There would also have been many aboriginal workers.
- They lived and worked in temperatures often well over 100°F.



Looking across Momba and they said this was
green !!!



The road to Momba Station

Or lack of it! The entrance is about 4 miles from the house



Momba House in Frederic Bonney's day



A friendly welcome when we arrived!!



Momba House now

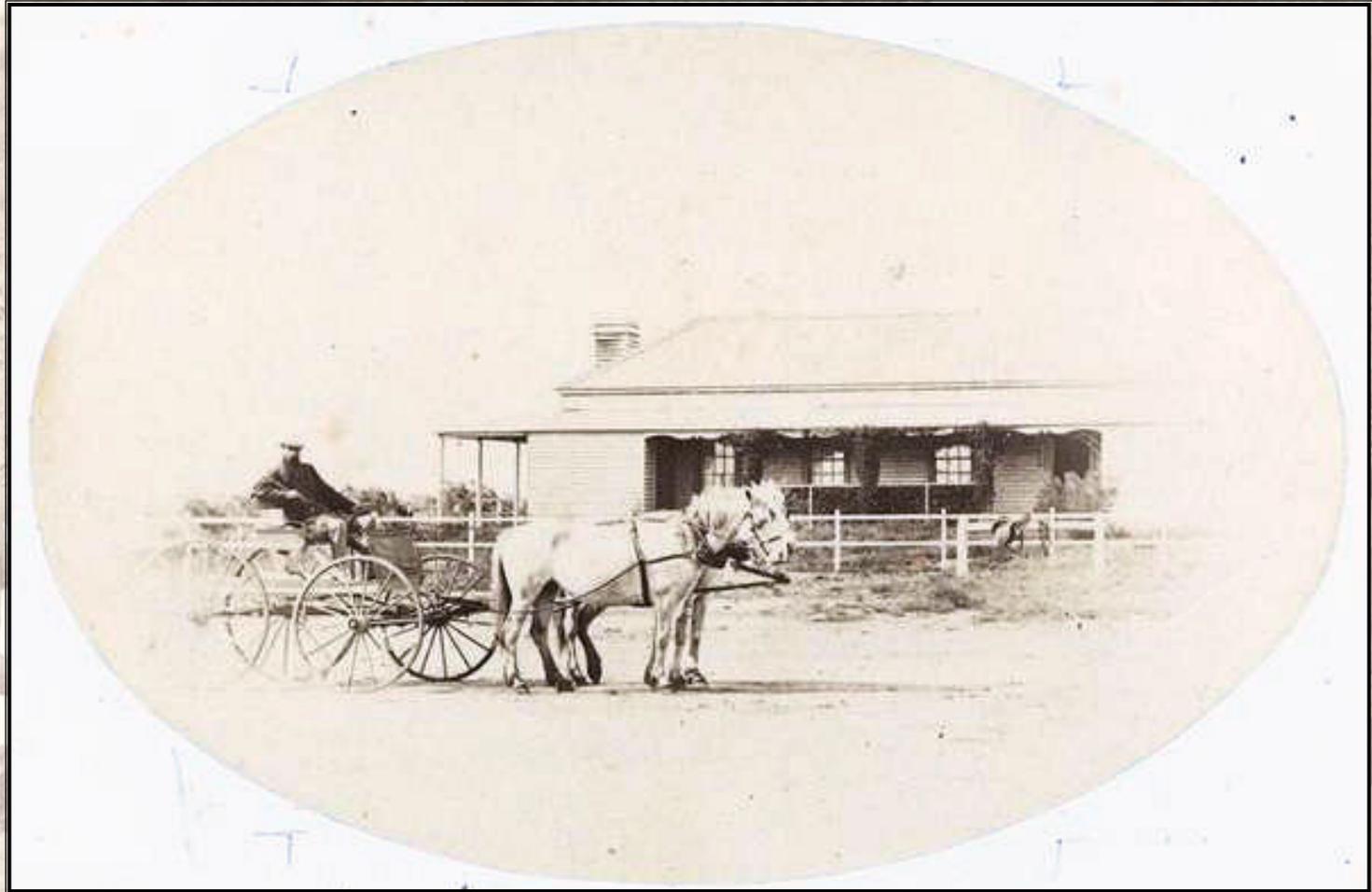
This one was built in the 1970's next to the old one that is now demolished



Momba Station once run by many people
now run by only two people



Picture taken in front of Momba House,
possibly of Edward Bonney

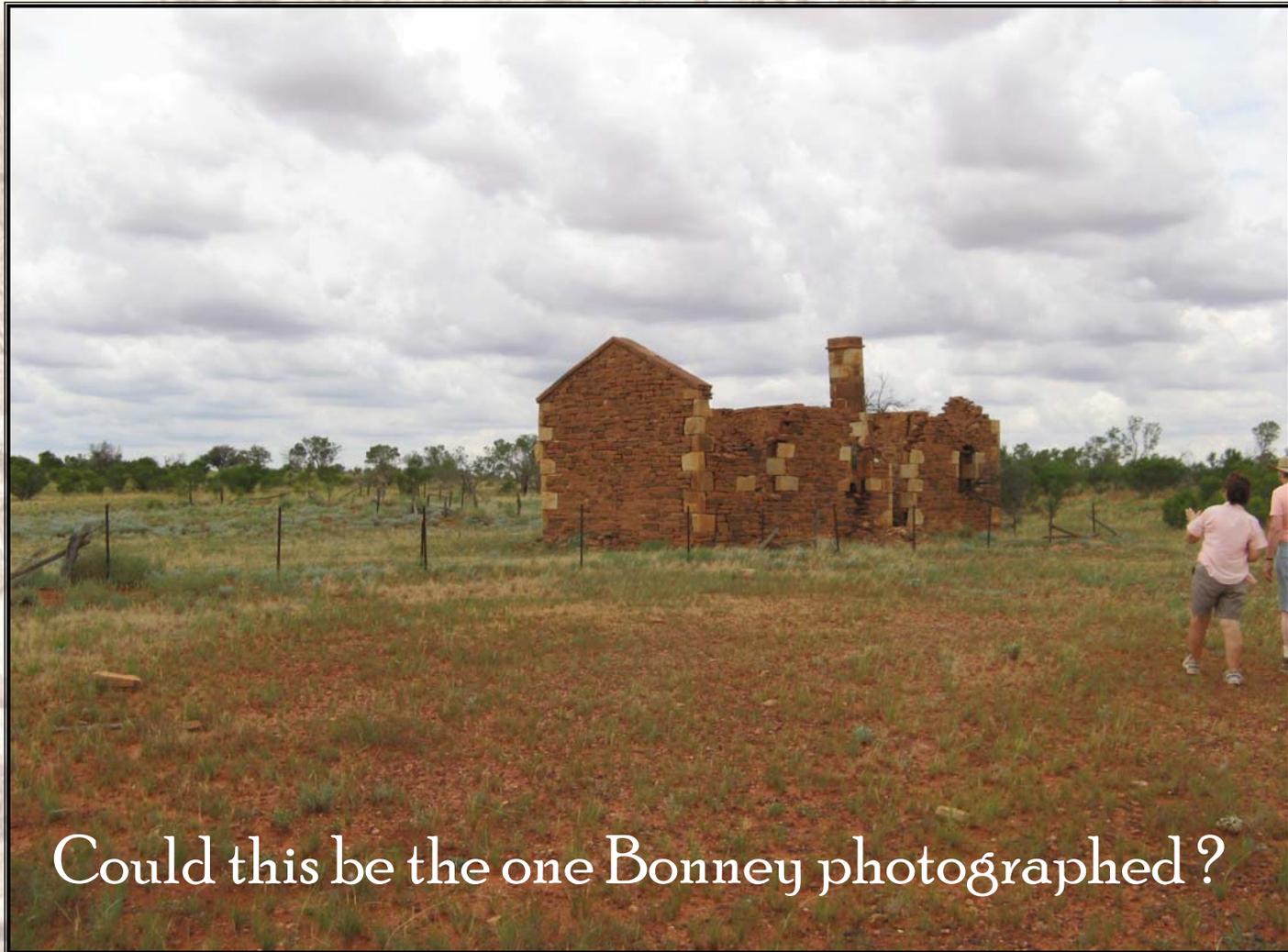


Overseers Cottage Momba Station



Overseers Cottage at Mount Jack

(then part of Momba)



Could this be the one Bonney photographed?

The Stores at Momba Station



Momba Stores today



Remains of the Blacksmith's at Momba



Sheep were brought in by aboriginal shepherds and held in a long pen until they went for shearing



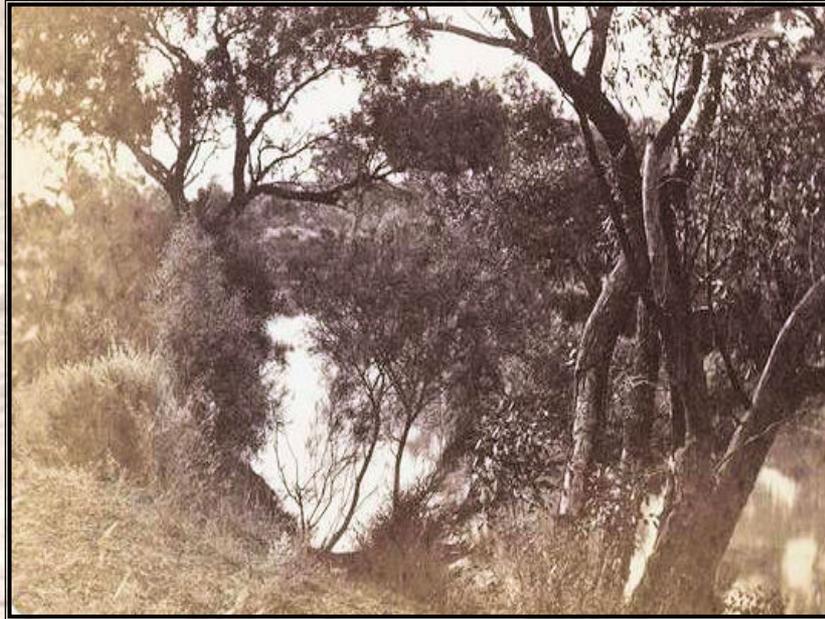
Sheep shearing. Often up to 52 sheep shearers working together



Sheep shearing building at Mount Jack



Natiola Creek on Momba where the wool was washed



In the late 1800's



and in 2008

Fleeces laid out ready for washing



Wool washing



Preparing bales of fleece ready for transportation



Bales of fleece taken by wagon to Wilcannia to
be loaded on to river steam boats



Wilcannia was about 90 miles away

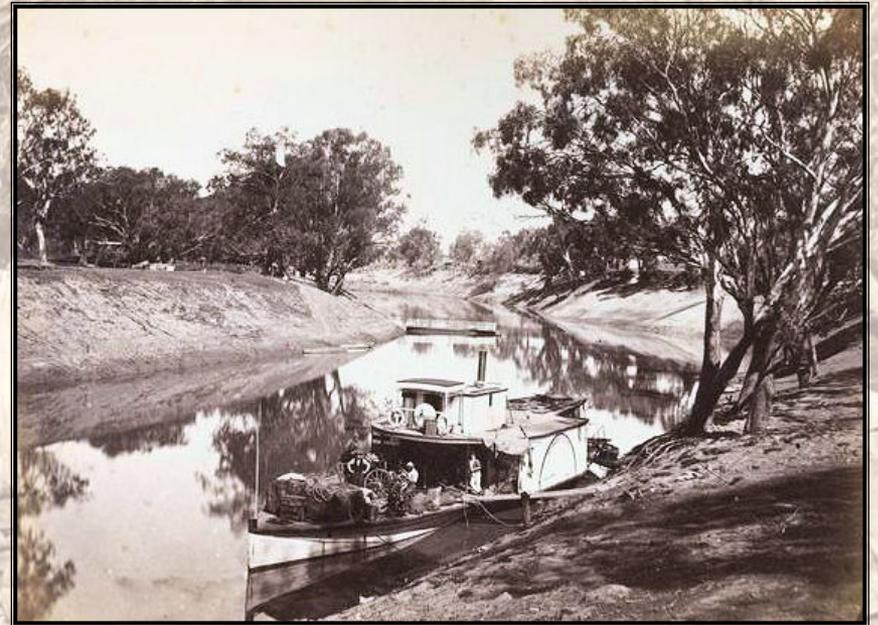


Frederic with some of the aboriginal workers at Momba Station



Steamboats on the Darling and Murray Rivers

- The bales were loaded onto the steamboats at Wilcannia.
- The boats then travelled down the Darling River and on to the Murray River.
- Their destination was the port of Adelaide.



A steam boat under the bridge at Wilcannia in the 1870's



The bridge at Wilcannia today, steam boats can no longer get this far up the Darling River through lack of water



The steamboat industry was huge. It started around 1853 and had a great deal to do with opening up the land to the pastoralists



There were many steamboats carrying goods and people up and down the river network



Some boats were travelling shops and sold anything from lace to wagon wheels



Passengers were carried as well as goods. Frederic Bonney might well have travelled this way



The Darling River fed into the Murray River at Wentworth where the boats could then continue to Port Adelaide



Periodically there would be drought and boats would have to sit for days on end until there was enough water in the river to move downstream again



Some goods were moved around by camel train.
Frederic Bonney photographed T Elder's camel train
arriving at Wilcannia bringing goods for the stores



Today many goods are transported by road train



Eventually the steamboat trade died out as other more efficient means of transport came along



Today a number of old steamboats have been restored



This picture is taken to make Jeannette feel ay home!

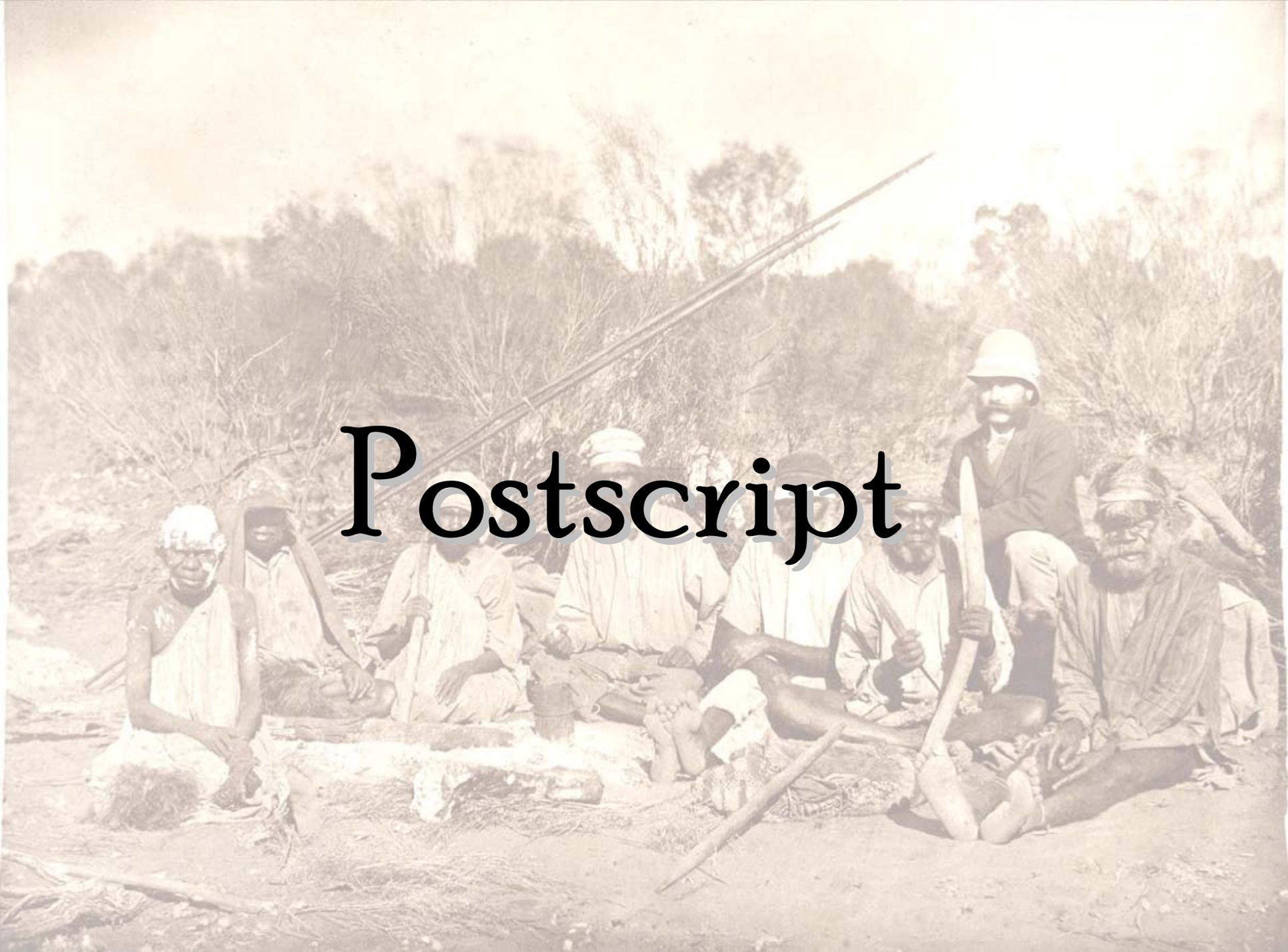


The Ruby as it looks today



And finally – Frederic at Momba Station with some of the aborigines he befriended, photographed and wrote about over the twenty years he worked there



A historical black and white photograph showing a group of approximately ten indigenous men sitting on the ground in a natural, outdoor setting. They are dressed in traditional, simple clothing, some with head coverings. One man in the back row is wearing a light-colored hat and a dark suit jacket, standing out from the group. The men are holding various objects, including what appear to be spears or long wooden poles. The background consists of sparse, dry vegetation and trees. The word "Postscript" is overlaid in a large, stylized font across the center of the image.

Postscript

So we tried the Murray River experience
for 5 days to finish off with!



and then it rained...

The day after we visited Momba Station they had a rain storm and this is what it looked like from the air. We could well have still been there today if we had stayed any longer!



Colton House hallway

Photograph of the hall at Colton House taken by Frederic Bonney during his time there, showing his display of some of the artefacts and mementos he brought back from Australia



A historical black and white photograph of a group of men sitting on the ground in a natural setting. The men are dressed in simple, light-colored clothing, some wearing hats. They are holding various tools and objects, including what appear to be spears or long poles. The background shows a natural landscape with trees and brush. The title "The End" is overlaid in large, bold, black serif font across the center of the image.

The End

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