

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

DIARY

OF THE

Exploring Expedition

LED BY MR. W. J. O'DONNELL,

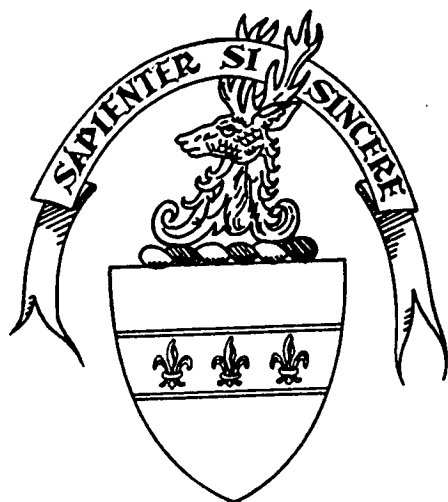
ON BEHALF OF THE

Cambridge Downs Pastoral Association

MELBOURNE.

*From Port Darwin to Cambridge Gulf, North
Kimberley District, Western Australia,
and back.*

1ST JANUARY, 1884.



Ex Libris
Rodney Davidson

DIARY.

THE following is the report by Mr. W. J. O'Donnell of his recent exploration trip in Western Australia. Mr. O'Donnell was the leader of a party sent out by a syndicate in Melbourne for the purpose of examining the country in the Kimberley district, north-east of the King Leopold Ranges, which country had been, so far, unexplored. Besides Mr. O'Donnell, the party consisted of Mr. W. J. Carr-Boyd, second in command; Mr. A. J. Wells, surveyor; and Messrs. O'Malley, Linacre, and Wall. The report is dated "Melbourne, December, 1883":—

Arrived at Palmerston by s.s. "Catterthun," January 18, 1883, the vessel lying at anchor about a quarter of a mile from the shore. Not wishing to submit to the exorbitant charge of £1 per head lighterage, I elected to swim the horses, two at a time, behind the small boats. Landed all safely, and then put them in the police paddock, waiting for the arrival of the "Meath," on board of which our plant was. This caused a delay of a fortnight. In the meantime, from unexplained causes, four of these horses died before making a start.

On the 1st February, travelling along the telegraph line, we started for Southport, which we reached on the fifth day. By this time I found that the number of horses we had was not nearly sufficient for the journey, consequently wired to Melbourne for funds to purchase additional horses.

This, together with very heavy rains which set in, caused a delay of another fortnight.

On the 19th February we got away from Southport, and still travelling along the line of telegraph, reached the Katherine on the 15th March—a distance of about 260 miles. Owing to the bad state of the roads, and low condition of horses, and an occasional day's spell on good feed, we only made an average of 10 miles a day. At this time I thought it necessary that the horses should have a good spell, as some of them had fallen off considerably in condition. Here I exchanged four of the weakest for four strong ones from Mr. Giles, of Springvale station.

On the 25th we again started for the Delamere station, the furthest out station in the territory, a distance of about 80 miles, which we reached by easy stages in seven days. We had another delay here of a week. In the

meantime we got a bullock in, and the meat jerked in the sun and smoked. This gave us 350 lb. of dried meat for the whole of the trip. As there was no possibility of getting provisions after this date, I thought it necessary to put the party on rations. These consisted of 5 lb. of flour, 4 lb. of beef, 1½ lb. of sugar, and 4 oz. of tea per man per week. Making a final start on the 8th April, and steering in a southerly direction, after 14 miles travelling, camped on a creek called George's Creek. We here marked the first tree, O.D. 1. Next day, still travelling southerly, we reached the head of Gregory's Creek in about 14 miles. The whole of the country passed over since leaving Delamere was exceptionally good, being composed of rich flats, open forest, and downs country, well grassed with Mitchell, rye, Landsborough, and a variety of other grasses. Marked tree O.D. 2.

April 10.—Following Gregory's Creek down in a general S.W. by S. course for 13 miles, we formed camp, O.D. 3.

April 11.—Leaving Gregory's Creek, and steering a S. by W. course, we travelled 15 miles, and then camped on a creek trending towards the Victoria River. Marked tree O.D. 4.

April 12.—Owing to unavoidable causes, we only made two miles, in a southerly direction, and camped on a creek similar to the last one.

April 13.—Still keeping south, over low tableland, and cutting the course of several creeks trending towards the Victoria, we camped on a large sandy creek coming from the east, after travelling 10 miles. Marked tree O.D. 6.

April 14.—Proceeding on our way, we travelled on a general S. by W. course over some very stony country, and in 19 miles camped on a large stony creek. Marked tree O.D. 7.

April 15.—Keeping southerly again to-day, and crossing the course of numerous creeks, all trending westerly, we camped on another large creek, after travelling 16 miles. Marked tree O.D. 8.

April 16.—Continuing our journey, and shaping a general S.W. by S. course, in 10 miles struck the Victoria River. Not being able to cross it here, we travelled along its bed for a mile and a half before effecting a passage through the tall reeds and long grasses which line its banks. This is a noble river, and is heavily timbered with such trees as giant gum, box, baubinia, swamp cedar, wild fig, curryjohn, melaleuca, and numerous others. The entire country passed over since leaving Delamere

station proved to be of first-class description, is well grassed, and watered by numerous creeks coming from the east and flowing towards the Victoria, in many of which were good springs.

The geological formation of the country passed over to here was limestone, chert, and sandstone, while close to the Victoria trap-rock appeared. Marked tree O.D. 9. Lat. 16 deg. 41 min. 30 sec., long. 131 deg. 18 min.

April 17.—As it was necessary to shoe some of the horses here, and seeing the necessity of giving them a day's spell, camped here all day.

April 18.—Following the course of the Victoria River up, and passing over some grand pastoral country, camped on a billabong close to the Victoria River, having made 10 miles in a general S. by E. course. Marked tree O.D. 10.

April 19.—Still following course of river, passing over same description of country as yesterday, in a S.S.W. course for 14 miles, we camped on a large waterhole. The prevailing rocks to-day near the river were trap, while limestone and sandstone occurred at the back country. Marked tree O.D. 11.

April 20.—Ten miles south-westerly to-day, following the course of the river, when we struck the course of a large creek coming from the west, which we ran up for a mile and a half, and camped on a good-sized waterhole. The country passed over to-day was for the most part well grassed, with occasional patches of triodia, the formation being limestone, with jasper and chert appearing occasionally. Marked tree O.D. 12.

April 21.—As the horses appeared to be getting weak, we remained here all day to spell them.

April 22.—As the Victoria from this point trends too much to the south, I determined to leave it, and shaping a general W. by S. course for 21 miles, we passed over some of the best pastoral country met with by us, composed of immense open plains and downs as far as the eye could reach. During the fore part of the day we crossed over numerous creeks containing water, but failed to reach water on our course before dark. I, however, having gone ahead of the party, found plenty, but too late for the party to get to it that night.

April 23.—Making an early start this morning, and travelling north-easterly for four miles, reached the water found by me last night. Marked tree O.D. 14; lat. 17 deg. 8 min. Being anxious to explore country ahead before shifting party, I took a fresh horse, and steering a S.W. course, in 11 miles discovered a very large watercourse coming from the west, which I named Stevens' Creek, after Mr. H. W. H. Stevens, Port Darwin, the manager of Messrs. Fisher and Lyons' property in the Northern Territory. I then returned to the camp where I left party.

April 24.—Starting with the party this morning, and following on my yesterday's tracks, we camped on Stevens' Creek. We passed over

to-day some splendidly-grassed land, rich, and various descriptions. Judging from the size of this creek, it must have a long course, and its banks were lined with fine timber, suitable for building and fencing purposes. The geological formation of the country here is basaltic, with low hills of jasper and iron, and limestone pebbles strewn the plains. Marked tree O.D. 15. Lat. 17 deg. 15 min., long. 130 deg. 46 min.

April 25.—An early start this morning, and following up Stevens' Creek for 11 miles in a W. by N direction, we camped on a nice waterhole. The last few miles of our journey were over rough ironstone country, the ironstone being very rich, and cropping out in large boulders. As this creek keeps too much to the north for us, we intend leaving it here. Marked tree O.D. 16.

April 26.—Judging from Gregory's journal, I believe the country lying between here and Stirling Creek, a distance of 45 miles, to be very dry; so I think it better to remain on these waters till midday, then giving the horses a final drink, hope to reach Stirling Creek the following night, unless I should in the meantime discover other waters on our course.

At half-past 12, allowing the horses a good drink, we started on a south-west course. I fortunately found sufficient water for party after travelling 12 miles, at which we camped. The country passed over to here was principally sandstone tableland and open forest, well grassed, with triodia intervening. Marked tree O.D. 17. Lat. 17 deg. 20 min.

April 27.—Our horses having strayed from here last night, gave them a good drink at 8 o'clock, and shaping an S.W. course I was again most fortunate in striking the course of a good-sized creek in 13 miles, in the billabongs of which I found several nice waterholes, on which we camped. The country passed over was open forest country, poor, sandy soil, covered with iron and limestone pebbles, coarse grasses, and triodia. Marked tree O.D. 18.

April 28.—Starting early this morning, and steering W.S.W. over similar country to that crossed yesterday for 10 miles, we then entered a better description of country, and in six miles further came to where the tableland ended abruptly in steep cliffs to a deep valley below. After some delay we succeeded in finding a passage down its sides, and in two miles further we entered some very fine, well-grassed country, with several creeks and billabongs crossing the plains. In two miles further we reached the Stirling Creek, at a point where numerous springs occurred, showing permanent water, on which we camped. Marked tree O.D. 19. Lat. 17 deg. 34 min.

April 29.—Last night experienced the coldest weather we have yet had, the thermometer being down to 40 deg. I am sorry that we were not provided with a boiling-point thermometer, as with it we could have ascertained the height of this part of the country above the sea level. Judging by the number of grass blankets left here by the natives, I think this country is much colder at times. The natives are numerous here,

as we can see their signal fires all around. As Gregory in his journal states that there is no water for 12 miles down this creek, I will remain until noon, then water the horses and start. At 1 p.m. we resumed our journey, and followed the creek down on a general N.W. course for 13 miles, and finding a good waterhole, camped for the night. Marked tree O.D. 20.

April 30.—Starting early, and still following the course of Stirling Creek in an N.W. direction for 12 miles, passed on our way several good waterholes, also found creek to be running a strong stream. A short time before camping came on to the banks of a large running creek coming from the southward, which I called Murray's Creek, after Mr. R. M. Murray, of the Katherine Telegraph Station, he having shown us the greatest kindness and hospitality during our stay there. Not being able to cross this creek, we were compelled to retrace our steps half a mile before finding a ford across Stirling Creek. The country passed over for the last two days was of the very roughest description. The bed of the creek is confined between high, precipitous, and rugged hills of limestone, while the narrow valley between is strewed with huge and rough limestone boulders. Our horses suffered terribly in coming through this rough gorge, having had the shoes torn off them, and in many places leaving traces of blood on the stones. This I have called the Devil's Gorge. Owing to the hills approaching closely and descending abruptly into the deep water, our further progress in this direction was stopped; we consequently had to camp.

May 1.—As I do not wish to retrace my steps through the rough gorge, we will endeavour to make a road up the side of the hill, by clearing dead timber and stones, and in an hour and a half we succeeded in getting the horses safely to the top, which proved to be rough tableland. From here we shaped an S.W. by W. course for two miles, when we got into well-grassed forest country and low stony rises, the formation of the country being chert and limestone for the next seven miles. We were here running parallel to the Stirling, when we struck the course of a good-sized creek, with springs, coming from the southward and wending towards the Stirling, its banks being lined with palms and water pandanus. Camped here, and marked tree O.D. 22. Lat. 17 deg. 22 min.

May 2.—As some high hills appeared in our course we steered for an opening which we observed to the W., and in two miles we reached the top of one, from which we observed that there were several rough ranges on our course. Steering a general W. by N. course for 11 miles further, we struck the junction of two large creeks, one coming from the south, the other from S.S.E., and wending towards the Stirling, which is about six miles off. We camped here for the day, and marked tree O.D. 23.

The formation of these ranges is of sandstone, and although very well grassed, proved to be exceedingly rough, cutting our horses up very much, some of them toward the end of the journey showing signs of knocking up.

May 3.—Proceeding on our journey, and travelling on a W. by N. course for 14 miles, and steering towards a very conspicuous and high isolated hill, which I named Mount Panton, struck the course of a creek coming from the S.E., and trending north-westerly. When we struck it the bed was dry, but, judging from the numerous blacks' fires, there must be plenty of water lower down.

Accompanied by Mr. Wells, I started on ahead of the party to find water, and in six miles succeeded in finding some, but too late for the party to reach. Mr. Wells' mare having knocked up in the meantime, it was late before we reached the party, when we found them camped without water, three miles back. The country traversed to-day was composed of low sloping ridges and lightly-wooded country, all well-grassed, and the travelling fairly good.

May 4.—We watched the horses last night, consequently had a daylight start, and following course of creek down westerly, reached water in three miles, and owing to the reduced condition of the horses, remained here all day. As one of our horses (Nelson) was completely done up, we left him here, and called this Nelson's Creek. Marked tree O.D. 25. The country adjacent is very good and well-grassed, its formation being sandstone and limestone.

May 5.—Following the course of this creek down westerly for a mile and a-half, we came on to the banks of a running river, coming from the south, which proved to be the Negri, named by Forrest. This river, judging from the flood-marks and driftwood, must drain an immense scope of country, is very broad, and its banks lined with very heavy timber. We here crossed on to the left bank of this river, and following it down in a north by west course for 10 miles, camped on a long and broad reach of water. Marked tree O.D. 26.

I noticed here that there is plenty of timber for fencing and other purposes, the country being exceptionally good. Opposite our camp we observed a large stream of running water joining this river, which I take to be the Stirling. Owing to the rough nature of the country lately traversed, and wishing to find a good stock route, I have come considerably more north than I intended, and as the travelling on this river is very good and open, I have determined to follow its course to where it junctions with the Ord River. Lat. of this camp, 17 deg. 11 min.

May 6.—*En route* this morning 7.30. and following the course of the river in a N.W. by N. direction for 10 miles. Owing to the deep ravines which we were constantly meeting, we were obliged to keep about a mile from its banks. After getting this far, the river turned more to the westward, and the travelling being exceedingly good, got six miles further before camping. The geological formation of the country passed over during the last two days is isolated limestone ridges, with hills of red sandstone capped with ironstone, and slate occasionally cropping out. In a pastoral light the country is as good as anything yet passed over,

and suitable for any description of stock. Marked tree O.D. 27.

May 7.—As the Ord must now be close to us, we leave the Negri here, and steer S.W. by S. to cut its course. Travelling over a Mitchell grass plain, in three miles we struck the Ord, coming from S.S.W. and trending N.N.E. Owing to the absence of trees along its banks, we did not perceive it until we were within a few yards of it. It was here about 20 chains wide, with sandy and rocky bottom, and as the water was running a strong stream both above and below, it must have an under-current here. Also noticed a strong spring of salt water and a lot of good white salt encrusting the dry portion of the river bed. We camped here, and marked a tree O.D. 28; lat. 17 deg. 5 min. 30 sec., long. about 129 deg.

May 8.—Most of the horses being now very lame and tired, we determined to remain here some time before proceeding to the west to examine the country held by the C.D.P.A. In the meantime I rode up the river to observe the character of the country in that direction. A mile and a half from the camp found tree marked "A.F. 157, 1st Aug., '79." Also observed that there were extensive high ranges to the west. The country for miles around here is of the same character as that passed over the last few miles—good pastoral lands, well watered.

May 9.—Spelling. Party went fishing, caught a large supply of bream and catfish, which were very acceptable, our rations being entirely inadequate to our appetites.

May 10.—Owing to the horses being weak and footsore, I will be compelled to remain here nearly three weeks before attempting to cross the ranges which lie in our course to the westward. As I do not wish to remain idle all this time, I have determined to trace the course of the Ord to where it runs into the Cambridge Gulf, for which purpose I take four of the strongest horses. This being an unsuitable camp, I will take the party back to-day to the Negri, close to our former camp, and about a mile above its junction with the Ord. Starting at 11 o'clock, we found a capital place to make a depot camp; water and grass good, plenty of firewood, and plenty of timber to build a stockade.

May 11.—Party busy cutting timber for stockade, which I mean to build of stakes and saplings. It is necessary that this should be done, as after my departure for the Gulf the party will be reduced to three, and the blacks are very numerous here.

May 12.—Finished stockade to-day; party catching fish and ducks, of which there are plenty just here.

May 13.—Being Sunday I will not make a start to-day, but get everything ready for a start in the morning.

May 14.—Accompanied by Messrs. Linacre and Wall, and taking supplies for 12 days, with a riding horse each and one packhorse, we started. As the map supplied to me showed a distance from here to the Gulf of some 80 odd

miles, I expect to be able to get there and back in that time.

The travelling on the east side of the Ord being too rough for our horses' feet, we crossed on to the left bank, and here saw a tree marked 24D, also old horse tracks, which I took to be Durack's.

After travelling in a general N.W. by W. direction for 15 miles, we camped on the river; there was a strong stream of water running here. In consequence of the ranges coming close to the river, the travelling was very bad for the first 10 miles. The formation was steep sandstone hills, then hills of soft slate and granite, with numerous lodges and veins of quartz running through them, also ironstone.

May 15.—Still following the course of river in a general northerly direction for 24 miles, we made camp. On our way to-day crossed numerous tributaries coming from both east and west.

The country is much more open here, and the travelling improved. Soil, red loamy sand, and its formation principally ironstone, which is of rich quality, quartz also occurring here.

At this point the hills recede from the river, and open downs and lightly-timbered plains take their place on the left bank, while the ranges on the right bank are still close to the river.

To the west of our course, and about 12 miles off, we observe a tier of blue ranges I have called the Carr-Boyd Ranges, after my second in command.

May 16.—Continuing our journey down the river in a general N. by W. course for four miles, we struck the course of a large water-course coming from the S.S.W.; rode across its mouth, and found that the water was running underneath a huge bank of sand, which formed a sort of bar at its junction with the Ord. As this is nearly as large as the Ord, and must drain a great scope of country, I have taken the liberty to call it the Frazer River, after Malcolm Frazer, of Western Australia. Still following course of river in a general northerly direction for 12 miles, we formed camp. On our way to-day again crossed numerous tributaries of the Ord. The country passed over was of a first-class description—nice open plains and lightly timbered forest country.

The hills on the east have now receded considerably, while the Carr-Boyd Ranges approach much nearer to the river.

The soil here is a rich brown loam, covered with round sandstone and ironstone gravel. This evening we surprised a large mob of blacks, who rushed away in great fear at our approach. As they were joined by another large party a little further on, they allowed us to approach and parley with them. As they seemed very much excited at our nearer approach, I deemed it advisable to leave them there, and went two miles further on to camp.

May 17.—Made an early start this morning, and travelling about a mile from the river in a general N. by E. course for 21 miles, camped on the right bank of the Ord. As before, we saw numerous branches joining the river on either

side. The country travelled over was somewhat similar to yesterday, richly carpeted with grass on a loose brown loam. Noticed a different variety of large and well-grown timber, suitable for fencing and other purposes.

Near the end of our day's journey, the ranges again approached the river on both banks, their formation being white sandstone and quartz. They are here very high and precipitous, descending abruptly into the plain below, in some places closing in to within a few hundred yards of the river, while in other places they form a semicircular fence, enclosing valleys to the extent of several thousand acres, and making natural paddocks of them. After following the windings of the river for miles we were at length completely blocked, owing to the ranges descending abruptly into a very large and deep waterhole.

May 18 and 19.—Owing to the extremely rough character of the ranges (being the highest met with yet, and in many places 1500 feet high), we were occupied during these two days (most of the time on foot) in trying to find a passage through them, and finding it utterly impossible, we were forced to return to our starting point. I here climbed one of the highest in the vicinity, and noticed the river trending north-westerly through another gorge similar to the one in which we were blocked. Beyond that range succeeded range, very high, rough, and rugged, while to the north-east and east I could get a more extended view, and by the aid of a powerful field-glass observed that the hills are more detached, while plains extend a long way in that direction.

May 20.—Having failed to effect a passage on the left bank of the Ord, I will now try the right bank; but in order to avoid the ranges in the vicinity of the river I will make for the open country which I saw to the N.E., and afterwards strike a course to cut the river again. Making for a gap in the hills to the N.E., I reached it in four miles, and was glad to find that what had seemed impracticable turned out to be a good road. By following the windings of a few gorges got into open country in about two miles on a general northerly course. A capital dray road can be made through here. We here cut the head of a creek trending toward the Ord, which we followed northerly for three miles, and then north-westerly for three miles, when it junctioned with the Ord. We were again blocked by another precipitous gorge, so had to retrace our steps three miles south-easterly, where we camped.

The country passed over to-day, although very rough, is fairly grassed, some of the valleys between the ranges being very good. The geological formation of this part is fine-grained white sandstone. From the top of a high hill, which I scaled, observed the river running more to the north-east. Owing to the ranges being still rough to the north, we must work a little round to the east before trying to cut its course again.

May 21.—Skirting the hills for 11 miles on a general E. by N. course, had very good travel-

ling, then 11 miles further on a general N.N.E. course, and we camped near the head of a good-sized creek.

The country passed over to-day was granitic in formation, also quartz cropping out in huge lodes, with broken quartz and slate strewn all over the surface. Country poorly grassed, with triodia intervening.

May 22.—Following down the creek in a northerly direction for five miles and a half, it suddenly turned to the W.N.W.; we followed it down another five miles. From here observed (from top of high hill) the timber of the Ord, and find by calculation that it is here running through Northern Territory country, about two miles off, and trending north-westerly, and still skirting the ranges which lie to our left; and leaving the creek, which ran through the ranges, to join the Ord, steered N.W. about 10 miles, and camped on some fresh-water lagoons. The old grass having been recently burnt by the natives, the young grass had sprung up very thickly, which will do our horses good. From here observed that the river again turned into Western Australia, so to-morrow we will steer westerly to cut its course again.

The formation of the country here is isolated hills of sandstone and limestone, of most peculiar form, standing out with perpendicular sides to a great height, showing layers of different strata—first sandstone, then cement with quartz pebbles, then slate, sandstone, and cement again to near base, when limestone cropped out; the soil red loam here, and much firmer. We here observed trees of great size and variety.

May 23.—Our packhorse is now showing symptoms of knocking up. We have travelled to here over 140 miles, nearly double the distance I had expected, and by calculation we must still be over 60 miles from the Gulf. As I am, however, for obvious reasons, anxious to trace the course of the Ord right to the Gulf, I will not now turn back. Our rations are nearly done; we consequently have to reduce them to 2 lb. of flour and 2 lb. of beef per week; no salt, and very little tea and sugar. Should we meet with the yacht "Cushie Doo" in the Gulf, hope to get from her some provisions; if not, we will have to kill the packhorse for food. Steering a westerly course this morning, and passing over some good country, in 15 miles we reached the banks of the Ord, the river here running northerly. As there was plenty of green feed on the burnt ground we camped for the day. The ranges about here have receded considerably from the river, and the country is much more open.

May 24.—Following the river in a northerly direction for four miles, we found it turn to the west, so steered W.N.W. to avoid some low ridges, and after riding about seven miles, crossed a running creek, coming from the northward, on which we spelled the horses for a few hours. Continued the same direction for another mile, then turned S.W. by W. for six miles, and again struck the Ord, followed it down for a short distance north-westerly, and then camped.

May 25.—Continuing down the river in a

general W.S.W. course for 10 miles, I then thought it necessary to camp. The country passed over the last two days is of limestone formation, with occasional ridges of slate and quartz. We observe in the distance, N.W. from here, a large isolated hill, shaped on top like the roof of a house, which I take to be Houserock-hill, laid down on the chart. As we cannot now be far from the salt water, I will cross the river to-morrow, and follow down its left bank.

May 26.—Steered on a general N.W. course, and after following the river for seven miles, turned in to river to water the horses, when I perceived that a strong tide was running in here. I then had to retrace my steps up the river for some two miles to where the fresh and salt water met, where I spelled the horses for a few hours, a bar of rocks dividing the fresh from the salt water.

It is my opinion that shipping of large tonnage can come within half a mile of this point, the river here being over half a mile wide, and apparently of considerable depth, even at low water, its banks being very high, and in many places 10 ft. above the level of the water, and have noticed from marks that there must be a rise and fall of at least 12 ft.

Observing that the vegetation on the river was very dense some few miles lower down, we left it here, and steered south-westerly to a good-sized creek, on which we camped for the night.

May 27.—Some delay was caused this morning among a network of creeks and fresh-water lagoons. Owing to the boggy nature of their banks, we were unable to find a crossing, so had to retrace our steps to where we crossed the creek in the morning, near our last night's camp. To avoid these lagoons we steered south for a mile, and after travelling on a general W.N.W. course for 11 miles, camped on some lagoons near Mount Bastion.

May 28.—Accompanied by Linacre, started for Quoin-hill, which is about 14 miles N. by E. from our camp, from the top of which I had a good view of the Gulf stretching away to the north. East of here the river is about three miles in width.

Leaving Linacre here, I travelled four miles further, along the foot of Quoin-hill, when I again scaled its highest point, for the purpose of seeing if I could get any sight of the "Cushie Doo." Had a good look round by Adolphus Island, but failed to see anything of her. Also observed from here another arm of the sea running southerly. I then retraced my steps to Linacre, and we both started back for the fresh-water lagoons, on which Wall was camped, reaching there two hours after dark.

May 29.—From here we will travel as near south-east as the character of the country will admit of, and prove thereby what the country is like in the direction of our dépôt camp. Starting from our camp on these lagoons, and making towards some ranges to the south, in which I see an opening, and after cutting the course of several creeks, we camped in the ranges, after travelling 18 miles in a general S. by W. direction. The country travelled over to-day is of

sandstone formation. Saw several blacks during the day, who showed great fear at our approach.

May 30.—Steering W.S.W. for three miles, we cut the course of a large creek trending northerly. Continued in the same direction for three miles further, making towards the point of Mount Cockburn; turned the horses out for a spell on another good creek (a tributary of the last). The country around here being very mountainous, and observing that the ranges were lower towards the E.S.E. we made a fresh start in that direction, and after travelling about nine miles camped on the large creek we had crossed in the morning. This is a very fine creek, with splendid long reaches of water, and has its banks lined with large, well-grown trees. I have called it Parry's Creek, after Mr. Parry, of Melbourne.

May 31.—The country here being very rough and stony, has reduced our horses considerably in condition, and having lost most of their shoes in the ranges are all very lame. Our packhorse, I fear, will not go much further, as he is constantly falling down, we having to lift him on his feet again. Our own rations are now further reduced to 3 oz. of flour and 2 oz. of meat, our tea and sugar being all finished.

Should we have much more of this rough country our supplies will be entirely run out, and we will be compelled to kill Roanney, if he does not die before.

Running up the valley of Parry's Creek in a general S.S.E. course for 14 miles (the travelling being very good), we found that it turned too much to the west for us, so were obliged to leave it, and shaping an E.S.E. course towards an opening in the ranges, we camped after travelling six miles, having found a rocky water-hole here.

June 1-6.—During these six days we made but little headway, having only made 17 miles in an S.E. direction from our camp of May 31.

Owing to the exceedingly rough nature of the country traversed (the drainage here being from all points of the compass), our course was very circuitous, and we had frequently to return miles on our tracks, as it was impossible to get our horses up the steep sides of the mountains.

Although so exceedingly rough, this country is well adapted for sheep, the hills in most places being well grassed, while the whole of the country is thoroughly well watered, as every day we crossed numerous running creeks and springs.

I have no doubt that with fresh horses, well shod, and with plenty of spare time, I would have discovered a good track through these ranges to the Gulf.

During these six days we were compelled to walk nearly the whole time, leading and driving our horses.

June 7-10.—Making for the point of the Carr-Boyd Ranges, in a general S.E. by S. direction, early on the fourth morning we struck the Ord, having made 26 miles. Then travelling up the river for 3 miles we camped near the junction of the Frazer River.

The country from our camp of the 6th,

although stony, is of a first-class description, most suitable for sheep, the Carr-Boyd Ranges having long slopes on the western side, which are thickly carpeted with rich and various grasses.

This stretch of country is also well watered, having numerous running creeks and springs in every direction, all of which flow towards the Ord.

Some 8 or 9 miles before reaching the river Linacre's riding horse knocked up, and we were obliged to leave him.

The formation of the country passed over during these days was, in the higher hills, sandstone, while the lower hills were composed of limestone, quartz, and slate. The soil in the valleys is of a rich, chocolate-coloured description, sparkling with scales of white and yellow mica; also, occasionally, crystals of selenite, with hills of ironstone frequently cropping out.

June 11.—Two of the remaining horses were now very weak, and Linacre and Wall were not in a condition to walk to the dépôt, as they were very much reduced from insufficiency of food, we having lived on a kangaroo for the last nine days. As one of the horses was fresher than the others, I decided to leave Linacre and Wall on the Ord, and push on to the dépôt to send them relief as soon as possible. In the meantime they could exist on fish, as they had plenty of hooks, and fish were very plentiful in the river. Making an early start in the morning, the mare only carried me 20 miles, when she knocked up, refusing to carry me any further. I then had to lead her 10 miles further on foot, when I camped for the night.

June 12.—Started this morning before daylight, but finding the mare still unable to carry me, and not wishing to abandon her, dragged her the remaining distance (10 miles) to the dépôt, reaching there at a quarter-past 3 p.m. Having had nothing to eat since yesterday morning, I naturally felt rather hungry on arrival. I then asked Messrs. Carr-Boyd and O'Malley to catch fresh horses and proceed down the river with rations for Linacre and Wall. They started rather late, and reached them on the morning of the second day, getting safely back to the dépôt on the 17th. Another horse (Roaney) had died after I left them. We will miss these very much, as they were two of our best.

June 18 and 19.—Making preparations for an immediate start to the west. To inspect the country belonging to the C.D.P.A. On the evening of the 19th we dug holes and cached some provisions and other articles not immediately required by us.

During my absence the latitude of the dépôt camp was ascertained to be 17 deg. 3 min. 45 sec. as the result of numerous observations.

The party at the dépôt said that although numerous blacks' fires had been seen in every direction, they were never troubled by them during my four weeks' absence.

With the exception of three or four, the horses had picked up considerably, and are now nice and fresh. I determined to leave six of the

worst behind, including the two that had returned from the Gulf, which were in a very weak state.

June 20.—To avoid the rough ranges west of this I have determined to follow the course of the Ord down for 30 or 40 miles, thence make westward, and get on to the syndicate country by the N.E. corner. Starting at 11 a.m., we made about 10 miles in a W.N.W. direction before camping for the night. Latitude of this camp, 17 deg. 0 min. 30 sec.

June 21.—Still following the course of the Ord, we camped on the left bank, about 18 miles due north of last night's camp. Lat. 16 deg. 45 min.

June 22.—Travelled a mile and a half further down the river, to a point where the ranges receded, and travelling in a W. by S. course for 7½ miles over stony but first-class downs country, camped on a small creek a quarter of a mile from the Frazer River. The formation of the country passed over to-day was entirely limestone, the downs being strewn with large slabs of this stone, which were very rough on the horses' feet. Soil of a rich chocolate nature. Lat. 16 deg. 45 min.

June 23.—Being anxious to recover the horse Jack, which was left behind on our return from the Gulf, I started with Wall to find him. Crossing the Frazer close to here, which by measurement I found to be much larger than the Ord (being 500 yards wide), and running a strong stream a little below where I crossed it, the water appearing to come from a large bank of sand occupying the centre of the river, and flowing over a rocky bed below. Steering north-westerly for the point of a large bluff range about 4 miles off, and which I named Mount Pitt (after William Pitt, Esq., Melbourne), still proceeding N.W. to avoid the rough end of the Carr-Boyd Ranges. After 8 miles went northerly, and thence N.N.E. for 7 miles to Jack's Creek. It being too late to look for horse tracks, camped here for the night. A short time previous to reaching this creek, and close to the mountain, I heard a most frightful yelling, which proceeded from a very large number of men, women, and children. Not caring to go near them in their excited state, we proceeded on to camp. The country passed over to-day was first-class, being Mitchell grass downs on rich chocolate soil, and low well-grassed ridges. Their formation was granitic, with slate and quartz in all shapes, showing large reefs of quartz cropping out from the ridges, also broken fragments of granite, slate, and quartz strewn the ground. This country, I think, will prove to be auriferous, and am sorry I have no time at my disposal to prospect it.

June 24.—Before daylight this morning heard the blacks cooeing and answering each other, the calls extending on to a plain close to our camp. We saddled up, and passing near them without being seen, observed they were burying some dead. We judged this as the women were weeping loudly, and not wishing to disturb them, we rode on to pick up the tracks of the

missing horse. At length succeeded in doing so, and traced them back to a place where we perceived he had been killed by the blacks.

We then set out for the main camp, but darkness setting in we were obliged to camp 6 or 8 miles from it.

June 25.—Got into camp early, and again started with the party after lunch. Travelling up the right bank of the Frazer in a S.S.W. direction for $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, we camped in its bed, which at this point is choked up with coarse sand.

The country passed over this afternoon is very good, although stony, being downs, with nice flats between the low limestone ridges. Lat. 16 deg. 49 min.

June 26.—Travelled up the Frazer in a general westerly direction for 13 miles before camping.

On our way up the river to-day observed the tracks and droppings of horses, which I imagine to be Durack's.

During the day we cut the course of several tributaries of the Frazer. The country for the most part was extremely good sheep country. We are now about to enter some rough country, granitic in formation. Lat. 16 deg. 50 min.

June 27.—Still running up the Frazer, we made 15 miles in a general W.N.W. direction, the travelling to-day being very rough. A few miles before camping observed a large water-course coming from the north-west, which is apparently the main branch of the Frazer.

On account of the rugged nature of the high and precipitous granite hills, which came close in to the valley of the river, we could not make a straight course, but were compelled to follow the windings of the river, which at this point is much smaller. A short time previous to camping we surprised a large camp of blacks, who clambered up the sides of the hills in great fright, leaving everything behind in their hurry of departure. Being anxious to make friends with the natives in this part, I invariably left in their camps presents of coloured handkerchiefs and other articles. Lat. of camp. 16 deg. 44 min.

June 28.—Still running up the Frazer in a S.W. by S. direction for 7 miles, through country even rougher than yesterday; we only made a short stage, as one of our horses had evidently been bitten by a snake, and lying down, could not be induced to move. Took water back to her in the evening, and, cutting some grass, allowed her to remain till morning, in hopes of being able to get her along then. I will be sorry if we should lose this mare, as she is one of the fattest and best of the lot. Lat. 16 deg. 48 min.

June 29.—Finding that the mare had lost all use of her hind quarters, we were compelled to shoot her. Travelling in a southerly direction for 12 miles, we made our first camp on the syndicate country. Our camp was on a large sandy creek coming from the southward, and a little lower down flowing towards the east. The formation of the country is still granitic. The flats of this creek are richly grassed, while the

hills are covered with triodia. As some of the horses showed symptoms of knocking up yesterday, I have decided to remain here a day, and as several of them have lost shoes, and are very footsore, they will require to be re-shod.

June 30.—Spelled here to-day. Lat. 16 deg. 58 min.; marked tree O.D. 37. While the horses were being shod I rode out to endeavour to find a passage to the westward, but owing to the rough and precipitous nature of the country, I fear we will have to go still further south before doing so, the ranges here trending in tiers from N. to S. From O.D. 37 to 40.—During these days made many attempts to get to the westward, but without success, losing many shoes, and cutting our horses' feet about in the effort. The whole of the country here is of the same character as that recently described. From the top of a very high hill near O.D. 40, we observed to the eastward a long and very high table range trending N. and S., which I called the Linacre range (after Mr. Linacre, Melbourne).

July 3.—Seeing that the country to the southward was much lower and more level, we decided to proceed in that direction to-morrow. We are now close to the eastern boundary of the C.D.P.A. country.

July 4.—Starting early, and steering east of south for six miles, we came on to a good spring, in a creek which we had run down for two miles. The creek from here turns easterly, but as the ranges to the west and south are still very rough, although well grassed, I will follow the creek for a little way, hoping to discover a better road towards the low ranges to the south. After following the creek for two miles east, it turned N.E. by N., so we were obliged to follow it, as it was impossible to take any other course. Five miles further we camped. The country passed over to-day showed great improvement, the hills and flats being well grassed. Lat. 17 deg. 7 min. O.D. 41. At this camp another large creek (coming from the S.S.E.) joins the one we have followed down all day, and both trend northerly from here, so we have determined to run up the second creek to-morrow, hoping to get through that way.

July 5.—Started to run up creek to the S.S.E. this morning, and travelled four miles in a straight line, but found the creek very erratic in its course and the travelling rough. We spelled the horses here at a beautiful spring, showing a large stream of running water. The country travelled over this morning was very well grassed on the downs and low ridges; the higher hills were also covered with grass to their summits. The formation to-day was granite, slate, and quartz ridges. Being blocked here by a waterfall, we were compelled to face the hills, to the top of which we got without accident. Then travelling on a S. by W. course for four miles, we descended a very rugged and precipitous granite hill, covered with large boulders, and camped in the bed of a sandy creek which ran at the foot of it.

July 6.—Steering a S. by W. course to-day for six miles, over low well-grassed hills and

sloping ridges, and then wishing to camp, as several of the horses were very footsore, we turned easterly, to cut a creek, the timber of which we could see a little way off, and in one mile came on to some beautiful springs. I here had the good luck to shoot a beautiful turkey, which was very acceptable. O.D. 43. Lat. 17 deg. 18 min. We are now about three miles from the Linacre range, and observe from here that a large creek is running on this side of the range in a southerly direction.

July 7.—As some horses require to be shod, we did not leave here till midday. Steering a general S.W. by S. course for eight miles, we then camped on a good-sized creek with fine springs in it. We are now just on the border of the syndicate's property. The formation of the country to here is granitic, with quartz occasionally cropping out, and it is similarly grassed to that over which we rode yesterday. Lat. 17 deg. 21 min. O.D. 44.

July 8.—Steering a general S.S.W. course to-day, following down the creek on which we were camped yesterday, passing numerous springs and waterholes, after six miles cut the course of a large and heavily timbered watercourse, having several channels, and being about a quarter of a mile in width, and, judging from the *débris*, must at times carry down a large body of water. It was coming from the W.N.W., and trending E.S.E. From its size and position I take it to be the head of the Ord River. Following it up for five miles we camped in its bed. Lat. 17 deg. 28 min. O.D. 45.

July 9.—To-day we followed up a large branch coming from the W.N.W., the main branch of the river coming from the W.S.W. After travelling 2½ miles we came on a number of beautiful running springs, and decided to spell the horses for the day, the grass being quite green. In the meantime I got a fresh horse, and rode out south-westerly to a large hill, distant about six miles from the camp, for the purpose of observing the surrounding country. From near the 44 camp to here, and for miles around, the country is of a first-class description, and composed of low sloping limestone ridges, downs, and lightly timbered, plain country. In many of the creeks (tributaries of the one we are camped on) I noticed numerous springs of permanent water. The whole of this country is splendidly grassed with the Mitchell, Landsborough, barley, and other grasses of a fattening description. We also noticed that the creeks are densely lined with large-sized trees, such as the Leichardt pine, gum, bloodwood, box, swamp cedar, curryjohn, &c., many of which are most suitable for fencing and other purposes. The geological formation of this part of the country is granite, with occasional sandstone ridges; also quartz and slate showing in many of the hills. Lat. 17 deg. 27 min. O.D. 46.

July 10.—The last few nights have been intensely cold, the thermometer down to 32 deg., producing ice in waterbags and buckets. The days are everything that could be desired, being sufficiently warm to be pleasant. Running up the creek on which we are camped,

before long we got into a rough strip of granite country, about two miles in width; but soon getting through it came out on to good forest country. In many places we found this creek running a strong stream. Eight miles W. by S. from O.D. 46 we struck a creek coming from the northward, up which we travelled for three miles and a half. On either side and close in were rugged granite hills. Here we camped for the night, there being plenty of grass and herbage for the horses in the valley of the creek.

July 11.—Leaving this creek, and steering north-westerly over some low sandstone ridges, we soon came to another good-sized creek, with springs and permanent waterholes. Crossing this, and still keeping our former course, after two or three miles, changed our bearing, and went northerly, when we cut the course of a large creek coming from that direction, the valleys of which being good travelling, we followed up for 10 miles, and then camped. Lat. 17 deg. 15 min. O.D. 48.

The country passed over to-day, although stony, is admirably adapted for sheep, being well grassed and abundantly watered throughout. The soil is red loam, while the hills change from granite to sandstone, and occasional slate ridges.

July 12.—Thermometer down to 32 deg. again last night. Running the creek up to its head for four miles in a northerly direction, gradually ascending, we came on to some level tableland. Continuing the same course, we soon struck the head of another creek running northerly, and which rapidly increased in size, containing permanent water. We followed it for eight miles before camping. The tableland extended for several miles on each side of us, was well grassed, open forest country and plains, the timber being eucalypti, coolibah, bloodwood, ti-tee, and pines. Hardly a stone to be seen to-day, except where quartz cropped up, one lode showing 20 ft. high. Lat. 17 deg. 5 min. O.D. 49.

July 13.—Found it necessary to remain here to-day, as several of the horses required shoeing. During the day I rode out in a N.E. direction, and found the country similar to that passed over yesterday, while the creek had become very much enlarged by receiving tributaries on both sides, and now contains some very fine waterholes. I have called it Wall's Creek, after H. Wall, a member of my party.

July 14.—The surrounding country has every appearance of being auriferous. I only wish I had time to prospect it. Freezing last night again; but the days make up for the unpleasant coldness of the nights. We have had more or less of this weather since the beginning of May. Owing to many horses being footsore, and reduced in condition, I can plainly see that it will take much longer than I expected to examine this country, so it will be necessary to still further reduce our rations to 4 lb. flour, 1 lb. rice, 1½ lb. dried beef; sugar, 1 lb.; and tea, 4 oz. Starting early this morning, and steering westward towards the ranges, which are not far off, we struck a creek, which we followed up between the hills to its head, and without much

difficulty got over the ranges and struck a creek on the other side, trending north-westerly (which I named Budd's Creek, after Mr. Budd, hon. secretary of the East Melbourne Cricket Club). This creek contains some very fine permanent waterholes, and following it in a N.W. by N. course for six miles and a half, struck a large river coming from the S.S.W., and camped here. The country passed over to-day was composed of low stony ridges and downs, richly clothed with a carpet of grass, and all the high hills being thickly grassed to their summits. Lat. 16 deg. 59 min. O.D. 50.

July 15.—The grass and water being exceptionally good here, and wishing to spell the horses (several of which required shoeing), I decided to remain here all day. Accompanied by Mr. Carr-Boyd, and being anxious to get a good view to the westward, we followed up the river for a distance of 10 miles in a S.W. by S. direction, and then turned westerly towards a very high peak in a long range about three miles distant. This range is much higher than the surrounding country, and is trending from S.S.W. to N.N.E. As it is evidently a dividing range, I called it the Howitt Ranges (after Mr. A. W. Howitt, of Sale, under whom I had the honour to serve in the Burke and Wills expedition). Having ascended the high peak (which I called Mt. Lush, after Mr. C. G. Lush, Melbourne) we obtained an extensive view of the country in every direction. The country to the west and south-west is apparently very similar in its character to the country passed over lately, being composed of low sloping ridges, undulating downs, and lightly-timbered plains, richly and variously grassed. I can confidently state that in all my experience in Queensland I have never seen better grassed country than that over which I have ridden to-day, being equal to the best of the Barcoo and Thompson country, and is watered throughout by numerous tributaries of the Wilson, in most of which are running springs and large waterholes. The Howitt Range, although very precipitous on the eastern side, so much so as to be almost impassable for stock, declines gradually to the west, where low sloping ridges and downs occur. In a valley some six miles to the west I observed the timber of a large watercourse trending northerly. The range is of sandstone formation. Having satisfied ourselves as to the nature of the surrounding country, we returned to camp. At the foot of Mt. Lush we observed a forest of pines, which will prove most serviceable for building and other purposes. I also notice that the timber on the river is of immense size, the trees being giant gum, bloodwood, curryjohn, banhinia, swamp cedar, and other useful timber for fencing purposes.

July 16.—The river we are camped on I have named the Wilson (after Mr. John Wilson, of New South Wales, and chairman of our syndicate). Wishing to prove what the country to the northward is like, we followed the course of the Wilson down in a north-easterly course for 12 miles, and camped on a splendid reach of water. The country passed over to-day was

similar to that described yesterday. During the day noticed that numerous branches joined the river on either side. Marked tree O.D. 51. Lat. 16 deg. 51 min. 30 sec. This camp is about a mile and a half north of the boundary of the C.D.P.A. property.

July 17.—Accompanied by Mr. O'Malley, I started down the river for the purpose of inspecting the country still further to the north. We made 15 miles in a general N.E.E. course before camping. Near here we ascended a high hill, and observed the river going through some high ranges about 10 miles distant, a little W. of N. The formation of the country was for the first three miles of sandstone, and then of granite and ironstone. Having now satisfied ourselves about the course of the river and the nature of the country, we will return to the main party to-morrow. During the day the Wilson was joined by several very large branches, both on the left and right banks.

July 18.—Returned to O.D. 51.

July 19.—During my absence Mr. Carr-Boyd made an excursion to the west, and informed me that the country in that direction was first-class. He also discovered some salt-water springs. The others of the party had succeeded in obtaining a large supply of fish, also a large kangaroo, which was a valuable addition to our larder. Some horses having to be shod, we did not start till midday, and travelling back up the Wilson, camped a mile above O.D. 50. Marked tree O.D. 52.

July 20.—Several of our horses being now very weak and footsore, it is utterly impossible that I can take them all in my trip to the west, so I have determined to move a few miles up the river, and there leave Linacre and Wall with most of the horses and plant, and, accompanied by Messrs. Carr-Boyd, O'Malley, and Wells, and equipped as lightly as possible, proceed at once to examine the remainder of the country. Shifted two miles further up the river, and reaching a very large sheet of water, with plenty of green grass, formed camp. This is a most suitable place for the party spelling to remain at, as game is plentiful, and the river is full of fish. O.D. 53.

July 21.—Started early this morning with four riding-horses and two packhorses, and the following scale of rations:—4 lb. flour, 1 lb. sugar, 4 oz. tea, 1 lb. rice, 1 lb. preserved potatoes, and 2½ lb. dried meat per man per week. Made for the Howitt Range, with the intention of crossing if possible, and in four miles westerly reached the foot of the range, but found that, owing to the high and precipitous character of it, we could not effect a passage here, so skirted the range in a S.S.W. direction for 12 miles before camping on the Wilson, which was much nearer the ranges here. O.D. 54. Lat. 17 deg. 10 min.

July 22.—Still travelling along the foot of the range in a S.W. by S. direction for 20 miles, we camped on a fine creek coming from the west, and containing numerous running springs. During the day we crossed numerous creeks containing springs, which were all trending

easterly. The country passed over the last two days is of a grand pastoral description, suitable for any kind of stock—open plains and downs on a rich chocolate soil, and lightly timbered forest country, the trees on which are principally pine. About six miles before camping we passed a very high and prominent hill, which I named Mount King, after Mr. E. King, Melbourne.

July 23.—During the night, for the first time on the trip, some of our horses strayed away. One of the party went out to look for them, but returned in the afternoon, having failed to find them. I then caught a horse and rode out to cut their tracks, which I succeeded in doing, and then followed them till darkness set in, and not being far from our camp, returned there for the night.

July 24, 23, 26.—It took these three days to get the horses together again, as they had scattered all over the country, two of them having travelled nearly to O.D. 53, where I had left Linacre and Wall, a distance of about 30 miles. While away after these horses I discovered some very fine creeks to the N.E. of O.D. 55. Two of the largest of these I called Pine Creek and Palm Creek; in both of them were numerous springs and waterholes. Palm Creek rises in some low ranges over 20 miles N.E. of O.D. 55. The whole of this part of the country is of a very fine description, being composed of well-grassed downs and plains, and low isolated hills. The soil is of a rich brown and chocolate loam. The formation of this country is entirely of sandstone.

July 27.—Got back with the horses early this morning. A short distance west of our camp is a very high and conspicuous hill, which I named Mount Luke (after Mr. Thomas Luke, Melbourne). For the purpose of viewing the country around I scaled this mountain, and from it observed an opening in the hills to the west; also that the country to the S. and S.W. was similar in character to that passed over by us recently, being low ridges and undulating downs country, while to the N.W., as far as the eye can reach, it is apparently the same. I can trace numerous creeks from here. Returned to camp, and started in a north-westerly course. In three miles came to a narrow pass about 50 yards wide, by means of which we got through the ranges without any difficulty. This gap offers a capital track for drays and stock to the country west of here. The country between here and our 155 camp forms a natural paddock, having a valley between the hills averaging one mile and a quarter in width by a length of three miles, having a creek of running water trending through it. The ranges all round show a bold precipitous front, and are several hundred feet above the valley, offering an effectual barrier to every description of stock. The creek flowing from the narrow gap mentioned will, I think, prove to be the head waters of the Margaret River. Passing through the gap, we cut the course of another creek running north-westerly, which we followed down for five miles. As it then turned to the N.E., we decided to leave it.

Up to this point the creek is permanently watered by springs, and its banks lined with water-pandanus. I have called it O'Malley's Creek (after Mr. J. O'Malley, a member of our party). Turning now westerly, in seven miles struck the head of another creek trending to the south, and, following it down for a short distance, camped. O.D. 56. Lat. 17 deg. 20 min. Since leaving O'Malley's Creek we have been running along the foot of a table range of considerable height, which rises abruptly from the valley. The country passed over to-day is still good, principally composed of open forest country and of sandstone formation.

July 28.—The table range, taking a sudden turn near here, now runs N. and S. Steering westerly, we reached the foot of it, and observing a sloping spur, we with much difficulty reached the top. One of our horses (Littlejohn) falling some distance down the hill, we were obliged to unpack him before we could get him to the summit. Steering a general N.W. course from here, in three miles and a half struck a good-sized creek, in which were several fine springs. We here turned the horses out for a spell. The last three miles and a half this morning, although exceedingly rough, is very fair sheep country, being composed of patches of grass and triodia, alternating with each other. After an hour's spell we made a fresh start, and after making 11 miles in a general westerly direction, running parallel to the creek, at which we had lunch, camped on it. Marked tree O.D. 57. Lat. 17 deg. 18 min. The creek is here trending about south-easterly, and being as nearly as possible on the western boundary of the C.D.P.A. country, I have called it Boundary Creek. The country passed over since lunch is a great improvement on that we rode over this morning, being well-grassed open downs and open forest country.

July 29.—As some of our horses are now getting footsore we will spell here to-day. In the meantime I will follow the creek down and examine the country to the south. Running the creek down for about six miles in a general S.S.E. direction, through some rather rough tableland country, I descended into the valley of a large watercourse; then traveling south for two miles came on to a very large and heavily-timbered creek, and observe that numerous branches join it about here. It is now trending south-westerly. The formation of this valley is of limestone and slate, and it is exceedingly well grassed throughout. I now returned to camp, well satisfied with my day's ride, but will endeavour later on to trace this river and prove its course.

July 30.—Messrs. Carr-Boyd and Wells started for a three days' trip to examine the country north of here, and east and west of the western boundary. On their return they spoke in favourable terms of the country passed over, being for the most part well grassed and abundant of water.

July 31.—Last night was extremely cold, large icicles appearing on the waterbags this morning. Leaving the two packhorses here on

some green feed, and planting saddles, &c., I, accompanied by Mr. O'Malley, proceeded to inspect the country west of here. Crossed the creek and proceeded in a general W.N.W. direction for 21 miles, cutting the course of numerous creeks. At last struck a very large one, which I called the Serpentine, on account of its very winding course. At this point the creek flows close to and round the point of a high table range, which I called Mount Downey (after Mr. Downey, Melbourne). Ascended to the top of the mountain, from which I had a good view of the surrounding country. Observed some high ranges about 25 miles off to the westward. A conspicuous mountain about 20 miles W.S.W. from here I named Mount Forrest (after Mr. John Forrest, Surveyor-General of Western Australia).

August 1.—Returned by a course more to the north than our outward track to O.D. 57. On reaching the camp found the others had already arrived.

August 2.—Starting early this morning, and steering south-easterly for six miles, thence S.S. westerly $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, brought us to the large watercourse discovered by me four days ago. Close to this point is a high and very peculiar isolated hill, which I called Mount Wells (after Mr. A. J. Wells, the surveyor of our party). This is a good landmark, and can be seen for a long distance. Following the creek down for six miles in a general W.S.W. course, camped on a fine waterhole. Marked tree O.D. 58. Lat. 17 deg. 27 min. 30 sec. Anxious to see which way this large creek is trending, I rode down some two miles further, and then climbed to the top of a very high hill, from which I could trace its course running between two table ranges in a westerly direction for about 20 miles. From here observed what I take to be the Serpentine Creek joining this one close by. Numerous other tributaries have also joined it on both banks during the last few miles, and consequently it has become much larger in size, having large reaches of water in its bed. On account of the size and direction of this river, flowing as it does straight for Mount Leake in the Leopold Ranges (near which point Forrest left the Fitzroy), I believe this to be the head waters of that river. Having shot a nice kangaroo here, I returned to camp.

August 3.—Returning up the river to-day with the intention of reaching Mount Luke as early as possible, we made 11 miles in a general north-easterly direction, although we actually travelled much further. Camped on a fine large waterhole very deep. The country passed over to-day is of the very best description, being high and undulating downs, thickly carpeted with Mitchell and other grasses on a rich chocolate soil, the formation being principally limestone. Soon after starting this morning marked a tree O.D. 63, 1st August, '83, this being close to the S.W. corner of the C.D.P.A. country.

August 4.—Steering a general easterly course to-day for 21 miles, we camped at night on O'Malley's Creek, about four miles from Mount Luke.

August 5.—Making an early start, we reached Mount Luke in time for breakfast. Previous to starting out west I had left instructions with Mr. Linares to bring all the horses and plant to Mount Luke on a certain date. He did so, and we found them there on our return. The horses which have been spelling have freshened considerably, so hope to get along all right from now.

August 6.—Leaving Mount Luke this morning, and steering a general southerly course over well-grassed downs and lightly-timbered plains, after travelling four miles we got off the syndicate's country, and in two miles further cut the course of Palm Creek. From the position and size of this creek here, we believe it to be the head waters of the Margaret River. Still proceeding southerly, this creek was soon joined by Kangaroo Creek, which comes from Mount Luke. In these creeks I noticed that there are plenty of permanent springs. From this point observed ranges trending N.E. and S.W., through a gap in which the creek seems to flow. About four miles N.E. from here noticed that the ranges slope into extensive and well-grassed downs. After travelling a little further in a southerly direction, we entered a gorge through which the creek flowed, and after following it for two miles and a half further, turned the horses out for their customary spell on some nice grassy flats. After spelling for an hour, we again started down the creek, and, after one mile we came to a point where the hills closing in made a narrow gorge, with rugged and perpendicular sides, and the bed of the creek being filled with a long deep reach of water, we were compelled to climb a steep hill so as to cut the course of creek lower down, and reached the top in safety. From the highest point of the hill observed that the country to the E., N.E., and S.E. is very open, principally downs, and apparently well-grassed. Noticed two large creeks coming through valleys on either side to join the one we are now on. We now descended into the valley of the creek again, and soon came on a stretch of open, well-grassed country. In a mile and a half further noticed another large creek joining this from the west. This watercourse having now considerably increased in size, and containing some very large deep waterholes, I am convinced that it is the Margaret River. A short distance further we camped, having made about 12 miles in a S. by E. direction. The country for the last few miles has been of first class description—grasses rich and various, and well suited for any stock. The formation of this country is of sandstone, with occasional ridges of slate and quartz, good reefs of the latter cropping out frequently. The soil on the downs is a brown loam, while on the flats it is rich and black. O.D. 62.

August 7.—Weather very cloudy this morning, with a few drops of rain, the first we have had since leaving Delamere. The want of rain here will not trouble the future settlers much, as the grass is green even as late in the season as this. Close to last night's camp noticed another large creek from the west, in which are

several fine reaches of water. To-day succeeded in making 17 miles in a general S. by W. direction. For the first six miles the sandstone ranges come close in to the creek, being high and precipitous on the east side, while on the west side they gradually slope, and are approachable for stock. At this point the country is much more open, and the high cliffs entirely disappear, leaving isolated round-topped hills, the sloping sides of which are well-grassed, with nicely wooded flats between. For the remaining distance we followed the course of the river; numerous tributaries, containing natural water-holes and springs, joining it on either side. The formation to-day was entirely of sandstone, and the soil on the plains rich and loamy. O.D. 63. Lat. 17 deg. 48 min. During the afternoon Mr. Wells and I surprised two natives who were sleeping on the banks of the river. They did not perceive us until we were almost on top of them, and suddenly springing up, they yelled with terror, and jumped into the water. As, however, they left a large bundle of spears behind, we induced one of them to return, with whom I held a parley, and made him a present of a handkerchief.

August 8.—Still following down the river we made about 13 miles in a S. by W. direction before camping for the night. The formation of the country for the first five miles was of sandstone. After this point it entirely disappeared, and was replaced by high and rounded hills of slate, also limestone appearing, during the remainder of the day. The grass and soil were similar to that passed over yesterday, with the addition of some hills of triodia. About three miles before camping we came on old horse tracks, and judged that they belonged to Saunders and Johns, who had been prospecting here some two years back. The river had to-day also been joined by numerous branches on either side, while the grasses were good and the soil a rich loam. This country will some day become very valuable as a sheep run, being best adapted for that description of stock. A little below our camp the river runs through a deep and impassable gorge, with high sandstone hills on both sides. I have come much further south than I had intended, being anxious to find the best road for drays and stock from the Margaret easterly to Start's Creek, and thence by Stirling Creek to Roe Downs, on the Victoria River. From calculation and observation we must now be close to Forrest's 144 camp, near which he saw the last of the Margaret coming through a gorge north of him.

August 9.—During last night we had several heavy showers of rain, which obliged us to put up both tents. This delayed our departure till the afternoon. Following the valley of a small creek, which joined the Margaret near here, we steered easterly, and soon reached the foot of some rough sandstone ridges, covered with buck spinifex. The travelling here was extremely rough, and as many of our horses were now getting footsore, we could only get on slowly. On ascending to the top of these ridges, we observed to the east some low level country with

a large heavily-timbered watercourse in the distance, for which we made, and soon reached. The last two miles was nice open and well-grassed forest country. On arriving at the creek, we found it to be coming from the N.N.E., having here a very wide and sandy bed, over 200 yards. Judging from floodmarks, a large volume of water must at times flow through this channel. Following it down for a mile S.S.W., we found water at the junction of another creek which joined it from the south-east, and camped. This creek is, I am certain, a tributary of the Margaret, and is trending S.W. round the point of a high sandstone hill close to here. Observed a high hill about a mile and a half S.E. from here, and hoping to get a good view from it, I walked there. Observed in the distance several watercourses coming from the N.E., also a continuous and high range to the S.W. From N. to E. low and broken ranges, with good valleys between. From E. to S. open plains and lightly wooded flat country. From S. to S.W., low broken ranges. The formation of the country changes here from sandstone to granite, of which there are low isolated hills, with grassy flats between. O.D. 65. Lat. 18 deg.

August 10.—As we had only 4 lb. of flour left, last night we baked our last damper. Our other rations being almost finished, we are reduced to 1½ lb. beef, half of a pannikin of rice, and a small pannikin of preserved potatoes, this allowance having to be divided among the whole party daily. Some of the weakest horses being now very low in condition our progress is necessarily slow. This morning Mr. Carr-Boyd (wishing to return by Perth) informed me that he would leave the party and run the Margaret down to its junction with the Fitzroy, thence to the settlements on that river and round to Roebuck Bay. I supplied him with his share of rations, which was very small, also a spare horse, saddle and bridle, and the only blackboy we had. He then started down this tributary of the Margaret. Wishing to ascertain whether this large creek joined the Margaret, I, accompanied by Wall, started down for that purpose. In the meantime I instructed the party to travel two or three miles up the creek to the S.E., and then, having got round the point of the ranges, to steer E.N.E. till they cut the course of the creek on which Forrest's 145 camp was, and camp there, while I expected to overtake them that evening. Following the course of the large creek for five miles in a general W.S.W. direction, I found that it was there joined by the Margaret where it came through a deep gorge in the ranges. From the top of a high hill near here I observed that the river trends southerly for a short distance, and then westerly towards the point of a high bluff range, about four miles off in a S.W. by S. direction. Being satisfied about this creek, we started back to overtake the party. The character of the country passed over this morning was high sandstone ranges running parallel to this creek, and contracting its valley to about a mile in width, which is fairly well grassed, while the ridges are covered with spinifex. Soil, a mixture

of rich loam and white holding clay, and in places very stony. Having travelled a few miles, the horse that Wall was riding knocked up, so we returned to the last water and camped for the night.

August 11.—Making an early start this morning soon picked up the tracks of the party, and followed them. On our way, seeing a smoke from some blacks' fires close by, I rode into the camp, and saw a large number of natives, and although they showed great surprise, did not run away, as all others had previously done, but remained to parley with us. Having given them some presents we then left them, and proceeding on our way in 13 miles came on the party camped on a small pool of water left by recent rains. O.D. 66; lat. 17 deg. 59 min. The country passed over to-day was in the early part rather poor, being principally spinifex on a white sandy soil. In the latter part of the journey the country improved much, showing open plains and undulating Mitchell grass downs country. This country is granitic in formation. Passed over numerous watercourses, but all of a dry and sandy nature. I observed that these creeks, although trending southerly from here, soon turn to the east. I was glad to find on my return that Mr. Linaere had shot a fine turkey, which was most acceptable to us in our reduced condition. The gizzard of this turkey when opened was found to contain a full-grown lark, which had been swallowed, feathers and all. We all thought this to be a most remarkable occurrence.

August 12.—The weather this morning is very cloudy and extremely cold. Starting early and steering a general N.E. by E. course for 16 miles, in five miles came to the end of this grand downs country, which extends three miles to the north and about six to the south. These downs are then succeeded by open forest country, which stretches about eight miles further to the south. Finding ourselves unable to proceed in an easterly direction, owing to the stony character of the country and the condition of our horses' feet, we are compelled to abandon the Sturt's Creek route, as our provisions are now all but finished, and we will accordingly make for the Ord River, where there is a better chance of getting game and fish, also to get the rations *cached* at the dépôt camp, and the horses left behind there. Just after coming to the end of the downs country we struck a good-sized creek coming from the north, but soon after turning E.N.E. As the travelling along its valley was good, we determined to follow it, which we did for 11 miles before camping. We observed numerous branches joining it on both sides, in one of which was a runningspring. The country from the head of this creek is composed of rather poor forest land on a white sandy soil, the formation being low isolated hills of granite and limestone, with ground strewn with quartz, sandstone, and limestone pebbles. O.D. 67.

August 13.—We are now fairly in rough granite ranges, which are covered with spinifex, and the travelling having become very bad, the valley being strewn with blocks and boulders

of granite, we only succeeded in making about nine miles in a general easterly direction before camping, although we had travelled twice that distance following the windings of the creek. Soon after starting we observed a fine tributary coming from the S.W. I now feel convinced that this creek will prove to be one of the heads of the Ord, and that Forrest was wrong in supposing that the creeks he crossed running southerly were branches of the Sturt. O.D. 63. Lat. 17 deg. 53 min.

August 14, 15.—During these two days we only made 12 miles in an E. by N. direction, the creek twisting about to all points of the compass, and the travelling for the most part being very rough. Many of the horses show symptoms of knocking-up, and most of us were compelled to walk a good deal. This was rather rough on us, as our boots were nearly all worn out and we were almost barefooted. The country on this watercourse is of a rather poor description, the hills and ridges being covered with spinifex, with occasional patches of grass intervening. The flats are fairly well grassed, and on a rich loamy soil. The formation of the country is principally slate, high hills of which come close in to the creek along the greater part of its course, the bed of which is occupied by huge boulders of slate, which made the travelling very difficult. Slate occurs here in all shades of colour, and is both of a hard and soft description. On the 14th we were obliged to abandon the horse Littlejohn, as he was completely knocked up. On the same day we saw old horse tracks, which we again believe to belong to the prospecting party (Sanders and Johns). The last three days this creek has been joined by many large tributaries, and is now an immense size, having some very large and wide sheets of water, with numerous large mobs of ducks, some of which we were fortunate enough to shoot. This watercourse I have named the Pantom River (after Mr. J. A. Pantom, P.M., of Melbourne), this gentleman having a large interest in West Australia. At our camp of the 15th was a large and very deep water-hole teeming with fish. Several were caught for lunch. We are now entirely dependent on what we may catch, all our provisions being done, and we have no chance of replenishing them until we reach the dépôt camp, from which we are still nearly 80 miles distant. A mile or two back from this camp a large branch came in from the S.W. At the junction we saw a camp of blacks, who cleared out on our approach. The formation of the country has now changed to sandstone, having occasional ridges of limestone, covered with spinifex. In the afternoon a large haul of fish was obtained, many being of large size. We are now, unfortunately, out of salt, so are unable to cure any of them to keep, and must use them at once, and let to-morrow provide for itself.

August 16.—To-day made 13½ miles in a general N.E. by E. direction, and camped on a large waterhole. After travelling about two miles, the river ran through large and extensive plains and downs country, splendidly grassed,

extending to the foot of some low ranges in the distance, and from here we observed numerous creeks all flowing towards the Panton. While riding along the banks, we suddenly came on a large camp of natives, who were in the bed of the river. As soon as they saw us they rushed into the water, and swam across, screaming with terror all the time, and did not think themselves safe until they had placed a considerable distance between us and them. Being desirous to show them that we had no intention of injuring them, I left several presents in their camp. This will probably be the means of making them friendly with future settlers. Our provisions to-day consisted of the remainder of the fish we caught yesterday and two ducks. Saw numerous kangaroos during the day, but too shy to be approached. O.D. 71. Lat. 17 deg. 45 min.

August 17.—Very cold again last night. Nothing to eat this morning, so went out to try and catch some fish. By 11 o'clock we succeeded in getting one apiece, and then breakfasted. As almost all the horses were unable to travel, I decided to spell them here and proceed with Mr. Linacre to the dépôt for the spare horses and provisions *cached* there. Previous to starting we managed to catch three fish, which must do us until we reach camp this evening.

August 17, 18, 19.—Starting with Mr. Linacre about 2 o'clock, with a riding-horse each and one packhorse, we reached the dépôt on the afternoon of the 19th. During the whole time we only succeeded in catching three or four small fish, consequently were very weak and exhausted when we arrived. Found everything safe, and it did not take us long to unearth the provisions, and we soon had a good meal prepared, which we enjoyed immensely. The yard which had been made being partly broken down, I immediately set about repairing it, Linacre being busy in getting everything packed up preparatory to starting in the morning. The whole of the country passed over has been of a first-class pastoral description, composed of extensive open plains, undulating downs, and lightly timbered forest country, with occasional sloping ridges, the entire of which were covered with such grasses as the Mitchell, Landsborough, kangaroo, rye, and other rich grasses peculiar to Western Australia, some of which our horses seemed very fond of. The soil is principally a rich chocolate and brown loam on the plains and downs, while that on the forest country is more of a sandy nature. We crossed the course of many large tributaries (on which we noticed fine timber for building and fencing purposes), several of which were running. One very large running creek from the south I have named the Forrest River (after Mr. Alex. Forrest, of Perth, W.A.), he being the discoverer of the Ord, which I had omitted to say joined the Panton four or five miles below O.D. 71. At the junction it was running a strong stream, and was about the same size as the Panton. Two other large branches I have named after Mr. Nicholson, Melbourne, and Mr. D. A. Linacre, who is a member of our party. The large sand-

stone ranges to the west of the dépôt I have called the Osmand Ranges (after Mr. Osmand, a large landholder in the Kimberley district). The formation of the whole of this country is of sandstone and limestone ridges, with occasional high hills of red sandstone, capped with ironstone. Saw numerous blacks during these days, who all showed great fear.

August 20, 21, 22.—Having caught the freshest of our horses, I proceeded to look for the tracks of the horses which had been left here; found them without difficulty, and followed them up; soon came across three of them, which I ran into the yard. Catching one of them, I started after the other three, and found them about five miles from here. Bringing them back, we packed them at once, having no difficulty whatever with them, although they were very fresh, and in first rate condition. Starting immediately for O.D. 71, we reached there on the evening of the 22nd. The party not expecting me till next day, were agreeably surprised at our arrival. Having brought a nice damper with us it was soon attacked and demolished. To my intense surprise I found Mr. Carr-Boyd had during my absence again joined the party after an absence of eight days. He explained that on account of feeling very weak, and fearing that his provisions would not last him to the settlements on the Fitzroy, he had thought better to abandon the idea, so had followed the tracks of the party until he had overtaken us. The remainder of the party, although well, were in a very weak state, as they had caught but very few fish and only shot two or three ducks, while I had been away, having only four cartridges when I started. This was the more annoying as there were always hundreds of ducks close to the camp. They had principally subsisted on a few wild figs which the blackboy had gathered. One peculiarity I noticed in all of them, which was that they had almost entirely lost their voices, also their sense of hearing, caused from excessive weakness.

August 23.—Remained here all day to recruit, and send back for the horse Astronomer, which we had been obliged to leave about 10 miles back.

August 24.—To-day shifted down to the junction of the Ord and Panton, as there was some nice green grass there. We will spend a few days here to give the weak horses a chance, and to get them all shod, as far as possible, before starting back for Delamere. This necessitated the making of a large number of horse-shoe nails from copper rivets, of which we fortunately had a good supply. It was fortunate for us that Mr. O'Malley had the ingenuity to invent this way of making nails, otherwise we should have lost a great number of our horses, most of which were unable to travel if not well shod. These nails answered admirably, although rather more brittle than the ordinary ones. O.D. 72. Lat. 17 deg. 42 min.

August 25.—Having been obliged to leave two horses about eight miles down the river from here (while returning from the dépôt),

Mr. Wells and I started this morning to recover them. Found them close to where they had been left, and returned with them to camp O.D., 72. On our way back we were followed some miles by several natives, who kept calling out as if they wished to speak to us, but remained about half a mile behind. If, however, we rode towards them, they ran away; so, finding we could not get near them, we continued our journey.

August 26, 27, 28.—Remained here these three days. While some of the party were employed shoeing the horses, the others went out fishing and shooting, not for the amusement of the thing, but out of sheer necessity, as we had only seventeen days' short rations now remaining, and it was necessary to save them as much as possible by obtaining what game we could. We were fairly successful during this time.

On the 27th, from early morning till about 6 p.m., we were puzzled to account for reports, apparently in a N.W. direction, which we heard at frequent intervals throughout the day. These being exactly like shots fired from a gun at no great distance, we fired off several cartridges, thinking there must be some white men close by. Mr. Carr-Boyd rode down the river to see if such were the case, while I rode up. Finding no traces of any one, we came to the conclusion that the reports were caused by volcanic agency.

August 29, 30, 31.—Everything being ready for a start this morning, and having determined to leave the Ord at this point and steer for Mount Pantan, near the Negri, which lies about E.N.E. from here, we packed up, and crossing to the right bank of the river, mustered sufficient energy to give a feeble cheer as a farewell to this noble watercourse, which we were, however, heartily glad to turn our backs on. Should our weaker horses hold out, we hope to reach Delamere within three weeks.

Steering a general E.N.E. course, we reached the Negri on the evening of the 31st, having travelled nearly 50 miles in that direction, and crossed the large creeks previously mentioned as joining the Ord. For the first 30 miles we had grand travelling; hardly a stone on the track, and the country similar to that on frontage of Ord from O.D. 71 to depôt. After this we got into very rough limestone country, on the whole of which were strewn broken and sharp-pointed slabs of that stone. The consequence was that several of the horses had their shoes torn off and their feet cut about in a terrible manner. About two miles N.E. of our 74 camp was a peculiar isolated hill, of very rugged formation. We called this Mount Cotton (after Mr. Cotton, Melbourne). Having got fairly into this tableland, we decided to keep on our course, as the quickest way of getting out of it. Sighted Mount Pantan on the afternoon of the 31st, and also saw the timber of the Negri about five miles off. Shortly afterwards arrived at the edge of the tableland, and found that its formation here changed from limestone to sandstone and ironstone. At this point there is a very abrupt descent into the valley of the Negri, the tableland here showing for miles an almost perpen-

dicular front, being very rugged and precipitous. After much trouble in making a road, we managed to arrive without accident at the bottom, and following down the valley of a small creek, we were obliged to camp without reaching the river, as it became too dark to travel. The country for the last 20 miles, although of the very roughest description, is for the most part fairly well grassed, with triodia intervening, and abundance of water throughout, consisting of waterholes and springs. After descending into the valley the travelling was much improved, the rich loamy soil being thickly covered with grass. Late this afternoon we observed that the country a few miles to the northward was open forest country, the tableland not extending beyond it, and I am now certain that a good road for drays and cattle can be made five or six miles north of our track to near O.D. 44, in a direct line from O.D. 26, near the junction of Nelson's Creek with the Negri.

September 1.—The nights are still very cold, while during the day the weather is much warmer than it has been for months past. Starting early, and travelling over well-grassed flats, soon struck the Negri, which is still running a strong stream. Followed it down for three or four miles to near O.D. 25, and camped for the day on a large sheet of water, and were successful here in catching a good supply of fish, while with the guns we obtained a few ducks, and some cockatoos, so were able to save a day's rations.

September 2, 6.—During these days we travelled from the Negri to O.D. 19 (head of Stirling Creek) on the old tracks to O.D. 22, and thence almost in a straight line to O.D. 19. On this track we found capital travelling, the country being all well-grassed, lightly-timbered forest country, open plains, and downs; the formation is of limestone and sandstone, with plenty of water in creeks, caused from permanent springs. By this time several of our horses showed signs of knocking up. One mare was completely done, and as we were now much reduced for want of proper food, I decided to kill her here and jerk the flesh in the sun. We accordingly shot her and were obliged to remain here for the purpose of curing the meat and giving ourselves and horses a spell.

September 7, 8, 9.—Remained in camp feasting on the horseflesh, which had an uncommonly rough time.

September 10.—The greater part of the meat being jerked, we were ready for a start. Steered for O.D. 18, and camped for the night without water, as the lagoons there were now dried up. I, however, having gone on ahead, found that water could be obtained by sinking in the bed of the creek some four miles from here; but it was too late to get there to-night.

September 11.—Mr. O'Malley and I started ahead of the party, and by the time they arrived we had, by aid of a shovel and tin dish, obtained sufficient water to camp on, which we did for the day. The water ran strongly into the hole made by us, the horses being unable to

exhaust it. Most of them being in a very weak state we have to be very careful of them.

September 12.—Making an early start, we followed this creek down in a general N.E. by E. direction for some 14 miles, and then camped on some splendid running springs of permanent water. I have named this Giles' Creek (after Mr. A. Giles, of Springvale station, N.T., he having extended to us the greatest hospitality during our stay there). The formation of the country passed over to-day is ironstone ridges, also sandstone and limestone.

September 13.—Followed down the creek for a short distance to-day, when we were obliged to leave it, owing to the valley being much narrowed, and the whole extent across it occupied with boggy springs. Steered northerly for two or three miles, then turned east, and after a few miles of rough travelling, struck a stony creek, and gave the horses an hour's spell. Started again, and almost immediately struck Stevens' Creek, coming from N.N.W., and running S.S.E., and afterwards easterly. Running it down for five miles, we came to a point where Giles' Creek joined it, both creeks here running strong, and being of considerable width, densely lined with palms and water pandanas. We camped here for the night. Up to here the travelling has been very rough, and is not a suitable stock route. I would advise any parties bringing stock out to this country to leave the Victoria at O.D. 12, then strike Stevens' Creek at O.D. 15, thence W.S.W. to Giles' Creek (the whole of this track being first rate travelling), after which there is no difficulty.

September 14.—After travelling one mile to-day another mare knocked up. Being unable to rise from the ground, and being again almost out of provisions, we were obliged to shoot her, necessitating our remaining here to-day and to-morrow.

September 15.—Camped to-day; employed in dressing the meat.

September 16.—Made 12 miles in a general N.E. direction before camping. Shortly before reaching camp this creek ran into the Victoria.

September 17-24.—During these days we travelled down the Victoria by easy stages, and this magnificent river having been traversed and well described by Gregory, it is quite unnecessary that I should say anything about it. In this time we had a day's spell, and left some spare gear planted, so as to lighten the horses' packs. We were also compelled to leave behind another mare, which could not possibly travel. On the 23rd another horse knocked up, and having eaten nearly all of the last one, we shot and dressed him. I have determined that this is the last horse to be killed, so must make it last out till we reach Delamere. Most of the party are in a very weak condition, and hardly able to walk, as there is no nourishment in the flesh of poor and knocked-up horses. On the 24th we arrived at a point opposite Mount Sandiman, lat. 16 deg. 5 min., where, at the end of a very large waterhole, a rocky ford occurs. As this is no doubt the same place where Gregory crossed the river many years ago, I

have named it Gregory's Ford, after that eminent explorer. As there are high rough ranges a few miles down the river, which come close in, and make an almost impassable gorge for many miles, we have decided to steer E.N.E. to-morrow to get round them, and afterwards more northerly to cut our old tracks.

September 25, 26.—Steered a general N.E. course till near Gregory's Creek, on a large branch of which we camped on the 26th, having had the greatest difficulty in getting several of our horses along, they being very footsore and lame.

September 27.—Having serious fears about some members of the party, and finding the weaker horses a great drag on us, I decided to leave several of them here, bury saddles and other things, and taking the freshest horses push on for Delamere, which we hope to reach to-morrow. As we are now on our outward tracks, and know the country, we will not have the slightest difficulty should the horses keep up. Being desirous of preparing some food for the remainder of the party, I will push on ahead, and try to arrive at the station to-night, taking the black boy with me. The distance proving too far for our tired horses, we were still 10 miles from the station when darkness came on us, the night proving very cloudy, and setting in wet. Having neither moon nor stars to guide me, and being unable to travel by compass in the dark, I trusted to the black boy, who was born and bred on this station, and was supposed to know every inch of the ground. He proved unworthy of this trust, for although we passed within less than a mile of the house he failed to recognise the place, and, after travelling a long time, not knowing in what direction, I resolved to camp, his horse having knocked up in the meantime. Throwing myself on the ground, thoroughly tired, I was soon fast asleep.

September 28.—Up again at daylight, and having a good look round failed to recognise the country, as I had never been there before. I therefore asked the boy if he knew where the station was. He pointed N.E., and said that way, although I thought different, but as he seemed quite positive we started in that direction. After proceeding a short distance his horse gave in. I then had to drive both him and horse in front of me. Still being doubtful as to whether we were going right I again asked him, and he pointed in the same direction. Our travelling was now very slow, hardly a mile an hour. After about four miles I could see by the boy's manner that he had no idea where he was, and as we had no water since late yesterday, and the day being hot, we felt very thirsty. I here decided to let him shift for himself, so went ahead to look for water, and in two miles succeeded in finding some, at which I camped. In two hours' time the boy came up. During the evening I saw some blacks' fires, and heard them calling out.

September 29.—Having thought over the situation, I determined to steer a course in the direction in which I thought Delamere lay, and leaving the boy to do as he pleased. I made the

station in four hours, when I found that the party had arrived safely last evening, the boy arriving two days later. We were here very hospitably received by Mrs. H. Gosse, her husband being from home. The party very soon regained their usual health and spirits. Remained here three days to recruit, when most of the party pushed on for the Katherine telegraph station, being anxious to send news of our safe arrival as soon as possible, as we learnt by the papers that we were almost given up as lost. Two of the party remained behind to bring in the horses and plant. They were out much longer than I expected. As there was nothing to detain Messrs. Carr-Boyd and O'Malley, they shortly started for Melbourne, I and the other members remaining behind till the horses and plant were disposed of. We then came on to Melbourne, arriving here 21st December, having been away 12 months.

Having now come to the end of my diary, I only trust that my explorations may prove of some benefit to that colony. I have, beyond doubt, proved that a vast area of magnificent pastoral lands exists in the hitherto unexplored portions of the Kimberley district, and as I have had considerable experience in Queensland, I can safely say that these lands will compare favourably with the best parts of that colony. It is suitable for any description of stock—horses, cattle, or sheep. I have never seen anything to approach it with regard to its waters, as we daily met with several water-courses, many of large size, and nearly all contained running springs, the whole of the country being made available thereby. With respect to the timber, I found it most suitable for all purposes, and everywhere plentiful. I made it my particular duty to look carefully for the presence of poison plant, but failed to find any. I also noticed that there were no injurious grass seeds. The animals which inhabit this country are not numerous, being chiefly kangaroos and very few wallaby. Native dogs are also very scarce, as we saw and heard very few during the trip. Owing to these facts, combined with the delightfully cool climate which we enjoyed, I am convinced that before long this will become a great wool-growing district. It is well known that Cambridge Gulf is a splendid harbour, and affords secure anchorage, with plenty of room to work the largest

ships afloat, and the open sea outside the gulf is free from reefs and coral patches between here and Port Darwin, which is distant only 24 hours' steam. A very good landing-place for stock can be found a few miles up the Ord River, a strong tide running in about 20 miles from Adolphus Island, and the banks of the river being very high and sound, with abundance of grass and fresh water in the vicinity. A good market for cattle might be opened with the Dutch settlements, also China and Japan, which are all within a few days' sail, and Australian beef would be much superior to their miserable island cattle. The voyage from here to India is shorter by 3000 miles than from Sydney or Melbourne. It will, therefore, be plainly seen that Cambridge Gulf will be the port of North-eastern Kimberley, as it will not only command the trade of the Ord and all its tributaries, but also that large tract of country drained by Start Creek and the Victoria River. From the telegraph line (Northern Territory) we have proved that a good stock route can be made to the Ord River. The natives with whom we came in contact proved perfectly harmless, showing more fear than hostility. They will no doubt become very useful to future settlers. I have no doubt that as settlement advances a large portion of this country will be found to be auriferous, more particularly in the slate ranges on the Panton River, lat. about 17 deg. 50 min. Before concluding, I must return my sincere thanks to the members of my party for the support they gave me on every occasion. Although suffering great privations during portions of the trip, they all, with one exception, did their level best to carry out my instructions, and to assist in bringing the expedition to a successful issue. Also, I would tender my best thanks to Mr. John Wilson, the chairman of the association, for the warm interest and willing assistance he rendered in the matter of equipment and purchasing the horses; to Mr. Charles G. Lush, honorary secretary, for the uniform courtesy he has invariably shown in all matters affecting the interests of the Association; to Mr. Eiley, Astronomer-General, for his very kind assistance in the selection of the scientific equipment.

W. J. O'DONNELL, Leader.

A. J. WELLS, Surveyor.