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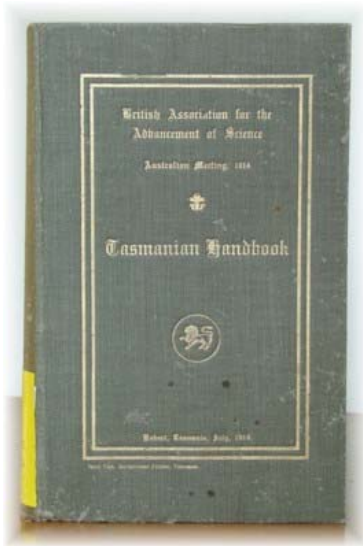
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## Tasmanian Handbook 1914

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Tasmanian Handbook



John Vail  
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1914

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## THE GEOGRAPHY OF TASMANIA.

By Col. W. V. Legge, late R.A., F.R.G.S. (Eng.), &c.

**T**HE island of Tasmania, the southern State of the Commonwealth, is separated from the south-eastern portion of the mainland, comprising Victoria, by the shallow Bass Strait, which has a maximum depth of only 48 fathoms. The nearest westerly points of the mainland and Tasmania are Cape Otway and Woolnorth Point (lat.  $40^{\circ} 38'$  S.); and the nearest easterly points, Wilson's Promontory and Cape Portland (lat.  $40^{\circ} 44'$  S.), the distance in both cases being about 138 miles.

The extreme length of the State from Woolnorth Point diagonally to Three-hillock Point, South-East Cape (lat.  $48^{\circ} 38'$  S.) is approximately 355 miles. The breadth from West Point (long.  $144^{\circ} 38'$  S.) to St. Helens Point (long.  $148^{\circ} 22'$  S.) is approximately 195 miles.

*Area and Coast-line.*—The area of Tasmania, exclusive of its islands, is 15,647,000 acres, or 24,454 square miles, of which about 75,000 acres are occupied by lakes.

The area of the islands is estimated to be about 1,131,000 acres, the four largest being Flinders Island, in the Furneaux Group, 513,000 acres; King Island, 272,000 acres; Barren Island,\* 110,000 acres; and Bruny Island, 90,000 acres. The total area of the State, therefore, is 16,778,000 acres, or 26,219 square miles. Comparing this area with that of other islands in the British Empire, it is found that Tasmania approaches, without dependencies, nearest to Ceylon (24,700 square miles), and, with them, to Scotland (30,367 square miles).

\* As pointed out in the "Geography" for the Military Handbook, the title "Cape Barren" is a misnomer, as it is "preoccupied" in that of the Eastern Cape of the Island. The Western Cape Barren Island is now named "Fleuveu Island."

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

By L. F. Giblin, B.A.

SECONDARY education in Tasmania made an imposing beginning with the opening of Christ's College in 1846, as a result of a movement with which the names of Sir John Franklin, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and Archdeacon Marriott of Hobart are closely connected. The colleges of Oxford and Cambridge suggested the ideal aimed at, but in its first years Christ's College had to restrict itself to higher secondary teaching. Even this was beyond the immediate needs of the time, and grammar schools were founded to fill the gap--Hutchins School at Hobart; and the Church Grammar School at Launceston. Christ's College has not so far made good; it has suffered from recurrent mismanagement in the past, and for the greater part of the last 60 years has been dormant, nursing back to health its original endowment. Recently, with recovered finances and under progressive management, it has shown new life, and is now giving valuable help in the higher secondary teaching to the affiliated Hutchins School; and shortly, it is hoped, will embark on its original career by providing a hostel and supplementary teaching in connection with the University. The two grammar schools, on the other hand, can look back to over 60 years of unabated activity, and for that time have been, with occasional partial eclipses, the leading schools of the island. Of their rivals, one of the most interesting was Horton College, a purely boarding school in the mid-lands near Ross, which ran successfully with about 80 boys (mostly from across the Straits) from 1855 until changed conditions compelled it to close its doors 20 years ago. One of the largest existing schools owes its being to

*Technical Education.*

issued to students passing group examinations. The subjects taught are as follow:—

Chemistry (organic, inorganic, industrial), mineralogy, geology, assaying.

Engineering—The theory of steam-engines, applied mechanics, mathematics, mechanical drawing.



THE TECHNICAL SCHOOL, HOBART.

Building Trades—Trade calculations and quantities, mechanics, geometry, building-construction, carpentry and joinery, bricklaying, plumbing and sanitation, coach and motor body building.

Commercial—Commercial law, bookkeeping, shorthand and typewriting.

Art—Drawing, painting, and modelling.

Decorative Arts—Drawing, design, woodcarving, needlework and decoration of fabrics, metalwork and jewellery, dressmaking.



## NOTES ON THE TASMANIAN FLORA AND FOREST.

By L. KUDWAY, Government Botanist.

THE climatic condition of Tasmania is decidedly temperate. A moderate summer heat alternates with frosty winter, but between the two extremes there is a relatively lengthy period of both spring and autumn moderation. The rainfall is fairly distributed throughout the year, and varies from excess on the west coast to deficiency on the east. The lesser vegetation of the Cryptogamia and smaller Phanogams do not differ in pronounced ecologic features from the condition found in most extra-tropical districts. But the structure of the larger flora, which is responsible for the prevailing appearance of the landscape, is in marked contrast to that usually associated with temperate conditions. In the language of the ecologist, the flora of Tasmania is decidedly "xerophytic," in contradistinction to the mesophytic state prevailing amongst the shrubs and trees of the milder climates of the Northern Hemisphere.

Our dominant shrubs and trees belong to the Myrtles and Legumes, and all show structure that economises the transpiration current. The lesser factors of our forests—Proteas, Conifers, and Fagus—possess the same feature. The Santalaceæ have no functioning leaves, and the Casuarinas attain an extreme by not only doing without leaves but by having stomata only upon the sides of grooves deeply sunk in the shoot. Yet with these xerophytes, not in their shade but boldly exposed to insolation, there are shrubs with broad leaves of thin, succulent texture, as, for instance, *Senecio velleyoides* and *Solanum aviculare*, which are as strongly mesophytic as the most ardent eco-

## THE ABORIGINES OF TASMANIA.

*By Fritz Noetting, M.A., Ph.D*

THE extinct race of the Tasmanian aborigines has attracted a great interest during the last few years, chiefly because of the absolute likeness of the stone implements manufactured by it, with those found in various parts of Europe, and called *Eolithes* or *Archæolithes*. Unfortunately the race became extinct. The last survivor, a female called "Truganini," died in 1879, at a time when the interest in the past history of our own race was in its infancy. The more the study of the prehistoric man in Europe advances, the more we learn to regret the early disappearance of the Tasmanian aborigines. There is no doubt that many of the problems which have puzzled the archaeologist could be solved in a short time if a few Tasmanian aborigines still survived in their primitive state of civilisation. Luckily, however, a number of accounts of eye-witnesses as to the customs and habits of this race have been preserved, and though these are frequently somewhat contradictory, they are a source of most valuable information. It is impossible to give but the most meagre outlines of the Tasmanian aborigines in so short a paper as this, but the student who is interested in the subject will find a complete bibliography at the end. Here I can merely give a general summary of some of the most interesting features of the Tasmanian race.

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERS.

Notwithstanding that some accounts speak of the Tasmanian aborigines "as very tall and muscular savages," there can be no doubt that they were rather undersized than anything else. The skeleton of Truganini, preserved

## SOME ASPECTS OF TASMANIAN AGRICULTURE.

By L. A. Evans.

THE principal rural industries of Tasmania are cereals, roots, including potatoes, wool, hops, pulse, livestock, bark, dairying, and fruit.

### CEREALS.

*Wheat*.—As regards cereals, wheat has been on the decrease in area for some years. This is largely due to the competition which arises owing to the large areas of land put in with this crop on the mainland. The wheat produced in this State is rather soft, but makes an admirable flour when mixed with the more glutinous varieties grown in hotter climates. The average yield for Tasmania is slightly over 20 bushels per acre, but in suitable localities on small areas crops as high as 60 bushels per acre and over are frequently secured. The area under wheat in 1903-4 was 49,414 acres, yielding 768,398 bushels, with an average yield of 15.53 bushels per acre. In 1912-13 the area had decreased to 25,226 acres, and the gross yield to 630,315 bushels, but the average yield per acre rose to 24.98 bushels. The decreasing area is, as stated above, largely due to the fact that, owing to fluctuations depending upon the seasons prevailing on the mainland, wheat is more or less a decadent industry in this State. One feature stands out as of worldwide interest in conjunction with this crop, and that is the series of experiments conducted by Mr. Frank Maddox on his farm at "Eastfield," near Launceston. Mr. Maddox, in the course of his experiments with the various fungi which attacked the wheat plant, discovered that pickling



HARVESTING AT COLEBROOK, COAL RIVER VALLEY.

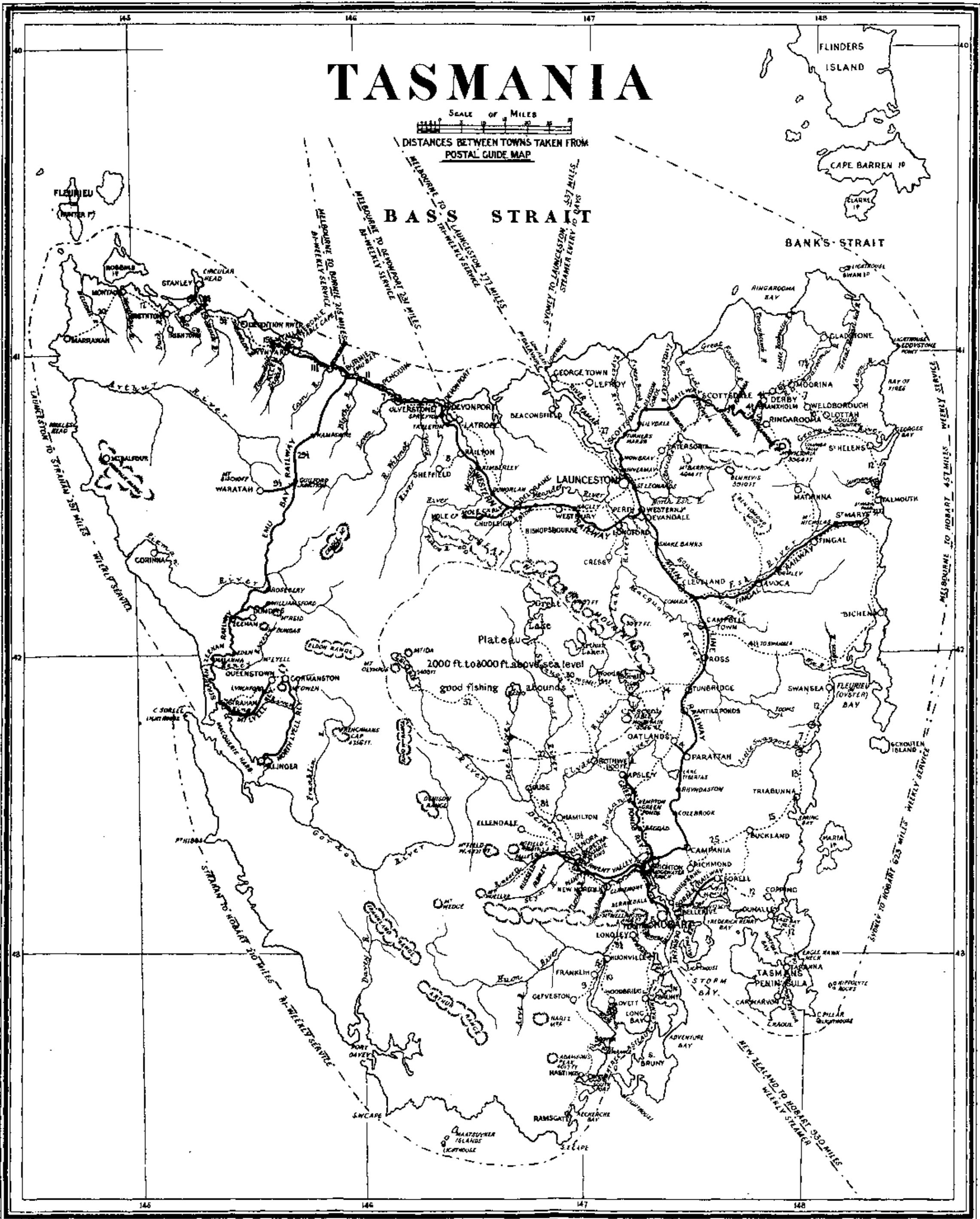
## TASMANIAN RAILWAYS.

**I**N proportion to the area and population of the State, which total 26,215 square miles and 197,205 persons respectively, the railway service of Tasmania is an extensive one, amounting to 686 miles of single line, of which 519 miles are owned by Government and 167 miles by private companies. The Main Line runs through the centre of the island, 133 miles, and connects the ports of Hobart (on the south) and Launceston (on the north). From the Main Line the country is opened up by branches, of which the most important on the southern side are the extension from Bridgewater up the beautiful valley of the Derwent, and the branch from Brighton to the Kempton and Apsley districts. There is also a short line from Bellerive to Sorell, to enable the produce from the latter district to find a market in Hobart: and a branch from the Main Line extending from Parattah to Oatlands. Further north there is a branch from Conara to St. Marys, to serve the gold, tin, and coal mines of the Fingal district. Towards the Launceston terminus a line to the west intersects the most valuable of Tasmania's agricultural land; and a branch off this Western Line extends from Lemana Junction to Chudleigh and Mole Creek, famous for their limestone caves, which are visited by legions of tourists. Another line runs from Launceston to Branxholm, traversing heavily-timbered but exceptionally fertile country, and opening up communication with the gold and tin-mining districts of Ringarooma, Derby (Brissea Mine), Moorina, Gladstone, &c. A private company's line runs from Burnie, on the North-West Coast, to Zeehan on the west, and at Zeehan the Government

# TASMANIA



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