

no less than one third was paid out for freight charges; movement of goods to and from Oodnadatta was dependent upon camel trains which could make only two trips per year; and the sole subsidy received from Treasury sources was a meagre £250 allotted for the specific purpose of assisting in the maintenance of aged and infirm natives.

As already pointed out sheep-raising had not proved satisfactory as a self-supporting enterprise, and the high transport costs also affected the sales of cattle or horses. It also frequently happened that good seasons in the Centre would coincide with drought conditions further South, with the result that droving to the rail-head could not be completed; the converse also occurred and no start from Hermannsburg could be made.

However, the Mission persevered.

Rainfall figures for Central Australia do not, by simple inspection, reveal whether a season has been good or bad; much depends in practice upon when the rain falls, its intensity, and whether follow-up rains occur. However, a glance at a few extracts from the Mission records is of interest as an indication of how rainfall and the turnoff of stock from Hermannsburg were related over a sample ten-year period.



<i>Year</i>	<i>Rainfall</i>	<i>Turn-off</i>
1897	805 points	60 horses, 280 head of cattle—all sold.
1899	552 points	No sales at all.
1900	839 points	24 horses, 160 bullocks sold; (little return).
1901	556 points	78 horses, 2,200 sheep all sold; (the sheep at 4s. to 5s. per head); 460 bullocks sent away for fattening.
1902	411 points	A drought lasting 5 years set in and no sales were made until 1908.
1908	1,577 points	110 horses, 160 bullocks sold; (over 200 horses commenced the journey but at least 100 were lost en route to Oodnadatta).

EVANGELICAL WORK

As a missionary Rev. Strehlow followed a conservative line. In fact, critics on one occasion accused him of having "closed the Gates of Heaven", but such a statement does not do justice to either the man or his method.

Strehlow's guiding principle was that no permanent Spiritual benefit could be expected unless a firm foundation had been provided; consequently he would not admit any person to membership of the Church unless he felt sure that the newcomer fully comprehended the significance of the step he or she intended to take. Over a period of 25 years, Strehlow baptised 46 persons and in retrospect it is interesting to observe that not one of those baptised as far as is known, ever reverted to the old way of life.

In order to serve his people better Rev. Strehlow undertook considerable research work into tribal customs, aboriginal social and mystical life, and tribal organization. He understood Aranda, as a language, completely, and from 1911 onward published no less than seven volumes containing material of intense anthropological interest. In fact, his work is still amongst the most important on aboriginal matters extant. He checked Kempe's dictionary and enlarged it to approximately 10,000 words, re-wrote the grammar section, revised and added to the Aranda Hymnal, and translated the entire New Testament. He also prepared an Aranda Primer for use in the Mission School.



This young fellow with the real Rock-n-Roll stance is Johnny Olsen, of Uralla