

Exploration history of the Ord River in the Kimberly's

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Reference - Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW: 1871 - 1912),

Saturday 7 April 1883, The Explorer - Explorations in North-West Australia

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ZZ03 – MR. M/ STUMPY DURACK'S – stumpy Durack version of exploration

Reference - EXPLORATION OF THE KIMBERLEY DISTRICT, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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Reference - The MESSRS. DURACK'S EXPLORING PARTY from Kilfoyle

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA. Southern Argus (Goulburn, NSW: 1881 - 1885),

Tuesday 9 January 1883, page 2

ZZ06A - WALKABOUT magazine – river of destiny by Mary Durack 01/07/1946

RIVER OF DESTINY - By MARY DURACK

ZZ06B - MARY DURACK'S - Version from Kings in Grass Castles

Reference - VERSION FROM KINGS IN GRASS CASTLES – CHAPTER 20 – TO FIND A RIVER

The years 1881 to 1882. Organising for the expedition to inspect the Kimberley district

ZZ07 - ALEXANDER FORREST, F.R.G.S. – copy of Forrest's exploration of the Kimberly

Reference - Eastern Districts Chronicle (York, WA: 1877 - 1927), Friday 30 January 1880, page 3 -
ALEXANDER FORREST, F.R.G.S. – The Australian Explorer.

ZZ08 - An analysis of the social profile of the Kilfoyle's of Rosewood Station

Geraldine Byrne -Edith Cowan University - 1995

Basic introduction to exploration by Jerimia Durack

They started from Brisbane in last July—

chartering a steamer for that purpose; left Port Darwin early in August in a hired schooner, and are now proceeding up the Ord River, in route to Perth via the Margaret and Fitzroy Rivers and King's Sound.

They have seen Mr. Alexander Forrest, the well-known explorer, at his residence in Perth; and that gentleman kindly gave them every aid by the way of chart, tracings and even thought he would likely accompany my brother.

I think that the fact of there being such a large extent of splendid pastoral country—unsurpassed in this colonies—only waiting to be taken up in Western Australia, must induce many of our wealthy squatters to cast longing eyes in that direction.

True, there is, we might say, little or no local market, nothing much known about the ports, difficulty to be overcome regarding supplies, &c., &c.; but a very few year's might see most (if not all) these obstacles overcome.

We had much the same difficulties to contend with when we came into Western Queensland some years ago, and see the change now or must the natural advantages that Western Australia possesses be forgotten.

In my opinion, one need not be much of a prophet to predict that there will be something like a rush for country, especially in the northern part of that colony before many months are over.

Reference - DR CATHIE CLEMENT OAM 2011

EARLY PASTORAL LEASES IN THE KIMBERLEY

Cathie is a leading Western Australian historian, heritage consultant and researcher who is committed to the recording and preservation of Western Australia's history, particularly that of the Kimberley region.

Cathie was the founding President of the Kimberley Society and was made a life member of that Society in 2004. She has a strong commitment to Indigenous history, was a long-term member of the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee which advises the Minister for Indigenous Affairs on matters relating to Aboriginal heritage, and has provided expert evidence in native title cases.

An expedition led by Alex Forrest traversed the north-west of the continent in 1879 and reported the discovery of some twenty to twenty-five million acres (8,093,712 to 10,117,140 hectares) of pastoral land.

Allegations of improper acquisition of leasehold land were being made around this time and the government felt obliged to place a moratorium on the selection of pastoral leases north of the 19th Parallel.

More than a year passed before the Imperial and colonial governments agreed on the regulations that would allow land to be allocated in a way that would prevent improper acquisition and speculation and thus encourage rapid settlement of the district now known as the Kimberley.

Meanwhile, two firms associated with Julius Brockman and Alexander Richardson ignored The Waste Lands Unlawful Occupation Act and took sheep there.

In October 1880, the government invited people to lodge applications for Kimberley pastoral leases.

All the sealed envelopes were to be opened on 1 February 1881 and, if two or more were for the same land, the decision was to be by ballot.

In the final analysis, however, neither the new land regulations nor the ballot provided an adequate defence against the chicanery that marked the early years of leasing in the far north.

There was no limit on the number of applications an individual could lodge for the first release of land, no limit on the acreage sought either in total or within each lease, and no guarantee that applicants would pay rent on approved leases.

The non-refundable application fee of 2/6 thus allowed would-be pastoralists or speculators to apply for whatever land they wished as long they ensured that blocks with frontage to water had a depth at least three times their width.

New lessees were never in short supply and, in this case, Alex Forrest secured fresh leases over the land.

Alex Forrest played a central role in the acquisition and turnover of pastoral leases in the Kimberley.

He gave up his contract surveying work in 1881 and opened a land agency that specialised in Kimberley leases.

He had clients in the eastern colonies, some who were quite blatantly speculating in leases and others, **like the Durack's and the Emanuels**, who subsequently rationalised their holdings and established pastoral stations.

Forrest also lent money to the cartel's Kimberley Pastoral Company, purchased a share in both the company and one of the vessels that it used to ship sheep to the Kimberley, and acted as the Western Australian agent for Englishman James Game who commenced his long-term acquisition of Kimberley land by purchasing Yeeda station from Alexander Richardson and his associates.

ZZ01 -Mitchell Library of NSW –

Copy of John Pentecost original 1882 diary

John Pentecost diary of an expedition from Sydney to the Ord River, Western Australia,
January to December 1882





Diary of J. Pentecost
expedition to Ord River, W.A.,
Ja - Dec. 1882

Durack - Journal

For further information on this expedition see W. A. C. H. L. vol 2, pt XII, p 5, where a list of it is given, and light thrown on it of getting there & return of the expedition.

They sailed from Sydney by 1882 to & landed their horses & equipment & by weeks' travelling inland reached River, naming on their way the Du, Portacost (sic) Durack & the River, up into the Gulf. Travelling as usual known as Kall's Creek they reached Bay where they caught the schooner & landed at Fremantle on Jan 15. They were surprised at the good weather & the beautiful scenery of the coast.

Michael J. Durack (Leader)
 J. (Thomas?) Kilgyle (2nd in command)
 John Portacost (Sergeant & ferry)
 Sydney? Branch
 Thomas Hoan
 James (Also 2 natives)

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Durack – Emanuel Expedition

For further information on this exploring expedition see W. Aust. Hist. Soc – Jour & Procs. vol 2, pt XII, p.5, where a list of the personnel is given, and light thrown on their method of getting there. A résumé of this information is here given

They sailed from Sydney Jy 1882 to the Cambridge. Landed their horses & equipment & after some weeks' travelling inland reached the Ord River, naming on their way the Durack, Pentacost (Sic) Dunham & Bow Rivers, all of which

empty into the Gulf. Travelling west from district now known as Hall's Creek they reached Beagle Bay where they caught the schooner Mary Smith & landed at Fremantle on Jan 15 of 1883. They were convinced of the good qualities of the Kimberley District for pastoral purposes.

Personnel of Expedition Michael J. Durack (leader), T (Thomas?) Kilfoyle (2nd in command) , John Pentacost (surveyor & geologist) , Sidney?} Sydney?} Emanuel, Thomas Horan , James Josey (Also 2 native boys)

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AR/- 15 sheet 2/6

Notice, any shorthand writer other than my son who may be engaged to read these notes is requested to do a kind action by forwarding back to my son as no one else has any right to it nor to have it turned into longhand.

In case of accident leadg. to death this book is to be forwarded to my son Hugh Pentecost Park Cottage, The Reserve, North Shore Sydney, and for this purpose it will be taken by Sid Emanuel if he survives me, if not then by J. Josey - failing this by any one else.

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6th July

Sailed from Sydney on [crossed through - Wednesday] **Thursday morning** got up in time to see her going down the harbour.

She appears to be a steady boat but very slow on regular [indecipherable].

She had during part of this day to have been going at 7 knots an hour but I do not believe she has made more than 5 or 6. Meals getting very late we did not have our breakfast till nearly the middle of the day but of course some allowance must be made at start.

Friday.

Passed Point Hacking. Signalled the telegraph station there.

The Captain and officers seem all right but slow.

The fare is good it [indecipherable] to be at table but plenty of it. Nothing of importance. The Minnamurra passed us early in the day and went out of sight in no time.

Tom and Kilfoyle and Michael [Durack] tend to the horses these seem to get on very favourably.

I had long talk with Captain Dart [?] who says Stevens should not have chartered ships of this class.

Saturday.

Was mustered this morning at seven by Michael coming in our cabin to tell us she had put about and was returning to Sydney her boilers being quite broken down and that new tubes must be put in.

This most awful vexious delay will be something most unlike if it does not spoil our expedition altogether.

The Chief Engineer is said to have left her in Sydney because machinery was in such bad order.

We turned back at half past 12 last night. At about 8.30 this morning we are said to be 140 miles from Sydney and that we shall get in there on Sunday morning

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for being detained a week in Sydney where we are transhipped to the Vortigern an English ship.

During a week of detention, we had a great deal of trouble with Stevens & Co. In the office of that firm, they seem to be all masters and no men.

We wanted the horses sent on shore and they promised to send them afterwards then objected to do so unless we took all liability as to their landing and reshipping which liability of course we would not undertake.

Sent Stevens a letter or rather left one at his office which I wrote while there as I could not see him.

In this letter I told him that the horses would be ruined for our purpose as they were standing between decks with their heads over a hatchway from which the men were discharging coal so the poor brutes were breathing an atmosphere of coal dust and that the men could not get at them to supply the necessary hay and water and that if Stevens did not alter this state of things I intended but call upon the secretary of the Animals Protection Society to see if a prosecution should not be instituted.

Stevens got in a great rage and threatened to publish the letter which is just what I should like.

He complained both to Sid and to Kilfoyle about having received such a letter

when he was doing all, he could to send us off again as soon as possible but as Sid told him he was doing that for his own pleasure and profit and not especially for us.

There cannot surely be a more selfish and worse managed firm in Sydney.

On Sunday the horses were trans-shipped and we left Mort's Dock about mid-day but after proceeding as far as Bradleys Head we anchored as there were not enough firemen on board and those who were on board refused to work unless others were engaged.

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At about five o'clock two new Firemen were hired at six pounds, very menial wages.

It seems that the Captain had engaged two Chinamen one to assist the cook the other as Fireman, the former would not work and with the latter the Firemen objected to work hence the delay.

We passed through the heads about 5 o'clock and speedily began to feel the swell.

All through Sunday night we had very dirty weather.

So dirty that the passengers disappeared into their cabins and some were soon heard to be engaged in unshipping cargo.

We had a pretty good dinner on Sunday but tea in the evening was not enjoyable as there was no soft bread nothing but biscuit which I did not like at all and others have the same objection to it. Sid had no tea but remained in his bunk till Monday morning when he turned out after breakfast.

We had chops steak and potatoes but no bread. I complained to the Captain of the absence of soft bread he said it was not his fault and the steward said it was not his as he had sent for bread and none was delivered.

It appears to me therefore that the order was not given sufficiently early to be executed and that people would not put themselves out of the way to send bread on board on Sunday.

If we did not get a supply at Brisbane or have some baked we shall have a miserable time of it.

During Sunday night the boat knocked about a good deal and the poor horses suffered as they were exposed to washing of salt water as well as rain and knocking about.

They ought to have had some protection from the weather.

We find a great difference between this ship and the former the latter having been much superior both in cabin accommodation and in the quantity and quality of the food.

She was also a much better sea boat and would never have rolled and pitched

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as does this cranky thing.

Monday.

Sea still rough. Ship pitching and rolling Sid and myself got up to breakfast but went to our bedrolls again afterwards as these are the most comfortable places to be found at present.

It seems that she must have been making good speed during the night something like ten or eleven miles an hour so our passage to Brisbane ought to be short.

Chinamen, we have sick all in another berth today.

John has not made his appearance other than to say three of the others laid up.

Put the dog in the kennel as the poor brute hardly seemed to know what to do with himself on the wet decks.

Old Tom has been appointed cook's mate so he will be able to take care of himself.

Any [indecipherable] doing this work the Captain has promised to lend a man or two to water and feed the horses.

I must now try to get a little sleep as last night I did not sleep for five minutes the side piece of my bunk is so low that I thought I had gone to sleep and then been pitched out upon the floor and as I sleep in the upper bunk this would have been no joke but might have broken a bone or two.

Sid slept in the bunk underneath and was not troubled with wakefulness.

He had no tea, felt too queer but was not sick. Had a little reading of the nautical almanac. Nobody too happy.

Thursday [Crossed through - nineteenth] 20

We are now anchored in Moreton Bay awaiting the arrival of the three fresh horses to come from Brisbane.

Anchored last night after waiting some two or three

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hours for a pilot. Firemen came in this morning or rather two of them and complained of their food and wished to leave but I believe the Captain made terms with them.

Most of the other sea sick passengers came to breakfast this morning. And as the table will afford accommodation only for six or for seven the others have to come to a second table.

Friday, 21st Townsville

Very dirty weather. Ship rolling and rocking a great deal.

Did not sleep all night in consequence of noises and things breaking loose. Bottle of beer smashed in our berth. Rats running about over Sid's face.

Was afraid some of our things would be spoilt but there was more noise than mischief. Ship put about so she is now head to wind. Helped to water and feed the horses this morning in conjunction with Kilfoyle and three men from the ship.

Others felt squeamish.

Seem to have gone wrong with my dates as **I found the reference to the Almanac for Friday is twenty-first instead of 20th.**

Weather got rather warmer, thermometer stood last night at 70.

Sunday, 23rd

We have arrived off Townsville early this morning and the steamer lay

about three miles off the town. Went ashore in the small steamer at about one o'clock taking with us a gooseberry pie for lunch having previously taken some fruit juice.

Walked over part of the town, lay down on the sands then met Sid and went with him to take out Mr. and Mrs. [indecipherable].

About eight o'clock we went back to the Queens Hotel and met the Captain and others and returned on board at about 12 o'clock when about 20 tons of cargo

were put on board from the small steamer.

Townsville is a clean thriving looking

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place but the people all seem filled with the idea of separation.

They contend that not sufficient money is spent on their town and that all the northern district is anxious for separation and that Townsville should be the capital.

Argued the matter with Mr [indecipherable] but of course the people hereabout see it from their point of view, that is increased prosperity of the town.

The principal street is Flinders Street just about a mile and a half long and in which there are most of the merchant stores, the telegraph office and the railway station.

Railway goes to Charters Towers about ninety miles from Townsville.

Some of the party got sugar canes of about eight feet in length and brought them on board.

There are several Chinamen living in Townsville, most of the boarding houses for working men seem to be occupied by Chinese and to be well patronised.

Sent off letters to Mrs Pentecost and to Hugh which I suppose they will get in about a week.

Land seems to have risen considerably in value in Townsville within a very short time for I am told that about three or four years ago the town's trustees sold what land they possessed here for 25 thousand pounds and gave easy terms of payment and that the same land is now worth about 250 thousand pounds and can hardly be got for that so that some who bought three years ago and have not even yet paid for any land are making a thousand percent on their money.

We had a good walk about the town and the exercise will indeed

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do us good for it was a great change after being cramped up for a week on board ship.

Ships cannot approach to within a mile or two of the town though there is a long

jetty of granite which is said to have cost many thousands of pounds but which is of little service as it does not extend to deep water.

There is [indecipherable] money voted or to be voted to extend the jetty along which a rail runs out into deep water and then Townsville will go ahead with greater speed as mail and other ships will be able to lay alongside the jetty.

We left early on Monday morning.

Gave Old Tom a glass of whisky, my birthday.

Monday, July 24

At Townsville we took on board another sullen passenger who will probably have to stow himself wherever he can as there is no berth for him.

He is very tall about six feet three or more.

Last night he slept on deck [?] but found it rather cold.

The thermometer is about 70 in the shade and last evening in coming off to the ship we found it quite chilly though on shore it was warm.

Townsville people are very proud of their town and so the only drawback is the advent of occasional hurricanes which blow frightfully.

As to this paper from Townsville they publish their paper which comes out twice a week so there is no opposition as they take different days.

Mrs [indecipherable] reminded me very much of Mrs [indecipherable] both in voice and appearance.

Bought some tobacco on board from the steward but it is of poor quality to the right stuff.

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At Cooktown we did not land or at least only Sid and one other passenger. Everything very poor here and a very poor town as to buildings nothing to be compared with Townsville.

Took aboard some other passengers only one Englishman and several Chinese.

At Thursday Island there is a hulk lying off which is for receiving goods that are to be sent off or received for the town.

It is large and was brought out from England, it also serves as a depot for black fellows about to be employed in the pearl fisheries.

There were several schooners here and the floating to and fro of their boats and the mixture of ours, negroes, Malays, Kanakas and some natives of New Guinea made it a very lively scene.

We lay alongside the hulk for discharging cargo.

On arriving at Port Darwin we were pleased with the aspect of the town.

Things are looking up more than have been for some time previously.

The schooner came alongside almost immediately we anchored and in a very short time began to take the horses down into her hold.

She is a clean tidy looking vessel and the Captain seems a [indecipherable] fellow.

Next day had a row with the Captain Brown from Vortigern who refused to let us have any more water for the horses, he is a mean sort of humbug.

We stayed at Pickfords Hotel in Port Darwin for two days.

Charged two shillings per meal and some other bits.

Board regularly is 30 shillings per week.

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Aug. 5th.

Left Port Darwin after having been detained two days longer than necessary under the pretext that they could not get water to fill all the tanks of which five were put ashore from the Vortigern.

The horses had been trans-shipped on the very day of our arrival.

There was very bad management evinced in this respect and it was the means of keeping the poor horses on board ship for at least two or three days more than necessary.

During the next week there was little or nothing to record, no events of any consequence transpiring. We made only about twenty or thirty miles a day.

It seems that one of the principal causes for our delay at Port Darwin was that the Captain of the schooner did not hold a Masters Certificate for holding command of a sea going boat but merely a coasting certificate as met with some account in in South Wales.

I may here express my sense of his willingness to cooperate in everything tending to the welfare of the men and horses of the expedition.

He was active and a good sailor though his knowledge of navigation was very deficient being I suppose only sufficient to keep a dead reckoning. He received some aid in respect of navigation from one of his hands a

young fellow named Philpots (Philpots) who stated that he was a grandson of the late Bishop of Exeter and who seemed a well educated youngster.

Each day we had just sufficient breeze in the morning and evening as to tantalise us, land and sea breezes lasting over an hour or so and very light.

We had no fresh meat but in other respects did not fare badly though we were often reminded of the saying so frequently quoted aboard ship that the good God sends vittles but the devil sends cooks.

Our cook was a failure and dirty though a willing old fellow.

Caught a shark about six feet in length on one occasion which gave rise to some writing in diaries.

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As to our impressions of Port Darwin was that it is not an unpleasant place to live in but rather too warm in summer, at the time of our call of course the weather was splendid.

The town itself is built on elevated ground with a good view of the area.

There are not many European families, the bulk of the population being Chinese who seem to be a thriving orderly community.

The Governor [?] responsible Mr. Price is said to watch carefully over their necessities and sees that no injustice is done to them by the white man.

They hold an open market in the middle of the principal street in which they reside and we saw plenty of sugar cane millings cabbages meat and other things laid out for sale. It was all cleared off at an early hour. The fish were from four pence to sixpence a pound.

There are only two butchers established in the town and the orders have to be given before in order to secure supply.

The principal hotel is Pickfords which is well conducted and a roomy establishment. The charge for meals is two shillings each and two shillings for bed for weekly boarders and the charge is 30/- shillings per week which is very moderate and the bill of fare is not bad.

The principal buildings in Port Darwin or Palmerston (which is the name of the town) are the Government buildings namely the Customs, Post Office, Telegraph Office, the Police Barracks, Doctors residence, resident's houses and one or two Banks.

We stayed at the hotel during our detention at Port Darwin. At this time of the year the fever is very bad.

The Doctor is a government official and is paid about 500 pounds a year for looking after the health of the officials. In addition, he is also the Protector of the blacks and has a pretty good private practice.

I owed ten shillings to Sid while at Port Darwin to make up sufficient to pay my hotel expenses.

At Adcock Brothers Store we purchased six boxes of soap chamois leather

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cases of Hennessy's Brandy and one or two little things.

There are many blacks at Palmerston or Port Darwin consisting of two tribes [indecipherable] and the Larrakias.

Without any trouble we obtained two small black boys one is an orphan named Tom [Tim ?] Cherry the other is known as David.

They can both speak a good deal of English and are well up in the vocabulary of

others but that is not to be wondered at considering that one of them used to assist a bullock driver.

In order to secure these boys, it was necessary to give about fifteen shillings to the father of one boy and then take both two men before the Doctor as aboriginal practice in prisons is a bond had to be signed that the boys should be taken back or sent back to Port Darwin within or at the end of twelve months.

The bonds were signed by Kilfoyle and Sid Emanuel so I suppose one boy will be retained by each of them.

I believe that Durack intends to have the one Kilfoyle signed for and the other one too if he can get him.

We left Port Darwin on Saturday fifth and as I have already said took eight days to get to Cambridge Gulf owing to the lightness of the winds which only made their appearance for about an hour in the morning and evening and sometimes not in our favour.

Our arrival at Cambridge Gulf took place on Sunday the 13 instant but we were only able to get in just **opposite Lacrosse Island** where we lay for a day and part of another. Some of the party went ashore to see if water and food could be got for the horses. They went in spite of my opposition as I considered it a most foolish procedure even if water and food were found. Some of the party seem most obstinate and pig headed and **it was evidently a mistake to go on an expedition with men who have a [indecipherable] in the fire.**

It is bad to do with such men especially when they are ignorant bush men as it would be with so many mules.

I have already seen several instances of this. Among these I may mention

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the fact that one of the iron water tanks was placed down in the hold of the schooner where it blocked the way between the horses both for locomotion and for [indecipherable].

As the horses were constantly adding to the heap of manure the stench at least became almost unbearable. **Some of the horses were continually bleeding at the nostrils** from the effects of the ammonia given off and even for the short time the men had to go down to water and feed them, they complained much of the stench.

I suggested that they should remove a tank first using the water it contained which would otherwise probably become bad but Kilfoyle with characteristic obstinacy refused to do it. "It would be all right" he said and nothing could move him so water was passed down from the tanks on deck while that in the hold was allowed to remain untouched until it stank.

Then when the water was spoilt, they commenced using it and I protested against giving the horses such water as likely to kill them living as they were in such atmosphere.

Kilfoyle proceeded to mend matters by mixing off a tank of good water with the tank of stinking water thus spoiling good with very little improvement on the bad.

No reasoning served to move him from his purpose. **Next morning a horse was found dead** probably gripe which may or may not have been caused by the water. The supply of stinking water was then stopped for a few days after which it was again resumed and again a horse was found to have dropped dead.

Some said he had dropped down on the rope and choked himself but Sid pointed out that he was low the day before so Durack agreed.

It was therefore evident that it was not a case of choking.

Moreover, the rope was too low altogether to choke him. I again urged the necessity of getting rid of the stinking water and taking up the tank and Sid spoke strongly on the same subject so at last it was done and everyone on board the schooner remarked what a great improvement was at once manifest in the atmosphere of the hold.

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When one has such trouble to get things done the necessity of which every sensible person would at once perceive, it makes one regret more and more that he should have gone on an expedition with men whose ideas are limited to bush fires and who because they know how to ride horses and drive any cattle and live on rough and dirty fare they are the best judges of everything wherein horses are made useful.

If it please God that I ever return from this expedition I shall have received a lesson that will make me take great care never again to go on such an affair except with men of money choosing who are willing to render burdens. I told Sid and told Michael Durack that unless things went differently on shore, I should return to Port Darwin in the schooner for I would have no bother and no responsibility with men who would never follow the letter.

Sid professed his willingness to follow my directions and Michael Durack said he would take care that things should be different on shore and that he would consult with me respecting everything.

If they choose to go another way I shall leave them to follow it and do the best they can for themselves.

We have now sailed down Cambridge Gulf and a grander harbour there does not exist in Australia. Though not so pretty as that of Sydney it is six times the size and is very safe with plenty of deep water.

The Admiralty chart seems to have been conscientiously done so well that the Captain of the schooner (Murray) had no difficulty in bringing her down to her **present position that is at the mouth of the Gut** which I think if I recollect rightly is about forty five miles from the mouth of the gulf.

The rocks are rather broken so that most of the country around would be impossible for horses to travel.

On looking across the country one sees hill after hill in range towering up and the country seems desolate and barren affording no food for anything but a few birds.

Where we now lie the land is much better and ongoing ashore to select a camping place, we saw many pigeons and two wallabies

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with tracks of native dogs and tracks of natives (their foot prints in the sands). The water falls 21 feet in this gulf and the banks are then largely of a greasy kind of dark clay.

All the water of the gulf is turpid and of a red colour.

It is curiously marked even veined as it were with salt and fresh water which do not properly intermingle.

From this colour which might very appropriately be called the Red Sea.

As yet we have seen no sharks or alligators down here though there are plenty of the former near the mouth of the gulf.

It seems to me that the water is so turbid that they could not see their prey. There are high currents especially at the Gut and every appearance of a large river making its exit here.

Numerous cockatoos and some very bright small flowers of rich colour.

Saw a new species today, a tree with flowers like honeysuckle and scent somewhat like a lemon.

The bottle tree about here produces a large fruit about the size of a swan's egg or larger having a brighter hued shell with pithy substance in which seeds are imbedded.

We found some broken shells at an old native encampment and came to the conclusion that the natives ate them.

We tried the experiment.

At least it seemed as though one may almost as well eat both but after a little mastication a pleasant tart taste was developed so that they were rather agreeable to chew.

I suppose the cockatoos also eat them for we saw large flocks where these trees grow. The seeds are probably nutritious as well as the pith-like matter.

I shall endeavour to take some seeds or a frond or two to Sydney with me though our means of carriage are very limited.

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14th. August,

Today we have come to our last bit of hay and our last bucket of water.

In fact, we are getting ships water.

This evening, we landed 21 horses two having died as I have said through neglect and ignorance.

The scene of the landing would have made a beautiful illustration for one of the papers.

We were obliged to allow about 150 yards from the banks and these were greasy sloping mud banks so I suggested that branches of trees should be cut and laid upon the bank.

Kilfoyle then suggested that the upper and most boggy part where the branches were laid should be covered with an old sail.

This was done and a passible roadway made for we were afraid the horses would be bogged if not thus assisted, they were so weak with over a month's confinement on board ships of various kinds and standing so long without any opportunity of lying down. We had landed only about eight of the number when darkness came upon us.

A large fire was kindled on the bank near the landing place, a tow rope made fast to a tree then as each horse was lifted from the hold of the ship by means of a sling and the winch it was lowered over the side and towed ashore. Some plunged and kicked others went quietly. Three men that were in the boat one of whom immediately the horse was in the water took hold of the halter another loosened the sling and the third pulled the boat to the landing place by means of the towing rope.

Some of the horses swam well some had to be towed merely floating on their side quite passive while others seemed to be frightened and plunged [indecipherable] till it seemed as though they would swamp the boat.

There was also one man on shore who at the boat approaching took the halter and guided the horse up the platform of tree boughs covered with canvas and he had as indeed all had plenty to do.

There was no one on board ship who was not busily employed except

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Michael Durack who on the previous evening fell down the hold backward and falling heavily on large quartz struts that formed the floor bruised himself very much though it was a providential thing that his skull was not broken or his neck.

It was a very narrow escape.

He has not been able to walk properly since. Having no arnica [?] with me I made up a lotion of belladonna [indecipherable] and brandy and rubbed that well into his back.

It gave him relief from his pain though it will be many days before he perfectly recovers.

Sid and Old Tom were down in the hold putting on the slings on the horses and the fumes of the ammonia from the tank and urine was almost unbearable, this made Sid's eyes quite sore and inflamed, I have given him some carbolic acid cleanser.

15th August, Tuesday.

The horses that went ashore yesterday were not hobbled but Kilfoyle and Josey attempted to drive them to the water hole.

Sid was helping them.

They were at work till twelve o'clock and several of the horses got away and at the time of writing, three o'clock, nine of them are still missing.

We find that we have not a sufficient number of hobbles.

After landing the horses yesterday everyone had had enough of the work and I think everyone slept well.

Today Sid, Kilfoyle and Josey went off from the place where they camped to look for the missing horses but have not yet succeeded in finding them.

Yesterday evening Josey broke Durack's gun by firing it off that made it stick in the bore area [indecipherable] by any effect that made.

He is a rather careless and clumsy fellow and though I had often promised he should have my rifle to carry as I should probably have not to go without it I have now come to the conclusion

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that if it is to remain a serviceable weapon I had better take care of it myself.

I did not much admire Sniders there is a bother about getting out the cartridges and they are heavy.

Sid's Winchester is a very much safer weapon and is the kind of rifle which each ought to have had.

It carries twelve cartridges and discharges the empty cartridge case with ease and rapidity in a moment, it is worth a dozen Sniders.

Plenty of pigeons of two varieties about here but will not put to waste our ammunition on small things as our supply is limited. [Crossed through - we ought to have brought about twice as much.]

The black boys get on very well eat enormously and have plenty to say for themselves, can swear like troopers or rather like bullock drivers.

They went ashore last night to hold some of the horses after a few were landed but when the boat left to go off to the ship they ran to it in great fear saying they smelt black fellows about. No natives made their appearance yet though the schooner must have been seen by many of them.

I have lost considerable weight through not eating sufficient, the food on board the schooner being plentiful but [indecipherable] and the cook who is cook and steward is dirty and very dirty so that the food has become repulsive.

It seems to make no difference to many of the others but probably they are not so fastidious as myself.

Sid has just come off from the shore his eyes very sore.

We intend to land the goods tomorrow.

Sent on shore Sid's saddle and bridle Josey's saddle two quart belts, two more belts and straps this making four belts and straps altogether.

I am afraid that we shall not have a sufficient number of straps.

The black boys and Old Tom have also gone ashore to the camping place and the Captain has sent some of his flour tea sugar etc. which we shall have to return to him when our stores are opened.

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Went down into the hold of the schooner today the fumes of ammonia are frightful.

Everybody is glad that the horses are out of the vessel

Plenty of small fish in the gulf except at the parts near the mouth which are very rocky and a great portion of the gulf has mangrove lined shores where one expects to see alligator.

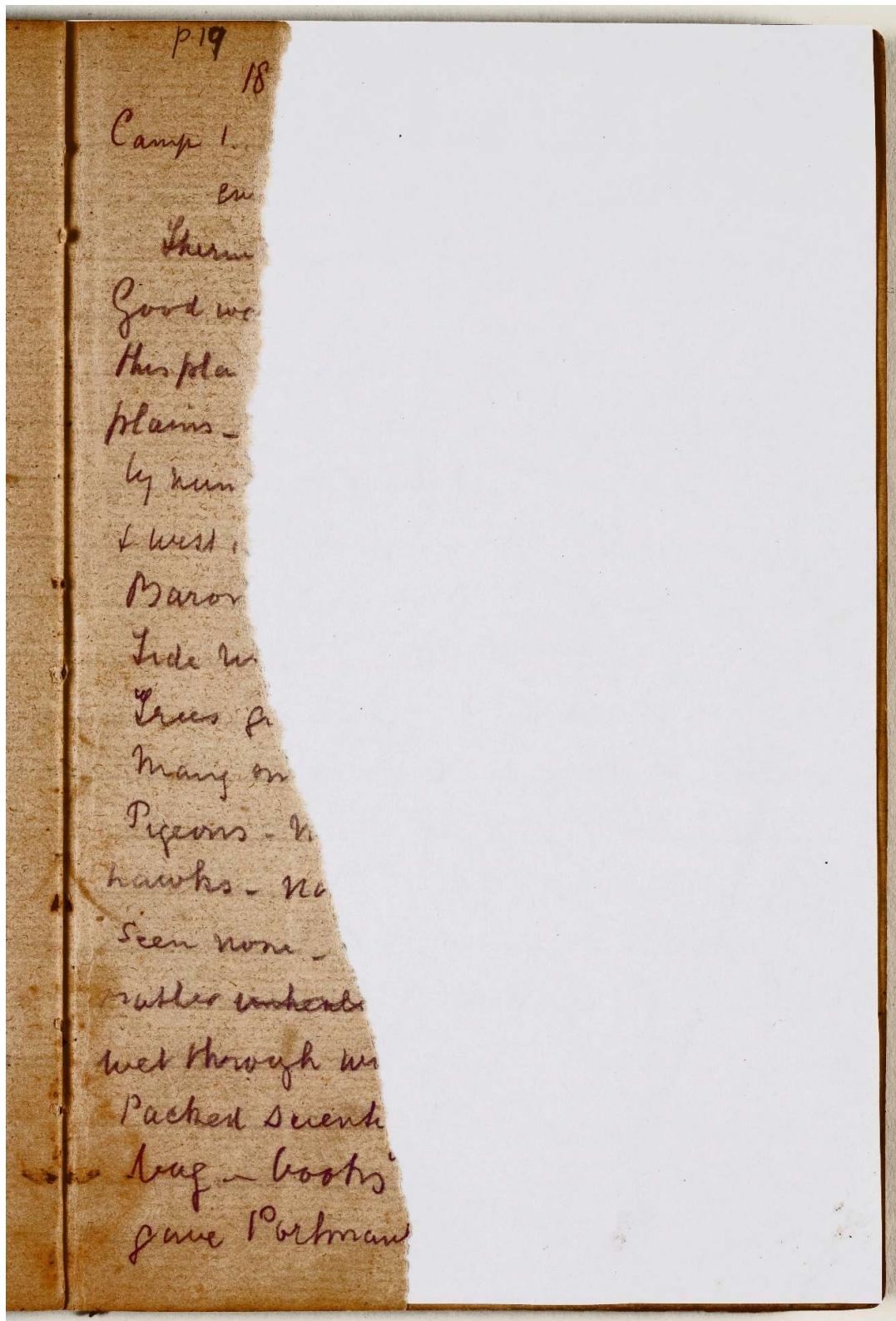
Took some rhubarb pills last night and gave three to Michael Durack.

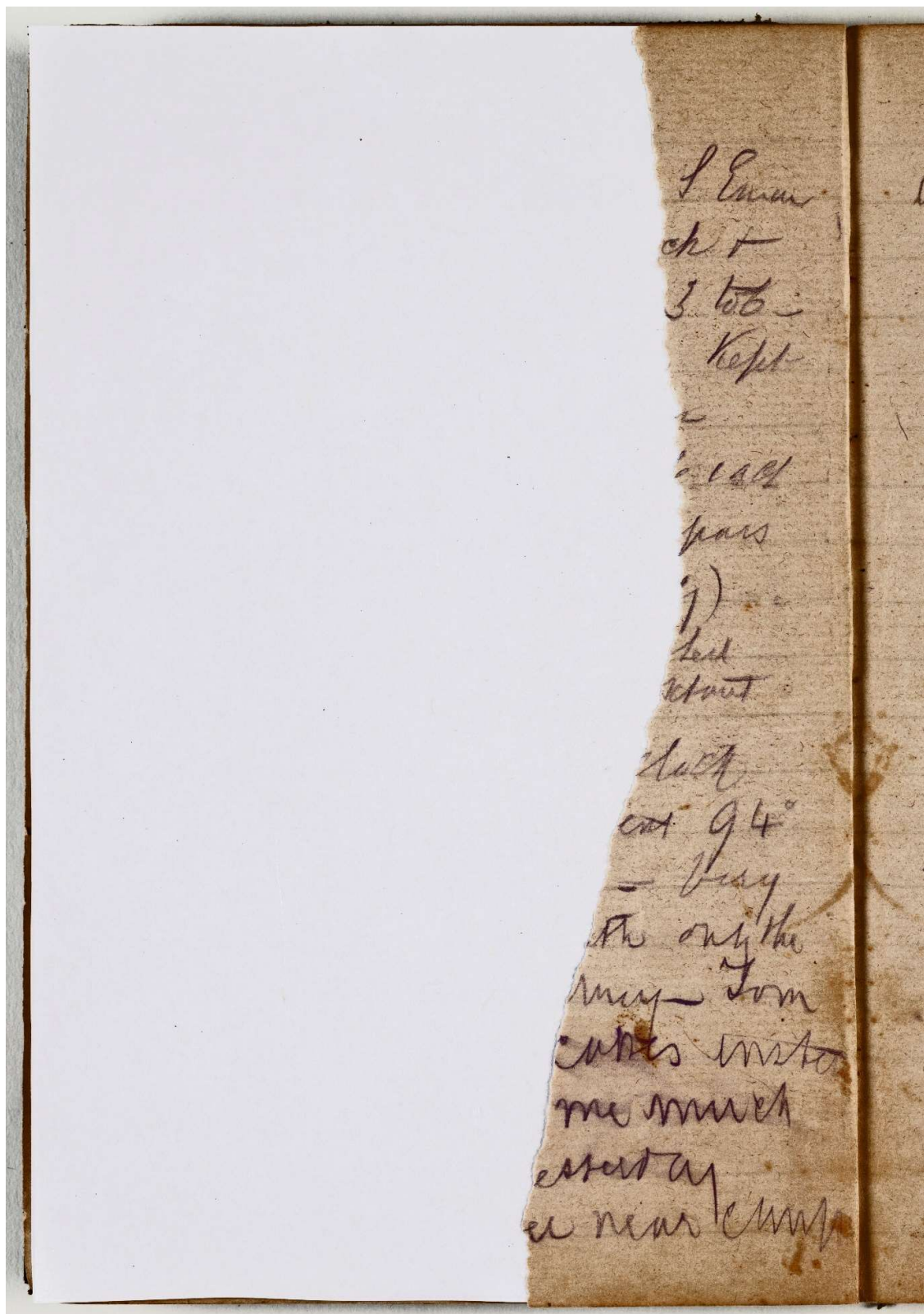
Captain Murray tells me his boat will leave on Friday so I suppose I shall have time enough to write to my wife to Hugh and to Mr Emanuel and if possible, to Mr Skelton [?] Editor of the paper at Port Darwin to whom I shall send a request that he forwards papers to my wife and son.

Today the men are cleaning up the schooner.

The weather is frightful here 130 in the sun and over ninety in the shade.

Cairns





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& the number 1 so I suppose Sid will select another tree just same number. Sweat dripping off face.

Monday 21. August,

Durack and Kilfoyle went out to find a camp but gave no notice to anyone else of their intention until they were nearly ready to start.

Consequently, there was great dissension and grumbling.

Sid said he would go with them but they went off before he was ready and though he cooed they did not answer and as he did not know the route, they would take was unable to follow.

Jim Josey and I went up the gully from our camp for about 2 1/2 miles and found it dry except beneath where we saw that there is a water fall about 30 feet in depth and about 30 yards broad.

Here we saw a wallaby which had come to quench its thirst in the deep pools of water left below the fall.

After this we proceeded on to the north west and found the rock to be hard metamorphic with no fossils but with distinct ripple marks here and there and with peculiar marks thus [see image for drawing] somewhat like indeed very like heart of oak reminded me of rough [indecipherable] woods sand blown rocks. There was a good deal of ironstone.

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Tuesday 22. August,

Durack and Kilfoyle after having returned, Sid, Josey and I had three horses saddled and went off ourselves to look for the camp.

We went along another side of the Gut for about a couple of miles then came to a deep gully where there was another possibility of crossing with horses and which contained no water. We then went off northwards and found the ground very rocky and fearfully bad for the horses so about three o'clock returned to camp coming back by way of the creek down a very steep hill.

Within a few minutes of our return Durack and Kilfoyle also returned and told us they had found a camp about six miles distance.

It was then decided that we should start on the Thursday for the new ground.

In the evening Sid and Durack had a row about their having gone off without giving any of us notice and about their general behaviour.

Durack spoke very mildly and excused this by saying they thought he knew the route they were about to take and that they did not hear him cooeing.

Sid said it would be better for us to part than to go on in the way we had been doing lately Durack putting on so much side and fancying himself boss.

He also said the others never made themselves sociable and that there had been two parties throughout, therefore it would be as well if we separated. Durack said he was willing to do so.

Sid told Durack that he had said that he did not believe my [indecipherable] the direct the route as he could not understand what I was doing with fixing [indecipherable].

Wednesday 23

Was spent in shoeing horses, packing boxes and other preparations for leaving camp but affairs were not so stormy today.

Weather very hot.

Sid shot a bronze winged pigeon and then some shot rattled the canvas which had been

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for making a boat [?] wheel to cross any river if necessary. Wind changed to the south. No blacks have visited us at this camp.

Thursday 24th

We all rose at day-break and got in the horses put on the pack saddles and left camp by nine o'clock taking a southerly direction over the hill at the back of the camp.

The horses took kindly to the packs and followed wonderfully.

Durack knowing the route went first then I followed then came four pack horses and Kilfoyle after which some pack horses and Jim then the other horses and Sid led Tom and the black boys.

We have arranged to have four in watches instead of three, Kilfoyle and blacks to take the first, Sid and Josey the second, Durack and I the third and Tom and a black be fourth.

We took till half past one to get to the new camping ground, a shorter time than Durack and Kilfoyle that would be taken.

This camp number 2

was reached by going in the south for about four miles and then about 2 miles in the west direction along the beach for about 2 miles. Generally we may say that we took a SW direction for about six miles taking 4 1/2 hours over the area for it was shockingly bad travelling for the horses, in effect only just possible to do it.

Our present camping place is below the Gut at the wide part and below some of the islands.

Between this place and the gulf the ground is flat with strands of grass covered plain and salt plains which are evenly covered at times with salt water and are probably inundated for the rainy season.

There is plenty of water and grass of various kinds here and the horses seem to take to it kindly.

The place is bisected

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by numerous creeks which contain water slightly brackish which leaves a rough taste in the mouth and which I expect will save us the trouble of taking some doses of salts.

It makes very good tea as far as flavour is concerned.

Saw no blacks on our journey but smoke of their fires on the opposite shore.

Sid shot a dingo which was in very poor condition.

We are camped under a Boab [?] tree on which the flowers of red colouring are thick but there are few or no leaves.

Had hot beef and damper for dinner with it, this is our usual fare.

Shall be glad if our stock of provisions will hold out but I am afraid if we go on as at present, we shall come short as some of the company did not seem to have any idea of prudence.

In the water flowing near us in the creek there are beautiful water lilies and plenty of small fish but hardly large enough to be worth catching.

The lilies are white and others of a mauve colour and thorn edged leaves. There are many of both sorts.

Must take the compass bearings as we go along tomorrow to make more sure of the direction of our journey.

Black boys seem done up. One of them lost his water bag and had to go back some distance for it.

Finding himself left behind and being terribly afraid of any other black fellows being about he soon came galloping along to overtake the others and was seen riding furiously astride of the horse's neck holding the bridle with one hand and the mane with the other.

Asked him how he felt about the journey he said he was very sore behind and no wonder in taking a gallop in such a position.

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Durack and Sid have cut their names on the trees but I do not intend to do anything of the sort as I do not think it necessary for everyone to amuse themselves in this manner and I cannot perceive that it would be of any benefit to me.

Besides the so-called Boab [?] tree the principal flowering tree is a large yellow

flower bearer which just at flowering time has no leaves, the flowers have five petals somewhat heart shaped bright yellow of lightish hue and about the size of a crown.

We are also opposite several bottle trees such as we saw at the mouth of the gulf.

Start again tomorrow morning.

Do not think it will be necessary to take latitude of star tonight as we are not far enough from the Gut to make it necessary because the rest of the party are now rigging tents.

Friday 25th August.

After a journey of 7 miles camped at a fine water hole or lagoon [crossed through - about] of which we saw about a mile's length.

On it grew multitude of water lilies white & mauve coloured and our approach disturbed number of native companions, pelicans, pigeons, wild duck, turkey. When near the lagoon about 1/2 doz natives were over on one side of it.

Signs were made to induce them to come to a parley but they replied by defiant gesture.

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Still as they showed no desire to molest us it would be only fitting that under such circumstances, they would have been left undisturbed.

This did not suit the views of two or three of our party who desiring the others to continue crossed to the other side of the lagoon by going around one end of it, they, three in number namely Durack, Sid and Kilfoyle.

Then right up to the bank opposite to this we stand and beckon them to come back.

They respond by shaking their weapons and by [indecipherable] at the introduction of their hunting plays or rather fishing plays.

So, it was after [indecipherable] I think we should have gone on.

A shot was then fired by one of the three by Kilfoyle.

This certainly was a most precipitous mode of inducing them to come to a friendly discussion.

Broadly about thirty of them rose from the grass and advanced shaking their spears.

One of the aborigines even threw his spear but it fell short by about 20 yards. The white men then replied by a succession of shots from revolvers, rifle and Winchester.

I think that 20 shots were fired and some natives were said to be wounded.

At last, they appeared ignorant of the fire arms and regarded the noise as a sort of diversion but the sound of the birds passing close by them and the dust played up by them at their food soon seemed to make them think there was something more than noise.

Instead of advancing in order then into the water and kept ducking and diving when fired at.

This soon became dangerous so they took two or three fellows and regained the bank and hastened up a hill leaving three or four in the water because these seemed to be winded.

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My opinion of the whole transaction was that it was a thoroughly useless unnecessary wicked procedure.

We should have passed on our way without disturbing them.

It would have been time enough to have shot them when they evinced a desire to oppose our progress.

The three heroes then returned to us and have mounted a small hill overlooking the lagoon,

we camped there for an hour or two.

Two ducks we shot and a turkey carried off a charge of shot, two other turkeys and native companion we missed.

A really good shot may have bagged enough game to have lasted us two or three days.

After two hours rest it was thought better in case natives should prove revengeful to proceed so the horses were re-loaded and the journey continued along flat grassy country.

However about 7 or 8 miles in the S direction, could not find water,

camped in a plain on the bank of a river flowing chiefly in a S course but the water was very low with steep slimy mud banks.

Erected no tents nor made tea but had preserved meat, damper & water.

Kept a good watch in case the injured and insulted natives should follow us.

Saturday 26th.

As the river flowed South and apparently emptied itself into the Gulf near the southern part thereof and as it was impossible

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to cross it on a/c of the yielding nature of the mud banks which would have swallowed man & horse we proceed along its eastern bank in a northerly direction (for the most part) for 6 miles till we came where the mud ends and a ridge of rocky boulders crossed the stream.

Here we forded it without difficulty and ascend a long grassy but stony hill, on the other side we came to a water hole and beyond that an old native camping place where we located ourselves for the night the locality being marked as

D Camp 4 - on a bottle tree.

Between this camping place & the river which here contained fresh water & was evidently not affected by the

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tides beyond the ridge of boulders there was about 1 1/4 mile of the worse stony ground of rounded stones one could imagine so that it was exceedingly difficult to go down.

The river I named the Durack as Michael Durack was the first white man to cross it.

On the East bank along which we had journeyed [crossed through - the] we were obliged to keep close to the base of the cliff of stratified rocks in many places with barely room for a horse to pass and any deviation would have led to the animal becoming bogged & lost.

One light horse walking along without a load obstinately wandered from the path and was soon nearly to the belly in mud but struggled till it fell over on its side and after severe

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struggling managed to emerge.

It was a lesson it did not forget.

Had it been one of the larger pack horses with its heavy load it would probably have disappeared.

On the East side of the river the fallen blocks of rock many tons in weight showed at almost every few yards distinct ripple marks almost as perfect as if just made by the tide.

These were yards in length across some slabs.

The rock was of a red colour externally from oxidation of the iron it contained but, in some patches, it weathered a bluish black.

After passing the ridge of boulders the bed of the river consisted of boulders and must originally

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have been more than 100 feet above its present level and even now must form a rapid powerful stream after the heavy rains.

The Durack where we crossed it was abt. 50 yds in width if I recollect rightly.

No game only one or two dingoes growling about camp at night one of which I might easily have shot but that I did no[t] wish to disturb those who were sleeping & who would have thought the natives were on us. Plenty of fish in a creek opposite where we forded the Durack some were several pounds in weight but we had no time to catch any.

Patches of ground covered with trees about 8 to 12 feet high bearing a kind of pea or bean the pod being that of a pea & its taste also but the shape of

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the seed a small kidney shaped bean.

Black boys did not recognise it so that it does not probably grow in the Port Darwin district.

The grass in this part where there is any is useless.

A great deal of spinifex the most prominent flower the yellow [see image for drawing] about size of crown piece growing on trees with ash coloured bark and when in flower (in clusters at end of twigs) leafless but dried leaves showed them to be somewhat like the leaves of the sycamore [see image for drawing].

any of the trees shed their leaves - most of those in flower seem to have done so where the flowers were quite developed.

No gums similar to those in other parts of Australia, but the

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paper bark tree seems a kind of gum sheds its bark in thin paper like shreds.

Sunday 27th. August,

Left camp at 9 am up a gulley bending NW after which our course for 4 hours was in a S direction nearly due S.

From the top of one hill could see a large portion of the gulf and of flat land on near bank & with what we called Mt. Cockburn in distance the northerly end of which was just opposite to us, so that during the last 2 or 3 days all our travelling has only advanced us about 8 miles in a southerly direction.

We travelled most of the day and it was the roughest day's journey we have yet had, one hill which we ascended, at about an angle of 45 degrees being covered with large blocks of sharp

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hard rock which no one would have believed possible for horses to ascend, men & horses were exhausted on reaching the top but there was no other way of proceeding.

On gaining the top Durack who was ahead said we could go by one way so we followed him for over horribly rough sharp stony ground by the other a quarter of a mile brought convincing proof that this was impracticable **so retracing our steps** we went the road said to be improved and for over an hour passed nothing but stones & spinifex patches till we descended the hill on the other side by a steep gulley bank.

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The hill was [crossed through - 1200] 600 feet above the sea level.

Proceeding along the gulley bed over rounded stones we at length reached a plain encircled except towards the river by ranges of these barren stony hills.

Here there was plenty of grass of a rank sour old kind but the horses could get some picking and in one or two dried creeks we found water holes of tolerably good water near one of which **we camped D5**.

Each camp is also marked with E & its number.

Sid's bridle was partly burnt during the night having been dropped into the fire along with some wood.

NB. Durack now takes command of the party not formally but actually as his friends seem only inclined to follow him and I should only have

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Sid and Old Tom.

The latter is a blasphemous old blaggard who amuses the rest by telling mighty stories in foul language and who does the cooking and depends upon Sid.

I have had occasion two or three times to reprimand him for his dirty language but he only becomes violent and nasty so for the future I shall let him alone.

Reasoning does no good with him and he does no good to Sid and others.

I wish we had brought a better man useful as he is in some respects.

For peace and quietness have to quietly submit to Durack's practical leadership though so far he has not shown any special qualities fitting him to be leader as I could have conducted the journey better myself.

The best bushman of the party is Tom Kilfoyle and he is entirely under Durack's influence.

We could hardly do without Kilfoyle unless we had another man equally as good. No man amount if exertion seems to worry him. We most of us walked over the bad ground yesterday. I was walking for several hours in pity for the poor horses and my legs were pricked all over with spinifex.

I am heartily sorry that I ever accepted an engagement to conduct a party in which some of the shareholders are personally engaged as they seem to think they are the parties to arrange everything and there is no order as there should be.

The way provisions are managed is shameful as to waste.

I have spoken to Durack two or three times about having rations weighed up so as to prevent waste and he says, yes, but does nothing.

By and by we shall be off [indecipherable] from want of some things,

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Josey eats enough for two and in the night he and Sid make coffee and boil rice for themselves as if they had not enough during the day.

Monday 28th Aug.

Had a spell in order not to overwork the horses which were hardly sufficiently recovered from the effects of the sea journey when we started and the last 2 or 3 days would tax most severely the strength of the ablest animals.

I have had occasion also to report the fellow of waste mentioned who even as I write I hear some fellows firing off revolvers and there are no natives to disturb them here.

Had bathe & washed clothes to day.

Mosquitoes bad as everywhere else.

My small piece of mosquito net not very useful though I was laughed at by some of the practical bushmen of the party for bringing such a thing, yet now they complain as much as any of the mosquitoes.

Gathered some wild flowers but several of them withered before I could get back to camp to press them in the book.

For breakfast coffee with meat for dinner tea and hot meat and very little of that, the others having eaten most of it before I returned from my wash though I was back a few minutes after twelve.

They are an intensely selfish lot no one seems to think of anyone else.

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I sleep regularly in a gauze tent given to old Tom by one of the sailors aboard the schooner while Sid and old Tom occupied the big tent.

Sid was grumbling awfully yesterday at the work put upon the horses by going up and down the country finding out the way instead of one or two of the party going off to scout first and so saving the horses so much work.

I have mentioned the same thing to Durack and Kilfoyle twice or thrice but as they agreed but did not take any action in the crossings, I have determined to say nothing more and let them go on their own way.

We should have done the present distance in two days instead of four if scouting had been done as it ought.

Legs very sore today where they were pricked all over by walking through spinifex.

Sid tells me that Durack told him he would not have come at all on this journey if he had thought he would not have had command of the party.

Have gone away from the camp parties to write up this diary as they are doing nothing there but sitting around listening to old Tom's extravagant stories and smutty yarns.

Numbers of white cockatoos about here but have seen no turkeys.

Also, plenty of snakes black and other ones which live in holes in the banks of the creeks.

Besides quartz [indecipherable] yesterday of promising appearance and saw two or three on the banks of the Durack.

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Tuesday 29 August.

Remained in camp. S.E. & D. [Sidney Emmanuel & Durack] went out to look for next camping place.

D. shot a turkey which when cooked proved an acceptable change of diet.

Still in sight of Mt. Cockburn. Fair feed for horses & good water in water holes in creeks.

Dog went out with Durack & Sid & lost them, did not return till late at night. Plenty small wild flowers.

Wednesday, 30th August

Left Camp abt. 9 & travelled South a little E as a general course over very rough country one hill covered with large angular masses of rock being at an angle of 60 degrees. Lat. [crossed through - 76 30] but sextant is [indecipherable] not in good order & have not time to try it.

Thursday, 31 August

Travelled S & little E. Met

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Sid Kilfoyle & Tom were overtaken by party of blacks about 40 in number who followed them setting the grass on fire behind.

One fellow called to a black boy to stop a bit & have a talk but he called out Wild black fellow - run -.

They spurred on their horses being behind the rest of the party through having had to stop & adjust a pack saddle.

When they came in view the blacks were running after them.

Sid sent one shot from his Winchester over their heads to steady their course a bit, which it appeared to do for a while but they soon came on again armed with spears & some having several & having their war paint

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on.

When they came in view of the rest of us someone called out to let them get into the open before firing.

They were soon in the open space but much scattered, and as they were still approaching, I fired a bullet from a Snider which whistling by in close proximity to the heads of some of them caused them to beat a hasty retreat.

Sid then called out come on boys charge the beggars and [crossed through - four] three or four setting spurs to their horses dashed off after them & fired some shots but without hitting.

My mare was heavy in foal and could not be made to go beyond a walk.

This I have felt to be a very great inconvenience & must remedy by having some other animal.

Otherwise, she wd be the best

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saddle horse in the crowd. Travelled from 9 to about 3.

Camped at a place where there was plenty of water but little or no grass. Beautiful flowers like the Queensland [indecipherable] but better colours.

Got some seeds of the yellow variety but none of the other.

Watched in threes I D & K first watch till 1 then S J & T till day break.

Friday, 1st September

Travelled from 9 to 2.40 very rough stones one hill 65 degrees.

Crossed river water being to girths.

Camped at bottom of the steep hill on a plain surrounded by hills and with the river running through it.

At night went down

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and I caught six fish some gropers which made a great noise when caught, one long snouted silvery fish like a guard fish and some perch.

They were all relished.

Saturday.2ND September

Left camp at 8.30 travelled till 1 pm over very bad cover went down steep hill into valley & see where the fording place was a very bad one greasy sheloy rocks on which the horses slipped & fell heavily, my mare going down 3 times, Durack's the same.

Some things were wetted.

In all we went only about 1 1/2 or 2 miles on our real road.

Durack & Kilfoyle now seem to be lost in recounting and throwing out hints and remarks but I make no reply as since they have chosen to take everything upon themselves, they must go through with it.

They won't listen but now find themselves incapable of doing the work.

Durack takes us into the most unnecessary hardships

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into places where he should not go, seems to go by sense, smell rather than by reason.

Durack says he expects we shall be mainly in this country but if we are it will be owing to his obstinate stupidity.

He is very silent at times and seems to begin to be distressful of his own powers at least though he is not willing to relinquish nor call himself leader.

Today we saw some black on the hill watching us in the evening, they passed our camp over the ridge of an adjoining hill & hooted as they went.

They have also set the grass on fire around us but that will not affect us unless they set fire to that growing where we are camped, as we have water on all sides of us.

We are camped under the shade of a bottle tree where the natives have been at work eating the fruit as the shells are left all about.

There are plenty of fish in a large water hole close at hand.

We caught a few but not very

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good the black boys being the most successful fishers.

Sunday 3rd. September

Remained in camp,

it took me some time to tinker up the Sextant which had carelessly been packed on an unsteady horse [crossed through - which] & was not properly packed so her pack saddles slipped and she kicked the thing especially the Sextant so that its box case was broken completely & some of the brass work twisted & some broken so that I am afraid it is not at all reliable.

However, it could not be well otherwise under the circumstances.

Have got the mirror adjusted.

Have lost sight of Mt Cockburn.

The bottle tree under which we are camped is a fine specimen.

With 10 boys

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D & K have gone out scouting.

Take this opportunity to post up diary. Trap rocks, better country plenty of water, blacks not so many yellow flowerings plant coarse grasses.

Tree (bottle) marked by Durack, Emanuel & others.

Camp 9.

Monday 4th. September

Travelled from 8.30 to 20 to 12 about 3 1/4 hours at about 2 miles an hour 1 hour E 1 hour SE 3/4 hour S a little E. over flat country, plenty of water, feed too dry.

Came on camp of natives who on our approach all [gins pet emu & men] fled to an adjoining hill

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but well within shot.

One of the black boys Cherry was there brought forward to parley with them.

He spoke boldly to them asking to have a talk and they seemed to listen attentively to what he said but did not, I think, understand him.

One of the natives made long speeches in return refreshing himself now & then with a kind of screech or howl or whoop or compound of the three.

They were not to be induced to come down & talk.

The black boy said the native said you walk along you too much shot me too frightened.

Some of our party examined a fishing line well-made which they had left behind them.

There were also

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several spears and bones of human beings & other things which they had no time to take with them.

None of their things were taken. We then left.

Proceeding on our journey we camped about 1 1/2 or 2 miles beyond them & at night could see their camp fire so they had not become so much frightened as to move their camp.

Like all the other blacks about here they were well proportioned & in good condition.

Saw fine fat Wallabies on our journey.

Camped No. 10 beside another creek contg. water though I cannot understand why we did not go on for 3 or 4 miles further.

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This zig zag happy go luck[y] kind of navigation & traveling is exceedingly vexatious and the slow progress we have made, about 39 miles S in 11 days is **really disheartening and if persisted in will cause extreme**

peril of starvation to our party as the provisions will not last more than three months, the meat not more than a few weeks longer, one bag of sugar, out of 3, nearly gone.

Sid & I took a walk for abt. 2 miles further on country flat trees from 12 to 20 feet high with large leaf 1/4 the size of this paper, but on most of the trees the leaves had gone & flowers were opening in

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fine clusters, flowers of red colour rather lighter inside than outside & resembling the flower of the cactus.

There are also some varieties of palms.

Cork trees loaded with their fine red blossoms.

There are also some very pretty blue & some white flowers very small & we still have the everlasting yellow flower trees.

Sweet smelling white flower bearing cactus & other flowers having a smell like almond oil.

See no kind of animals but Wallabies, white & black cockatoos, green parrots & several species of small birds, & pheasants & a brown plain bird.

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There are also the red & the blue dragon flies of rich colour which seem to keep down the mosquitos for in each camp (3 or 4 lately) where they have been seen few or no mosquitos have been seen felt or heard.

Only the pretty little striped fish in the water holes.

Tuesday 5th September

Remained in camp but Sid & D went to top of an adjoining hill to view the surrounding country whilst **Josey & I went up the flat & over a passage between 2 hills** near an adjoining flat where we found plenty of first-class water in a running creek & tolerable feed 3 miles from our present camp. The country beyond

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appeared fair to travel either to the SE or S a valley opening out each way.

On our return we find that D & S propose proceeding E through a gully.

The first part of the journey for 3 miles will be N or NE then going back on our tracks in the old zig zag fashion.

But it is no use to protest they are bent (D & K) on find the Ord which is supposing according to an old map of D to run out into the gulf to the E of Mt Cockburn.

By going E then we might within a few miles have solved the question & the mode of procedure was by

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me suggested but as usual not acted upon.

Now in much rougher country it is intended to go in that direction.

Kilfoyl[e] shod several horses to day as they were getting sore footed.

Had serious talk about way provisions are going.

If the route proposed by D lands us in a repetition of this kind of travelling S & I intend to go on our own route.

Took Vega on Sunday & made our latitude Camp 9 15 degrees 57.

Came by a Cygne 1555 four to be rung afterwards.

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Wednesday, 6th September

Talked to Durack respecting management of affairs and about his having any objection with Kilfoyle shouldering him out of the commandership of the expedition and reminded him that I was the only legal leader.

He said that he should not have come had he not thought he should be leader that he thought he was entitled to be so, as he had been the first to propose or get up the expedition when he was at Goulburn.

I replied that I was quite willing for him to be commander and for him to be leader provided that I was consulted in all things respecting the route and not things kept secret as they had been.

He said he should certainly consult me but there had been no occasion to do so as yet.

I then reported that other members of the party were dissatisfied with the way in which things had been managed.

I also told him plainly that I understood his motive in trying to be commander of the expedition was to get credit of being so but that I had no desire for such honour.

He said he thought he should be leader as he had had so much experience in the bush travelling.

I then said it was necessary for something to be done for we were losing time and wasting provisions while making no headway, I then asked him to join me in going out to view the country and see what would be the best way to go.

He consented to do so therefore horses were got in and we set out to explore.

He seems bent on coming on the Ord though as I repeated to him we can do so further south and then if necessary we could two or three or so run up and see the country adjoining it.

But Durack and Kilfoyle seem like children in their desire to find the river and go by it.

I almost fancy

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that Durack must have received a commission to inspect land for [indecipherable] or some other person land lying near this part of the Ord.

I cannot explain his continual wasting time in trying to find the river otherwise when we might be going south or south east.

He says the mountains bear our course but this is not quite true for they present some difficulty.

We could in almost all cases go through valleys.

We have been over much horrible country that there was no occasion to travel west we might have kept almost straight down from the northern point of Mt Cockburn and thus followed our course and at the same time seen whether the river or creek which we had seen was or as I expected was not the Ord.

As I have told them perhaps the Ord may discharge its waters into the Victoria and be only a branch of that river.

This idea did not strike them before but the difficulty they have not found the river tends to make them think the idea may be possible.

After the talk with Durack, we went out to view the country.

Ascended several elevated hills and saw a long level valley beyond which Durack thought he saw the river or rather trees which usually grow on river banks.

I could see no evidence of river but said I saw larger trees.

The valley ran SE and S of Mt Cockburn.

We resolved to try it on the thinking it would save time and if the Ord should be there, it would satisfy Durack and Kilfoyle.

Was away from camp all night and slept under a tree not having hobbled our horses.

The mountains we ascended with the horses were frightfully steep about 70 degrees and covered with rocks hardly possible even for a man to ascend I should scarcely have thought it possible

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for a horse to do such climbing.

Of course we had to rest several times.

When we got to the top of one steep one having left the horses down on a shoulder of it we found a fire burning coming to the conclusion that black fellows were there.

Durack said we had better get down as quickly as possible as we should be at a disadvantage without our horses.

We then went up the same mountain by another route and found the fire was only part of a large bush fire which had been lit some distance away.

Returned to camp next morning and rode for 2 1/4 hours about nine miles (9). [crossed through - got breakfast]

Thursday 7th September

Returned to camp got breakfast and all party left for the plain district and got to camp after going about 12 miles first N & NE then SE.

Ranges of hills & valleys ran NW & SE in parallel curves.

Mt Cockburn about 20 miles long & as far as one could judge about 12 miles wide.

Plenty of water & good feed.

While out yesterday missed Durack and fired revolver which brought the necessary cooking hands.

All country hilly barren & worthless, plains only narrow from 1 to 4 miles.

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Friday, 8th September.

Left camp at 7.

Found a horse in a water hole unable to get out, was queer the day before gone mad.

Gave him medicine last night but his fall into the hole or his long standing & weakness with the effects of the poisonous plant she had been eating had made her powerless & she was left behind being the 3rd of the horses lost since leaving Sydney.

Travelled 3 hours & then camped as Durack said it was necessary to look over our route which he thought was barred by mountains to the south.

Distance about 9 or 10 miles to SE a little east a point nearer E.

Lost small compass.

Tom lost quart pot great find for some black fellow.

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Tuesday, Feb. 27th

Native companions, black & white cockatoos.

Friday 8 September

Camped at 10 am after travelling abt. 12 miles over level grassy land. Cannot understand why did not go 6 or 8 miles further.

Great grumbling with Sid Josey & Tom not going to try to pacify them.

In the evening Durack said that tomorrow we should have to scout and see whether we could go on or not.

I see nothing to prevent us from doing so.

Durack proposed going up another hill to see the country as I was tired and Kilfoyle was going I did not see the necessity of three going so declined to accompany them.

They had hard work and did not see much, I think they expected to see the river but did not succeed in doing so.

Saturday, 9th September

Sid and Josey went out for horses having been gone for some hours

I am beginning to be anxious about them given Durack and Kilfoyle went out scouting.

Sunday 10 TH September

Durack and Kilfoyle came back in the evening.

We others remained in camp washing clothes ready for dinner.

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Monday 11th September

Left camp 8.20, first travelled 52 degrees E of N till 10.15 then 45 degrees E of N till 11.0 then 35 degrees E of N till 11.30 then 85 degrees E of N to 11.40 then 110 E of N till 3 then 120 E of N till 3.45.

Grassy (coarse & spinifex flats wide valley tolerably good soil valley about 8 miles wide nothing but patches of very small trees.

Camped next small water hole pretty good coarse feed for horses.

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Tuesday 12th September

Left camp 7.15 travelled 120 degrees E to 8.15 then 180 E to 8.40 then 215 E till 9 then 180 till 9.30 then

Wednesday 13th Sept.

Travelled from 7.15 for 5 3/4 hours generally in a SE direction.

Valley flat narrowed to a mile on E side of stream.

Large part of what has recently been passed is inundated during wet season heavy cracks all over and numerous puddle pits for several miles.

Sparsely covered with rough or coarse young grass, older grass having been burnt off by natives as has very much in this

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part of country.

Several stony patches on rising ground. Not much spinifex.

Latitude by Vega 16 degrees 16 if sextant is to be relied on for it gets much shaking through carried continually on my back.

Heard dingo howling at night.

All felt more cheerful on a/c of the improved rate of travelling.

I only hope it may continue & then there will be some chance for us but if we relapse into the old wanderings in the wilderness there will be both disapproval [crossed through - and] discontent and a renewal of complaining.

I am confident of my ability to carry the party through with safety and with much greater speed but can see my way to do nothing.

If however, there is much more of this wandering about the country I shall have to take the party off and go on our own right.

This we must do for safety for these bushmen seem to have no thought. Had I thought things would be as they are I would certainly never have left Sydney on such an expedition.

Latitude 16 degrees 16'.

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[crossed through - Friday] Thursday, 14th Sept.

Left camp at 8 travelled for 3 1/2 hours SSW then remained under some trees near dry creek or river bed for 1/2 hour, Durack & Kilfoyle being both absent.

When Durack returned, he said they had lost the river and we should have to go back on our tracks to some water & there camp while he looked for the river.

Asked if we could not go on the same open valley if there were any obstacles. None but they want to find the river.

Again I urged the course of going as near as possible SE & when we came to the junction with the Negri tracing the Ord for 40 or 50 miles while the pack horses had a spell in better camp.

No good.

The Ord seems to have a dangerous fascination for these fellows.

Cannot insist much more.

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We therefore took a course NNE for 1 1/2 hours.

The return on our tracks has caused great disappointment and dismal forebodings which I tried to allay as far as possible.

Only 1 bottle of oil left, other five used or wasted.

Durack & Kilfoyle had 2 fresh horses & went off after dinner to see if they could recover the course of river supposed to be the Ord.

Curiously they have gone over the same track which we returned.

This I cannot understand as it would have been more sensible if we had remained near where we rested yesterday while they went forward thus, we should have been saved a journey of some miles & needless work to horses. There was plenty of water there.

But they seem to have brought us all down here making sure that they would come upon the river here and finding no trace of it in this direction they have gone back.

Old Tom may well deride this account of navigation.

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Gave Sid some explanation of taking the latitude.

Must select some other convenient star as Vega as passing the meridian too early.

Saw some very pretty doves beautifully marked and several pretty small birds. In the morning there is quite a chorus of bird sounds and they have pleasanter notes than in any other part of Australia, some like canaries with a trill and series of notes, the only real songsters I have heard in Australia.

At night the dingoes were about howling.

Saw several walking stick insects.

Soil chocolate coloured sparkling with white & yellow mica. Several pieces of Selenita in stream sand.

No indication of metallic minerals. Have had the mare slipping since last Monday (instead of Durack's)

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mare (Vanity) which was too heavy in foal to travel well as hack.

Slippy goes well over stony ground and climbs up and jumps down banks of river & creek like a cat.

She requires no stimulus where as old Vanity could not be made to go without. Vanity now ridden by one of the black boys.

On Wednesday last had Wallaby stewed (shot by Durack) others except Tom seemed to relish it but I found it tough (though a young animal) and dry no fat.

I don't hanker after such as Capt. Darke used to say on board the Vortegern. Plenty of large bats about at night.

Also Kangaroo rats about size of a cat. Several wallabies. Durack shot at turkey but missed it.

Now camped under another bottle

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tree. Orange coloured dragon flies instead of scarlet & the blue.

A few mosquitos last night.

We have been pleasantly free from those pests for the last week or so.

But March flies are numerous & troublesome.

Friday 15th September

Half our stock of soap gone, country terribly dirty to travel over, so much dust on grass and everywhere [everywhere].

Very hot after 8 a.m.

Put all our watches forward 1/2 hour.

Ants here as everywhere swarming.

Cut out a bee's nest (Josey did) few days since but no honey.

Left horse behind on Wednesday too lame & weak to travel & last night another remained near camp & seemed in anything but a hopeful condition.

Plenty of screw palms & acacias by river bank.

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Sid amazed himself and others by pulling off black boys bridles when they came near him when the young sneakers [?] would swear at him frightfully and it gave them hard work to get off and up again on their horses.

They ride well that is they manage to stick on well to punish the horses moves.

I now ride regularly in the rear which is not a position of honour since it is a position of danger.

Now at 9 a.m. it is 114 degrees F Temp at 12 a.m. 140 degrees F and as thermometer graduated only to 142, I am obliged to place it in shade for fear of breakage.

Friday, 15th September.

Latitude by Vega 16 degrees 20' 12".

Camped.

D & K went to look out a route on Thursday.

Sid not well vomiting & diarrhoea.

Fancy it must be owing to bad water. I roughly sketched out our past course.

D & K returned after dark when all but self & Tom has gone to rest.

They appeared very tired. Said but little.

Saturday 16th September

Left camp at 9 a.m. & travelled SSW till 10.45 then S till

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4 over country hilly & covered with stones the debris of the hills we skirted.

All volcanic. The mountain range along the flank of which we passed must be abt. [? in margin] 15 or 16 miles long & is of rugged character very bold pinnacles.

No lines of real stratification but deep perpendicular fissures.

No Emanuel or Robinson Range.

At 4.45 we camped at a water hole.

Water very scarce during the day none fit to drink.

Became parched, heat over 142 degrees.

The horses were very thirsty having been driven rapidly by Tom, Sid & Self. K & J remaining behind to look for another sick horse which they did not succeed in finding & which is consequently lost.

During the journey Durack's mare Vanity heavy in foal became done up

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so she had to be left in charge of the two black boys to bring along & D said he would return after reaching camp with other horses.

After having proceeded a mile or so we could hear the black boys yelling.

They were frightened.

I had stopped with the mare & made of the black boys take off his cap into which I poured water from my water bag & the mare drank it greedily.

I pitied the poor thing & endeavoured to help her on but it was no use.

At the camp is as usual a fine bottle tree and marks of native camp.

It is evident that the natives do not injure these trees in any way & they must be the source of a valuable supply of vegetable & pleasant food perhaps when other things are scarcer.

Got some seeds of the

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Cork tree, so called in some parts of Queensland, a rich coloured very pretty flower in clusters. Seeds red beans.

D calculates the distance as 16 miles from our last camp, K, S & I as 20 but the latitude will tell.

D informs me that after another 3 miles journey, we shall arrive at open flat country for at least 20 miles for no hills are in view to the South.

Heard nothing abt. the Ord. Kilfoyle said when we started that he was sick of the affair and once he got out of this mess, he would never be caught in another one like it.

But he eventually forgot that it was he and Durack who got us into the mess and in the end all the country could be travelled easily enough with proper management.

As soon as the horses reached camp Durack went back to the black boys while Sid and Old Tom got something to eat and went to bed.

Sid tried brandy but it would not stay on his stomach, Old Tom also tried it and it stayed on his right enough.

I made Sid some beef tea from essence of meat this seemed to do him good.

I also made some beef tea for myself.

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Cooked myself a little dinner and had a pipe.

Kilfoyle Josey and Durack arrived back and with them the black boys whom they said were crying when found and very much frightened.

They are lazy little beggars.

Old Tom said he was ill also all day but, in my opinion, it was playing fox.

He did nothing for anybody and seems to look upon himself as slowly belonging to Sid though I expect his wages come out of the expedition fund.

He is not a good cook being vastly too dirty and he stirs Sid up to grumbling and discontent as he thinks if Sid took a more permanent place he would be (that is old Tom) of more importance.

He is very fond of running down other people's characters and altogether has not by any means an estimable character.

The only good thing in him is his adherence to anything manual and to me he is a sort of dog with the dog like attachment for his master, to most others he is rather surely except when he is telling his blaggard anecdotes.

I had to make a fuss with Kilfoyle on account of Durack having taken off my horse for as I said they would not care for anyone to take either of their horses.

He said it was taken because it was the strongest.

But I replied strength was a matter of opinion and if I wanted a horse to go off anywhere I might think first the strongest.

I think and hope they will not take mine again.

We put up no tents being too tired and kept no watch.

I do not think there is much danger to be coming from blacks after Durack.

Durack's mare had to be left behind after all but he intends to go for her tomorrow (Sunday).

Heard some nice singing birds but have not heard a laughing jackass since I have been in this district though there is another bird which makes a good substitute for them.

I omitted to state that Sid shot two quite excellent pheasant and it was very good eating

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though somewhat small.

Travelled on Sat. 1 3/4 hours SSW then 5 hours South then SSE for 3/4 hour

Sunday 17th September

Gave Sid a dose of chlorodyne.

He is better. Have cleaned up rifle and revolver.

They need frequent cleaning the travelling is so dusty.

Last night before going to rest I drank over a gallon of water I was so thirsty.

Slept well but in the morning the ants were about and some of them were curious on account of the dry.

I slept wrapped up in the blanket and was not much troubled with mosquitoes, there was a nice breeze and I was located on higher ground than the rest.

They prefer low ground; I think of health more than ease.

Sid will not take my advice in such cases.

I have spoken two or three times but prefers Old Tom's which is about as useful as that of a [indecipherable].

Durack has gone to look after his mare.

Kilfoyle is shoeing, I am writing up the diary and then have to make preparations for taking latitude.

It is not quite so hot as yesterday as there is some breeze.

Horses seem glad to have a rest and I think it would be better to manage as always to have a rest on Sundays.

The whole way yesterday was covered with volcanic stones very little grass except in patches.

Country hilly.

[Crossed through - Travelled on Sat.]

Monday, 18th September

Left camp at 8 had to leave old Vanity behind she was too weak to foal and was left near a water hole having been brought there only

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with trouble.

Old Doughboy was also taken bad & had to be left behind being too weak to travel so we have lost 2 more horses.

Some of the party attributed it to poisonous grass, others to hard work in tropical climate.

While not strong, others again to bad water and as three of the party have also had diarrhoea from last cause it may be this.

Old Tom, Sid & the black boy Cherry have been bad in this way from drinking this water.

After leaving the camp we travelled over 3 miles of bad ground stony &c. & then came to a pass or gorge [crossed through - through] with nearly perpendicular walls in some parts.

This was a difficult part of the journey especially where [where] we had to descend a rocky bank to cross the creek running through the pass.

The

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grass was very high in some places.

In the creek was a fine running stream. We travelled until 3.30.

Took latitude by Vega last night 6.55 and found it to be 16 degrees 37 57 showing that we had gone over 20 miles direct south on Saturday as our last camp was in **lat. 16 degrees 20' 12"**.

It must have been 24 miles with deviations.

The [crossed through - road] country has been undulating or slightly hilly but covered with stones, passed a good deal of quartz some of which looked promising for gold but had no opportunity for examining, there was abt. 6 miles of this kind of country covered mostly with patches of spinifex.

We travelled from 8 to 3.50, 7 1/2 hours but made only about

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12 miles D says.

We left 4 pack saddles at the camp this morning owing to the decreasing number of our horses.

They were placed in a tree and covered with tarpaulin which had been prepared (oiled canvas) for the purpose of a boat.

These were left at Camp 17.

Here also left debris from breakages, Chlorodyne bottle broken, Blowpipe case smashed, Pills & medicines mixed up in a glutinous mass, also glass for artificial horizon smashed & one lantern.

On our day's journey we passed several bottle trees & had some of the fruit which has a pleasant slightly tart taste and was a welcome change for us as we have no acids.

Bad water most of the day except in one place.

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Camped opposite a hill which I have named Blackfellow hill as half way up its steep side is a conspicuous cave in which was found the skeleton of a blackfellow entombed [entombed] in bark.

One of the party (Josey) brought away the skull to the terror & disgust [disgust] of the black boys to whom he exhibited it in the camp.

They said debbit debit (devil) sure to come at night & dash out their brains.

At night they took their tarpaulin near Jim & were much frightened by their dreams.

The skull was buried.

The hill has also a black appearance [?]. D & S went up it to view the country on the other side which they reported to be open for traveling, being flat as far as their eyes could see

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and with heavier timber in the distance that would seem to indicate the proximity of a river.

Tuesday 19th Sept.

Left camp at 9.30 & travelled till 12 SE then E then S, till 1.30 when we came to a fine river bed which we supposed to be that of the Ord the bed of the stream is about 200 yds wide and has plenty of water in patches.

We then travelled SE on banks of river.

Through this day's journey country was one large plain except in one part where we were turned more to the E by limestone rocks, very rough hollow, much eroded heavy pinnacles stratified about from 4 to 16 feet high, grass coarse. **Camped at 2.50**

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Wednesday, 20th Sept.

Remained camped by River as unable to take latitude last night owing to cloudy state of sky and it is supposed that D & E have land close to this spot.

Washed lot of clothes & had a good bath not before wanted.

Some of the party caught some sand fish.

Got a few seeds & flowers. S & D went out a short distance to have a look at the country, not up to much though they have not said much about it.

Got seeds from tree spreading & rising about 16 ft with leaf like pod small alternate double leaves, bean like seed.

Got latitude at night by Vega & A Cyne near [crossed through - 30] 16 degrees 39 which shows we must have gone a good deal east this last journey.

On giving result to Durack, I expressed my surprise that we had only gone a mile

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to south when he did not seem at all surprised but said we had gone mostly east and that the mountain pass through which we came the early part of our last journey was lying due west of us, he saw it when near the end of the journey.

It is impossible to keep the course there are such deviations.

Thursday, 21st Sept.

Left camp abt. 8 travelled till ... in (SW ?) direction over ground covered with small stones of various kinds.

Grasses better than hitherto not so much spinifex but the flat is only about 2 or 5 miles wide or less.

Camped at large water hole in hollowed rocky bottom.

Plenty of fish.

Sid caught some gropers.

At night tried to get star lunar for longitude but Antares was too low at time and others too high for artificial horizon.

Durack does not know where he is otherwise he may have got over into south-easterly.

Perhaps he is for in spite of remonstrance he always would do a good deal of saying it was not possible to get anything like that course.

Camped on the sand. [Crossed through - Red] Plotted course from beginning to

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Tuesday the 12th and found that at that time we had gone about 40 miles to E of 128 degrees & 60 degrees S.

Friday, 22nd Septr.

Durack asked me this morning if I had done anything by way of finding out longitude last night and I told him no on which he proceeded to make some notes.

He does not think I suppose that finding longitude by star lunar is really a regular part of my duties especially as I have no assistants, etc.

On leaving the camp Durack came to me and said what route today, what is our course.

This question surprised me very much as it is the first time or rather the second time only since the expedition commenced when he has asked such a thing.

He not only does not [does not] ask but if I venture to offer a suggestion, he merely treats it with slight contempt or has some excuse such as the road I propose is blocked whereas I have known in many cases that it was not blocked.

His unusual question this morning makes me think that finding himself in a hole he wants to make me instrumental in getting out of it in some way or another.

Perhaps he thinks he will be able to declare hereafter that he took the course from me and that when he did not it was because I had not offered it.

But Sid Emanuel is a safe witness as much as the others also if they spoke the truth

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that I have never denied any information asked of me and that I have always been snubbed when I offer it unasked so that it became necessary for my own comfort to keep a silent tongue.

I told Sid of his asking me about the route and what I thought of it.

I have also told him that in my opinion if things go on as at present, we shall be obliged to make back for Port Darwin for the sakes of our lives.

We left camp this morning at 8.15 and travelled slowly SE till 10.45 then S till 11.40 then SE till 12 & after S to 1.30 deviating course.

When Durack asked me his course, I said south but he proceeded by the south east course before getting south though in my opinion he might have gone south direct from the camp.

But he seems to have a mania for getting east whereas as I have told him and the others, I think we are more than enough south.

I have argued till I am tired of the necessity of making for the junction of the Ord and Negri and then if possible, going up the Ord to inspect the country but Durack and Kilfoyle seem to be bewitched by the Ord and look for it again and again.

They seem to do this thinking they can then follow the course of the river.

We have already come across to three or four Ords all of which they afterwards give up as mysteries.

This last river they said went off into a dry sandy creek

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within a short distance and thereafter could not be the Ord.

But how such a flow of water as would fill a river about from one to two hundred yards wide and spread over its banks and over surrounding country so that the water mark is shown to the height of twenty feet above the base of the trees it is impossible to understand if the water is rising within so short a distance.

The country passed over to day better as to grass it being mostly blue grass but with numerous patches of spinifex and almost everywhere with small stones.

Much limestone, volcanic rocks & camped on low hill near water hole surrounded by other hills.

Saturday 23rd Sept.

Travelled 8 to 12. Course, mostly E abt. 6 miles & camped on flank of rump of high hill near waterhole in gully flowing when full towards SW or W.

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D & K went out to view neighbourhood.

Durack has been very sulky this last day or two and speaks in a tone I do not like.

I told Sid and also Kilfoyle that in accord to the last latitude as we were about, that is, within a few miles of 17 degrees latitude, it would be better for two to go to the E or SE and two to the west or south west and explore the country for if we were between the Ord and the Negri and about 15 miles must bring them to one or the other or perhaps to both, one in each direction.

Kilfoyle agreed with me and Sid told Durack who [indecipherable] did not take his suggestion but looked, as Sid said, as if he would have said, oh kiss my backside.

Yet he has been very glum these past few days.

They [indecipherable] followed my advice in that they camped early and intend to go out and see the country.

I took the time by the sun and found that the hour was about 8 minutes slow so that having previously put it forward twice once for a quarter of an hour I am of opinion that Captain Darke was right when on board the Vortigern he said it lost at the rate of 30 seconds in 24 hours.

Durack came to me this evening and said he had been measuring up the course and found we were within about 15 or 20 miles of the river which was rather clever of him since he knows little or nothing about plotting and I very much doubt if he knows the course we have taken.

He picked up information from Kilfoyle to whom I tell it and so gave it to me as if he had done it himself.

[indecipherable] it is very strange he does not know which way to look for the river and thus we have not gone far enough to the east.

I shall not say anything more about the course.

I tried star lunar last night with the aid of Sid but I am pretty sure it will not be successful too much time lost when only one person and one sextant at work.

The country passed over yesterday better grassed than most and contained a flock of sheep but not to a great extent.

A lot of hills. To add also

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but one hill was of good height I should say six hundred feet and at an angle of sixty rough with sharp stones down which the horses came with difficulty.

I had to lead mine and there are very few places that I have to dismount in fact I ride where anyone else does.

As Sid says I go as fresh as if I were a youngster.

Sid and I had a long talk about the position of affairs and about making return to Port Darwin, if necessary, that is if provisions fail so but the disgrace of failure though not from any fault of ours is rather too much to contemplate. I am heartily sorry I ever came with such a company.

There is no such thing as manners nor any conversation which is of a crusty and pierced description.

Sunday 24th September

Saw splendid comet in ... about an hour before day break.

It was a magnificent sight.

Sid & Durack went out early to explore, expect to find the river.

By rough plotting I find that we are 65 miles E of Long. 128 degrees but this is not worthy of dependence since courses have been so irregular & varied often several times in an hour that it has been impossible to keep correct a/c.

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The distance south by some plotting is 110 miles whereas by Latitude if sextant is to be depended upon, we have gone a little over 104 miles that judging by last altitude taken.

This is subject to correction by next observation as we have travelled since & the distance is guessed.

We are camped in a valley within range of hills running from NW to SE or from N to S lying somewhat to the North of us & another range runs NE to SW lying to east of us both rugged & apparently impossible to pass but no doubt we shall find a gap or outlet.

Tried a lunar observation at last camp & calculated it as this but there are so many usual corrections to be made in the data & having no assistant observer (though Sid noted time) thus I cannot be satisfied with the result.

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If things go on for another week as they have been going on for the last, I intend to go off with Sid and push through or to start for Port Darwin.

This bush navigation as well as different information from it is endangering all our lives as we shall be without food to the finish taking five weeks to travel 110 miles.

It is monstrous and if I had made such a blunder I should have shot myself.

From my data will prove hereafter that I have not been to blame in the matter.

I have never been consulted as to the route and any suggestions I have made have been received with contempt or merely ignored.

Yet now they find themselves in this fix they would like to focus blame on me that I will not tell them where we are though they have been twisting about in several directions taking no advice.

They seem to fancy one ought to be able to tell them where they are no matter what manner of travelling, they pursue.

They will soon pay a penalty sacrificing me to their vanity for they find they have undertaken what they cannot perform.

I might suspect Old Tom of playing a double part running with the hounds and with the foxes **as I have heard some few words yesterday by Josey that would lead to that idea.**

For my own part I would pass this range of mountains and then send out parties to the east and west when one or other of the rivers would be running to the Limestone & Ironstone in the neighbourhood.

Kilfoyle shoeing horses today.

Old Tom in a rage last night because Sid promised some of Old Tom's tobacco to the black boys.

We have slept in the open air for the last ten days or so and after all

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I get on just as well as in the tent so long as there is no rain.

Monday 25th Septr.

Left camp at 8 travelled E (SE or W?) for about 2 hours (?) then camped where Sid & Josey could find us.

They had gone to rescue Sid's [crossed through - horse] mare which had been left in such a perilous position down on a ledge where she could neither ascend nor descend.

Lost the knife Sid gave me and went back about three miles in the afternoon to try & recover it as the loss of a knife is a serious consideration.

Did not find it but met Sid & Josey & returned with them to Camp on the spare horse (the Piebald stumbling brute).

Heard a good deal of sniggering in Durack's tent at night.

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Tuesday 26 Septr.

Started about usual time 1/4 to 8 and travelled about 3 or 4 miles around base of a hill where

we reached a river flowing NW which we supposed to be the Ord

but before starting just after breakfast Sid called me down to where Durack and Kilfoyle were waiting and then we had a jolly hour.

It seems they had been taking all the credit themselves of finding the river and hinting at my incompetence.

Sid fired up at this.

I gave it to them pretty straight.

Kilfoyle said I had made mistakes in taking the sun as I had altered my hour twice, once less a quarter of an hour.

I told him he did not understand anything about the matter.

It was quite laughable to them that he fancied I took the sun wrong because I altered my watch to make it correct by the sun.

I told Durack that he did not treat a person properly and he wanted to do everything himself in fact he did it and then if anything went wrong, he wished to throw the blame on me but that I would be no man's tool that I was engaged to lead and show [indecipherable] but how could I do so if he always gave a course he liked and never consulted me nor came to me for the course but twice during the trip.

He brought forward some absurd things against me which I easily refuted but I told him I would not allow any man to suck my brain and then kick

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my backside.

I said if I ever offered any suggestion, he regarded it as if he thought it the grossest impertinence possible.

He replied that I had not told them where the river was and I asked was it possible for him to do so or to keep any account of the courses as he often moved all around the place in a single day.

Sid also gave it to them pretty warm telling them that a day or two previously I had said we were within fifteen miles of the river and that I had suggested that we should go four or five miles then camp while two of the party went out to the south east and two others to the south west and that one party or other would be sure to strike upon the Ord or Negri.

This could not be denied as I had also told Kilfoyle, Sid told Durack and I told Josey.

This was before Durack pretended to measure the course again over and found that it was about fifteen miles to the river.

While I am writing this Old Tom is talking very confidently with Durack and has very [indecipherable] attention to him.

I wonder whether Durack has brought him over or not if so he may be a regular foolish old traitor.

But it is too bad to judge though it looks somewhat suspicious considering how he talks against Durack when the latter is not present.

I suppose it will all come out some day.

However, I must give the course to proceed.

I certainly shall not give the latitude that Durack may have all the credit.

If he is fit to do the navigating part of the business in guessing [indecipherable] let him, do it and I will not interfere but if he cannot do it he should have the manliness to give it up to me to

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whom it belongs.

I very much suspect that Durack and Kilfoyle have some nice little game afloat for their benefit and if they could manage things another way of getting my help but let me know nothing it would suit them well but if they do not get the latitude, I fancy they will be unable to play their little game.

They have shown several indications of wishing to carry out things another way and keep information from everybody.

Wednesday 27th September

Travelled today from usual time down the river crossing and recrossing several times.

Some remarkable rocks like [indecipherable] chalcedony, other volcanic & black shiny exterior or weathered surface looking like coal.

Lot of mica in river bed which is wide & tolerably deep above 30 to 40 feet & water seems to rise above that to a height of 20 feet to cover a large surface of land and better than any previously seen, little or no spinifex yesterday & today

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except in one small plain to west of river.

Had turkey shot by Durack yesterday (for supper) a very heavy & fine bird.

Same also served for dinner today.

We travelled to 20 minutes to 12 on different sides of river holes at back on both sides on West within a mile or two.

Sid reports good country on other side, & river has narrowed & deepened.

Water only in patches so that there begin to arise doubts as to whether it is really the Ord though it has been flowing the course of that river SE till about 20 to 12, we left the river and travelled across poor ground for 2 hours in a W direction

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arriving at a creek thickly filled with canes, fig trees, Palms &c.

I noticed there were some blacks following who set fire to the grass &c then ran away stealthily.

[The next four lines crossed through.]

Last night I took the latitude by a Cygne and [Crossed through - 17 degrees 40S] 17 degrees 17' 40. found it to be south of 70 so that according to that we must be some miles below the junction.

This morning Durack asked Sid what the latitude was, Sid told him truthfully that he did not know but we were below the junction.

Durack did not ask me but on leaving me guided the party in a south-easterly direction down the river.

Now at this time of writing they seem to be on the line given and by and by as no regular course is kept, I am sure there will be turmoil but he is now [indecipherable] for I should gain discredit because of failure and then Durack and Kilfoyle credit because of the success.

They thought it would be easy to run down Forrest's track but often it is not so easy as they supposed.

Kilfoyle and Sid both shot a duck each today and Sid caught some fish.

Both yesterday and today caught fish as we call them.

Took another [indecipherable] about 4 o'clock this morning having worked out the latitude today.

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Thursday 28th Sept.

Camped all day at same spot as arrived at yesterday by the side of a running stream of good water.

That in the river (Ord?) has been very brackish hitherto.

We are about 2 hours journey to west from where we quitted the river.

The creek or stream on the south side of which we are camped widens into a very fine waterhole deep and good water, plenty of fish groper, spotted and striped fish Lyebre [?] such as we see everywhere in this country & a sort of long fish with long snout a sort of Gare fish, very delicate good eating, also a kind of black bream.

The waterhole extends for

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at least a mile, perhaps farther & afford an almost inexhaustible supply of fine water.

We may say quite inexhaustible considering its great depth & width.

When we arrived here the black boys called out that they saw two black fellows other side of creek and the long dry grass & reeds on both sides had very recently been set on fire.

Trees, canes & grass were burning furiously on all sides.

Some of the trees when smouldering I observed gave out a pleasant odoriferous smoke resembling that used for incense.

The bark is white in some grey white & these trees burn really even.

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When green like touch wood, ? is it sandalwood being so very available.

There were also many palms, fine canes & strong reeds besides many varieties of large leafed, dark green foliated trees of good appearance.

There were also figs and sweet scented white flowered sort of acacia.

Plenty of yellow flowers with rich brown centres & sweet-smelling herbs with blue flowers numerous red green &c parrots or parakeets, not so many black & white cockatoos but many crows and numerous small birds more or less beautiful and with pleasing notes.

It is a pleasant spot.

This morning Josey went across

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the creek and stumbled on a native camp but no natives.

Being a little curious he set to work to examine their property bundles of cane as plugs for spears, stone tommyhawk and other things.

When examining a lot of paint which they use for war decoration he was spoken to by two blackf[ellows] who stood on a rock near[by] and had evidently been keeping an eye on him & who objected to this curious investigation of their property.

Being unarmed he at once left and returned to our camp for his rifle.

Then Kilfoyle & I accompanied him back or rather Kilfoyle

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then I followed [crossed through - they] them.

The[y] called to the natives but these had disappeared & would not show.

There was a camp seemingly often occupied under an overhy [overhanging] rocky mass of a small hill built up fire places, a good place for shelter.

Going up a side gully they came in view of some natives who were making off.

Not getting them to stop & talk they fired a shot or two Josey at the 1000 yds elevation.

The bullet must have gone near the natives for they immediately redoubled their speed.

This was a curious way of trying to get them to come for a friendly talk.

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The natives must get an abundant supply of food at this spot in the forms of fish & birds & other creatures that come to drink.

Sid and Durack went out to find the main river which Durack had lost the course of.

Before this Durack was regularly [indecipherable] as to the course and asked Sid what he would suggest.

Sid would suggest nothing but that they should go a few miles south and try to recover the river.

Sid also told him the latitude which he said had got from me.

Before this Durack had no idea at all where we were so that although he pretended that he could plot the course from Cambridge Gulf to here to fix the position to within fifteen miles he could not tell today where we were.

Recent navigation [indecipherable] source and they would be much more so but that he got the latitude.

Fancy his asking Sid instead of coming direct to me but I suppose he is afraid I should refuse to tell him.

He puts great faith in the Lord maybe he has not but which is naturally a suspicious fire and all no good to anyone and regular [indecipherable].

Sid told him the latitude which I took last night and found to be 17 degrees 9 33 by meridian latitude of

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a Cygne rather than free [?] has had great difficulty in taking as atmosphere was obscured by smoke on all sides and the mist and vapour.

The light of the star Vega now passes too early, but it should be free to get some good stars about four o'clock in the morning in another week or so.

Following Sid's suggestion Durack and Sid started off and managed after a good ride to recover the course of the river.

Durack has been all along thinking that we are nearly at the junction but after two days ride, he began to believe **what I told Sid, who told him, namely that we are south of the junction if there is any junction at all** and if the [crossed through - was not at the bend of the Negri was not the bend of the Ord we have seen another two rivers corresponding to both.

And we must be south of the junction and beside it in our journey unless the sextant be nearly useless.

The country around here is in good shape and cattle were well watered but with spinifex in patches.

Range of hills close to the north of us.

Went out to fish this afternoon but got none.

Black boys got 8 pretty good-sized ones and two pounds each.

My mare's back has been very sore lately but looks somewhat better today.

We shall go back to the river today.

Old Tom says he is disgusted at this continual running here and there going forward and backward. Bad bosses and no men.

Plenty of ducks on the Ord River that's one good thing.

Sid and Durack when out came on some natives, Sid saw them but said nothing

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to Durack so later only saw them when quite close so they saw him too.

He then consented to turn away but Sid said let's go on there are only a few of them.

There were two aged men two lubras and one youth and two children.

They went up to the blacks and Durack then talked to them.

They listened but made no reply.

They returned by the same route they had gone but it previously was the course on focus.

Sid has a poor idea as to Durack's knowledge.

Washed a lot of clothes today & had a good bath myself found it very acceptable.

One gets fairly black about the legs with the dust from the grass burnt & unburnt & this sticks to the shins with the aid of the perspiration. Found my small knife today packed away.

Friday 30th Septr.

Took latitude by meridian alt. of A Cygne and found it to be seventy twenty or between that and twenty-one nearer the latter.

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The mosquitoes bothered me very much while taking it.

They were awful.

More insults today, Durack and Kilfoyle are trying to batter Sid and get all the information from him.

Durack has made a pair of boots for him and gone out shooting all day with him though they shot very little.

They were talking about our position and Kilfoyle said Sid knew that we were not beyond the junction although they both know that by the latitude we are.

Grumbling "great doubt" more patience.

Sid and Durack when out came across some blacks and rounded them up.

One old fellow with his wife and two or three boys, the large one was helped up and he and the old fellow threatened to throw

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Saturday 1st Octr.

Left camp at 7.25 travelled S a little W then SW till 9.45 then W.

Country generally good, fine plain on E side of river crossed Kilfoyles Negri at abt. 1/4 to 10 coming from E & running N.

After turning West country became somewhat rocky & stoney appeared to be limestone.

Patches of spinifex.

Horse tracks by where course was influenced.

K still looking for junction of the 2 rivers though we are about 20 miles below [indecipherable].

Furnished tobacco.

Passed several patches of what somewhat resembled limestone but was probably Wolfram[ite] or [indecipherable].

At 10.30 course SW over good plains.

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Crossed Ord at 11 and almost immediately came to camping place of other party.

West side at the time rough.

Course 230 degrees E of N.

Country good on N & west side of river but of limited bulk being only about 3 miles wide or deep gently rising hills backed by higher ground & then roughly turns W & NW in about 12 miles distance.

Camped at 12.30 near waterhole in a creek.

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Sunday Oct. 2nd

Left camp at 8.45 crossed river banks, steep & sandy. Sid & Josey also crossed & then returned to West side to view the country.

This East side is very good extensive plains gently rising in some parts and those lightly timbered just sufficient for shade or shelter.

Grasses good blue & Mitchell. Fine reddish sandy (somewhat) soil.

No high hills as far as the eye can see to East.

On other side of river (West) hills in distance.

Been steering South

At 10.20 South West.

Other side of river (West)

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Crossed through - Monday Octr. 2]

now looks hilly & worthless (D & E's).

The East side on which we are travelling Pareton's.

At 11.15 going 230 E of N some [crossed through - more] gravel like limestone or Wolfram, not time to take any.

At abt. 12 crossed river which is here running N & S & then pursued SW course.

Tried for latitude last night but on a/c of sky did not succeed.

At about 12.30 passed small pyramidal hill on other side of river (West).

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Monday Octr. 3rd

Journeyed in SW course from last camp along old tracks made by other party going NE.

Camped at about 11 travelling abt. 4 hours in SW direction, crossed small river. Camped on E side of river.

Latitude 17 34 by A Cygne.

At this camp Josey went to river to wash some clothes and was suddenly startled by the appearance of 3 black fellows one of them with feathers & paint others with spears.

They ran upon him with uplifted spears & he in running away fell but cannot say why they did not then spear him unless his fall disturbed their action.

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They were trying to surround him.

He rushed to the camp for his rifle and Sid, Tom & I accompanied to the river where we found the blacks in ambush among the reeds.

We fired Sid shot one fellow & I another.

The one was found dead the other crawled some way but his dog being about the place so he was [indecipherable] among the tall cane grasses which here almost prevented access to the river bank.

We tried the river for fish but the water holes being shallow had evidently been well searched by blacks & there were no fish but small ones hardly worth catching.

Got one duck.

In evening & during night heard gin cooeing for black fellows.

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Josey & Tom after attack on them by the river side pursued one who escaped and when he took to rising ground he was joined by 3 or 4 others who must have been hiding waiting an opportunity for an attack on any straggler.

Country passed through yesterday very fine, on this side.

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Tuesday Octr. 3rd.

Left camp at 6.30 travelled 4 hours at least 3 miles an hour I think 3 1/2 in a SW direction till again arrived at river where we camped from 10.30 to 4.30 then resumed our journey and went on for 1 1/2 hours at 4 miles an hour & camped for night near a gully.

This resting during the heat of the day is necessary for the horses as the heat tries them greatly.

Fortunately, so far, we have always been able to get them an ample supply of water the country being splendidly watered.

During the evening just as most of the party had turned into their tents one of the black boys who was talking to me suddenly stopped

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and said.

Mr. Pente wild black fellow, I hear him talk.

I immediately shouted out the blacks were near and all gathered around the tents for the night was dark and the tall grass by which the camp was surrounded gave the blacks fine opportunity for this stealthy approach without observation when they might spear us by the light of the fire whilst we could not see them.

After some little while the suspense being unpleasant, I rose & got my hat and fired in the direction in which we heard the talking.

Other shots were then fired, and the blacks shouted & by the sounds appeared to be

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going away.

A doubly strong watch was kept through the night though it is my opinion blacks would never attack at night they have not the pluck.

We searched through the long grass before again going into tents.

I had to watch till 1/2 past 11 & could hardly keep my eyes open for drowsiness.

Durack watched with me.

Comments of some of Durack's behaviour.

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Wednesday Oct. 5th

Left camp at 6.30 travelled W more or less direct travelled over 4 miles an hour & camped at a pleasant place by river side under fine large leaved dark green trees.

Many palms & numerous sweet smelling small plants.

The Ord is [crossed through - not] characterised by the large number of sweet smelling plants there on its banks.

No fish worth catching.

At about 3.30 resumed journey & travelled for abt. 2 hours.

The course of river has now been west for seventy miles.

Camped in a stony piece of

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ground with water near but poor feed for horses.

My mare's back somewhat better.

Sid's gets worse.

Meat only once today & in a few more days we shall have none.

Nothing but flour tea & sugar.

How we shall manage on a short supply of these for five or six weeks at least it is hard to say and hard to think.

The failure in supply of provisions bears out my assertions often made before leaving Sydney that in my opinion we had not enough for 3 months, whereas we were supposed to have sufficient for 6 months.

Durack finding I was out of tobacco very kindly came

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and offered me 5 or 6 plugs of which I thankfully accepted one, as a larger quantity at once would tempt me to smoke more.

Thursday Oct. 6th

Left camp at 7.40 having been delayed an hour looking for a horse that had strayed.

Very hot.

Sid walked some miles.

Josey's horse knocked up & he had to walk, so also had one of the black boys from the same cause, travelled through & over very rough country for about 3 hours in a West & little to NW, struck river after here nothing but sand bed only small pool of water.

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Feed bad, ranges of hills on each side. Granite coarse & fine grained, slate shale & plenty of quartz, some in reefs.

Country north of this will be worth exploring for metals.

At last camp on impure limestone, at camp before conglomerate of breccias.

We must now shortly leave the Ord as it has no supply of water.

Course NW for 1/4 hour then West river running NW. Country covered with spinifex & worthless.

Resumed journey at 3 and travelled about

soon many well-defined large reefs

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Camped at foot of rugged hills surrounding us on every side, granite coarse & fine grained.

River here runs over bed of granite rocks projecting rock, some looking coarse others fine, beds of hard blue slate stone & depths of hard conglomerate numerous quartz veins & reefs, promising.

River dry except in few pools poor feed for horses.

No game no natives, few flowers or trees.

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Friday, Octr. 6th

Left camp at 7 travelled 1 3/4 hours making about 3 miles in a NW direction over frightfully hilly & rugged country all walked to save the horses.

River course NW & SE.

Course travelled NW, camped in a small creek by a water hole country from last camp all hills covered with spinifex.

Poor feed for horses even in this creek.

The worst country we have been in since leaving the Gulf district.

Black boys found mussels & roasted them.

Only a few small fish though Tom & the 2 boys dragged pool with hammock of Sid's.

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Saturday Octr. 8th

Travelled 4 hours leaving camp about 6.30, course more or less SW, came on tracks near water hole in gully where other party had camped.

Ground passed are exceedingly rugged nothing but stoney hills with spinifex.

Sid shot a tom cat & hawk.

Caught some fish.

No water the last 2 nights, country too poor to feed natives.

Gave course today it was followed and brought us upon steps of others.

Lost piebald mare through weakness, she stumbled & fell going up a steep & stony hill & nothing could move her.

We were obliged to leave her behind but did not kill her.

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Camped in gully.

Sunday Octr. 9

Travelled from 6 to abt. 12 in all say abt. 5 hours & a half at abt. 2 1/2 miles an hour, for first 3 hours in a SW direction remainder of time NW against my advice & wish.

Very bad country, horribly rough hills covered with keen edged granite stones & no green things but spinifex with points as sharp as fine needles which penetrated the legs & saddle.

Camped abt. 12 in gully surrounded by hills in every direction.

As far as eye can see are hills in every way N S E & W.

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Comet in NE a little more east abt. 20 degrees long, 1/4 moon little mountainous north & views at north very beautiful heavens.

No dew.

Weather gets warmer every day.

No flowers, no grass, only scrubby trees, slaty shale, granite &c.

One tin of meat now remaining.

Our sportsmen poor marksmen.

Monday Octr. 10th

Left camp at 6 o'clock travelled abt. 6 hours at about 2 1/2 miles an hour, rough country large quantity covered with spinifex, patches good grass, nothing but hills

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& gullies covered with quartz fragments &c projecting rocks.

Kilfoyle shot Kangaroo which (part) we had for dinner & enjoyed it being much better condition than last one.

General course S, sometimes to East & sometimes to West trying to break through the hills into more open country.

Had no water all day until we camped, then found a pool or two (small) filled by recent thunder shower & very acceptable assuredly a Godsend as the Kangaroo.

We have now only one tin of meat left.

Have seen no other tracks for 2 or 3 days.

The rough country we have

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been passing through is almost lifeless, only a few birds near the water where any exists, too bare & barren for Kangaroos & for Blacks.

Shall be glad to see our coloured friends again despite their spears as their presence will be an indication that of water is not far distant and that game is more plentiful.

Walked all journey except last half hour when I was glad to avail myself of the services of my mare which is well able to carry me.

My boots are very bad one pair really finished and others not sound.

I expect if we live to reach [reach] Kings Sound

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we shall all be in a curious condition as to boots & clothing generally.

Not much to choose between us.

Durack fancies Forrest went farther north than we have if so, he could hardly have given a fair description of the hilly barren condition of the country hereabout unless he was especially fortunate in finding plains among the hills for wherever we have travelled since last seeing the Ord, hills have surrounded us on every side.

Saw a few pigeons & small birds to day.

In direction of another thunder storm.

Barometer 27 degrees 7' at 12 with Thermometer 95 in shade.

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I certainly would not have come upon this expedition for thousands of pounds if I could have known beforehand what we should have to incur and what divided thought there would be and the distress to myself and what rough miles during our way with some more chimera.

It may be a wonder to anyone disposed to engage in any similar undertaking to take care that he is paid men with him who are bound to obey him and not men who being not only unpaid but also part promoters and contributors to the expedition fund rather fancies himself most and had elaborate need to do as pleases him.

If it should please Almighty God that I get safely out of this mess I shall then be able to show him gratitude by devoting myself more to his service and less to many selfish views though perhaps they have not really been more selfish than the way of most men.

Tuesday, Oct. 11th

Camped all day to give horses a spell.

Camp situated on piece of table land surrounded by hill tops.

By Aneroid it is abt. 800 ft. above sea level.

Near this camp in fact passing through the

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flat we saw the tracks of the other party.

This seemed to give more confidence to Durack who before had said somewhat savagely that we ought to have gone further up the river before attempting to cross.

Now after seeing the tracks, he seems satisfied.

So little known of ignorant people.

I have advised them to make their course SW so as to come upon their land and Mr. Emanuel's and this I believe they intend to do unless some whim induces them to alter their intention.

We are now about thirty miles from the extremity of their land and about fifteen from the beginning.

Went over maps with them today.

There seems to have been moderate amount of rain accompanying the recent thunder storms, for the soil is damp.

The grass somewhat less dry than usual & in some of the creeks there are pools of water.

Washed at one of these pools two shirts tweed trousers & other clothes.

Had Kangaroo for dinner so that the animal has lasted us two days.

Makes capital soup.

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Several zebra pigeons & small birds about here also saw camping place of other party near junction of two creeks.

Took latitude by Capella found it to be 17 degrees 53 South.

Tried to get it by a Taure but angle was too great for sextant to take with artificial horizon.

Found some of the medicine bottles broken.

I am afraid that my boots will not last for the trip.

They are so badly made, should not to have had packed boots of [indecipherable].

Wednesday Octr. 12th

Left camp at 6.20, travelled till ... in a more or less S direction sometimes SW, very rough [indecipherable] latter party.

Rugged broken metamorphic landscape & hills tree strewn & spinifex covered.

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After 4 hours walking had to ride, boots getting bad.

Travelled altogether this day about 5 1/2 hours at 2 miles an hour in a SW direction with at times S course.

Camped at foot of range in large flat valley, moderately timbered nothing but spinifex.

Take it to be L & S's ground.

Soil very wet with recent rains quite boggy in places.

Had to walk about 4 miles quite drenched to skin through thunderstorm which was a very acceptable change from the dry waterless time we had recently been having.

Slept as usual on ground but not very comfortably too wet & too many hard quartz stones.

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Fortunately, there was no rain in the night but only wind & threatening clouds. Made soup of cockatoos (2 white ones) & a pot of Essence of meat.

Camped for a few hours in heat of day.

Small birds more numerous have not seen bottle trees since we left the Ord & only here & there the flowers we have been accustomed to on banks of that river.

Lots of quartz reefs, very prominent [?].

From the granite slates & shales we have come into a sandstone country but with plenty of quartz in all directions.

The creeks all flow to the S or SW instead of to the NW [?] as formerly showing.

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We have crossed main part of range.

Mares back still bad.

Black boy David rode her yesterday.

Boys very fond of pills, but only the saccharate camphor pills.

[crossed through - Kilfoyle killed]

Thursday Octr. 12

Rain before leaving camp which delayed our start till 7.30 when we went on SW direction with tendency to go S.

At 10.30 camped at foot of high hill with long creek partly filled with water from recent rain.

Only few & small fish not to be caught.

Old natives camping place & with numerous remains in shape of bones of their feeds on fish, Kangaroo &c. Hills nearly all around us.

Very little grass plenty of spinifex.

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Sid & Josey gone to shoot something.

Kilfoyle & Durack to see if we can pass through the gully into flatter country trying about 2 miles to north of us.

Three white cockatoos shot but these birds do not make a nice feed having a sort of brimstone taste.

Curious that as yet we have not come across any of Franks [FORRESTS] marked trees, though certainly during the last few days we have been farther to S than his track.

Sid bad boil under arm in arm pit.

Black boys sore feet from spinifex points.

On leaving the gulley we travelled in a W direction for 1 hour & quarter then SW for abt. 2 1/2 hours.

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Camped in valley near gap between (or pass) between hills.

No water to be found but every appearance of storm.

In about an hour after camping storm began & rain came down in such torrents that everyone was drenched while tents were lifted force of wind.

I left Sid's tent on a/c of water covering the ground, Old Tom having pitched it in lowest ground as is not unusual.

Sid however listens to no reason on such subjects.

I was fool enough to go to the tent when the storm began but soon cleared out and in abt. 20 minutes Sid & Old Tom came up the hill the water must then have stood 18 inches over the bottom of their tent.

I cowered near the pack saddles near Josey & covered myself with a blanket which

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kept out the rain well so that had I not been stupid enough to go to the tent I should have been comparatively dry.

Sid said all their things were floating about & they had to run after the case of maps to save it from being carried off.

I had very little pity for them.

Old Tom is not honest.

This I make not as a new and original remark but merely because I have had new proof.

The fellow thinks I do not see things but I guess he will find out his mistake hereafter if we live to reach Sydney.

His only good quality is his sticking to Sid.

Another bottle of brandy disappeared a few days ago and the cork put back into with the foil around it.

I lost my pipe last night; I dropped it in the tent and I am sure Old Tom saw it but have heard nothing about it though he does not carry such pipes.

I gave the black boy my pipe and I think Old Tom got it from him for the other day I heard him promise to give Durack pipes that had been used but would draw well.

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I shall be glad to show him forth in all his merits demerits some time.

Though of course it would be impossible for anyone to describe his lying to [indecipherable].

He is the fellow who thinks himself damn smart.

Valley was flood on each side of rising ground on which we were camped today.

Had no tea, camped [indecipherable].

Friday, Oct. 14th

Spent forenoon in drying blankets waaterproof sheeting (a delusion from [crossed through - Shaw] Peapes & Shaw) and clothing but there is a look of unsettled weather.

Watch fell out of pocket & glass got broken.

Barometer case washed to pieces.

Seeds spoiled.

Stones lost.

Start at 2.10 camped at 5.00.

Wandering 3 hours, about 1/2 the time, S & rest West, arrived at plains.

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Past nearest hills covered with spinifex.

We must be on Mr Emanuel or Durack ground only the latitude & plotting will tell.

Camped about 1 1/2 or 2 miles from foot of range. Tracks of Emu & turkey. Plenty of water from late thunderstorm, 4 inches deep.

Saturday, Oct. 14th

Left camp at 11 travelled till 2 (3 hours) at about rate of 2 miles an hour the horses picking at good grass as they went.

First 3 miles or 4 miles scantily grassed but improving, all subject to inundation, all plain, pretty fair share of spinifex.

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Last mile much improved.

Camped by side of a brook or little creek in in the plain.

Plenty of water from the thunderstorms during the last few days.

Young grasses beginning to appear.

Best grasses we have seen, good country where we are camped for cattle but soft & spongy for sheep, though there are hills at no gt. distance.

Saw 5 or 6 blacks on a hill top who when they noticed that we saw them stood up and one woolly headed fine looking fellow made a speech & after pointed to the west.

Though he had a bundle of spears he used no gestures of defiance & was I think merely bidding us begone to the west whence he supposes

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we had come, other party having come that way. [indecipherable] were for shooting at him especially Josey and Sid but we advised not to do so.

Course abt. 20 degrees S of West through the journey, but generally more West then South.

Went out to see if could shoot anything no success.

Later in day Josey shot 3 parrots.

Had our last tin of meat today for dinner so for future must depend on what we can shot or catch.

Mosquitos damned bad at this camp.

Try for latitude tonight.

Tom went out for the horses yesterday and came back with the tale that

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he had seen a mob of blacks so four of us went out namely Durack Sid myself and Josey but saw no blacks and I think Old Tom's story a fabrication like falling of one of the Empires.

A joke got up merely to send us out to fetch the horses instead of himself.

Sunday, Octr. 15th

Left camp at 6.30 & travelled 5 hours in SW direction generally but with tendency to go north of SW or about 20 degrees north of SW.

Took latitude by Capella & found it to be 18 degrees 3 31 or thereabouts which does not correspond with the idea I had formed as to way South which we had made but this was supported by taking latitude by Jupiter so if there be any error it must be in the instrument.

This morning had Kangaroo rat and parrots for breakfast and found them to be not at all bad in fact kangaroo rat was as good as rabbit or better.

Josey shot some parrots again this afternoon.

I find that 1 argent screw of vernier

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of sextant has been injured during the last few days so that the screw will not work properly.

Shall take latitude again tonight, both by a Cygne & by Capella.

Living now generally on damper and tea, the latter very bad.

Camped on plains near small hole filled or partly filled with water from recent rains.

Not much rain saved here lately.

Land passed over today is fairly good being plain but only scantily grassed and with patches of spinifex these last being equal in dimension to the grass.

There are hills here and therefore scattered about sometimes short ranges but these are rather an advantage to the land as they would afford refuge in time of heavy rains.

Having been up nearly all night as soon as we camped, I fell asleep and on waking found Sid, Durack and Kilfoyle engaged in making out a position.

I was very much amazed to hear their ideas and comments and let them go on without any suggestion of mine.

However, as they seem inclined to take my work out of my hands in this summary manner, I think it not worthwhile to interfere.

The next time they want my help they

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will have to ask for it.

I shall give the course if asked and nothing more.

These fellows do not seem to think of the insults they themselves offer and yet not one of them knows more than the difference between east and west.

Took latitude & to my astonishment found angle of Capella to be more than 5 degrees greater than I expected.

I therefore examined Sextant & found that it must have received a blow or fall as the index error which after the last accident was + 10' was now 5 degrees 20'.

The horizon mirror was cracked & bent & the other mirror had been much disturbed whilst the vernier screw had been so damaged that for a time it would not work.

I put things as straight as possible and then found the latitude to be 18 degrees 20' so that we are now in Mr Emanuel's country.

Our next journey to west will be over Durack's.

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Monday Octr. 16th

Went out with SE to see land went for five miles to east and ascended a high hill whence we had (from rather I had for only I went up it) a good view extending for 20 miles.

I should think to us from the north to the south the horizon was bounded by hills on the east side and mostly open plains on the west side.

On Emanuel's land there are hills here and there several creeks and even at the time of our visit some water.

After the rains I fancy the country will look first class but at present it is rather patchy.

Spinifex plentiful rocks sandstone and granite of coarse grain.

As Emanuel's country extends to [indecipherable] it is partly in the hilly country through which we descended into the plains perhaps for three or four miles and this is the west part of it.

Loughnun and Shepherd's blocks to the north of [indecipherable] cannot be worth much for the north and north west appears to be very rough.

We promised to be back in camp before night but found it impossible as Sid Emanuel wanted to find water for the horses so we went travelling along some creeks with the very unfortunate result that we lost our bearings and at night had no idea where camp was situated.

We therefore lit a fire and camped by the side of it but in the night, I was terribly tormented by mosquitoes.

I slept with my saddle for a pillow but with nothing over me as I lent Sid Emanuel my saddle cloth, he having only a thin cotton shirt and trousers on.

He did not want to take it but I pressed it on him so he took it.

I had on a flannel shirt

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and therefore, bear cold or dew better than he.

Luckily there was no dew though for three or four nights previously it had fallen so much that my blankets were wet just as though heavy rain had fallen.

Next morning we set out and travelled nearly all-day tracing back our tracks, for breakfast we had water and hock on the run breakfast.

For dinner we boiled some water in the creek and I plucked a killed pigeon Sid Emanuel had shot a fine tasty plump bird it was a bronze wing.

We then continued running back on our tracks and had about 3 parts down our track when we met Durack and Kilfoyle coming to look for us they coming to the conclusion that we were lost as seemed very likely.

If a thunder storm had come on we should not have been able to retrace our steps nor would they have been able to find us so in that case we should have had to strike out for the Margaret River on the chance of meeting them.

As we had but very little ammunition this was a possible prospect and Sid Emanuel is a very poor one to be in trouble, he cannot take things [indecipherable] at all.

He was for trying half a dozen things at once.

We got to camp with a good appetite and very thankful that we were safe.

Will not go out any more with Sid only, or if I do, I will take care to notice the bearings on our course.

Made a bet as to a certain hill with Sid and lost it, a bet of a new hat.

Gave him pair of trousers moleskin instead.

I promised to give him moleskin trousers before but he said they would do instead of the hat. [indecipherable] and have lost my tobacco which Durack gave me yesterday so I shall have to do without for the week.

This I am very sorry for.

At the camp they fired off the rifles and guns several times during the afternoon but we did not hear

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them.

At last, I fancied I heard two shots and fired off my revolver in reply but it seems they did not hear it.

Next morning we went to an adjacent hill and I fired off the rifle three times in various directions but it seems they did not hear it.

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Wednesday, Oct. 19

Left camp at 6.10 & travelled till 10.10 (4 hours) generally in a W direction with tendency to N (abt. 25 degrees).

Country well-watered several good water holes in creeks, one or two permanent apparently.

For 9 miles from the camp we left this morning the country was flat the grasses good & water plentiful.

After then the country became broken, plenty of spinifex & little grass, not too much water.

Shot rat & curlew.

Had Essence of beef soup with rice for breakfast.

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Thursday 19th Oct

Camped for Durack & Kilfoyle to go out some six miles & see as they suppose land belonging to Loughnun & Shepherd but I doubt the identity.

Moreover, situated as we now are I do not believe in doing anything that tends to prolong our journey even one day.

No water near where we camped excepting sinking in the sand.

Plenty of supple [indecipherable] Part of journey yesterday over burnt [?] scrub, rocks granite, then chalcedony in beds covering miles or in thick veins, then white quartz often in a lightish coloured sandstone.

Durack talked about getting over dividing range but Forrest spoke of no such range as I told him.

Then he spoke of the water shed of the Fitzroy being divided by a range from that of this country where streams run in a different direction.

He did not appear to relish being corrected.

I cannot understand the [indecipherable].

I think they imagine the land there goes out to sea

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to be Kilfoyle and Duracks and not Loughnun and Shepherds and that is why they would not go that way.

Durack is quite willing to go out though he had previously stated he would not go out a step of the way to see the land.

Our sugar will be finished this week then we shall have only flour and tea and I shall be very thankful if they last four or five weeks for then there will be no food and absolute starvation.

This morning, we had curlew and kangaroo rat for breakfast both were much relished.

I am afraid that Durack and Kilfoyle have been mean enough to take my mare out to day though they knew she has sore feet and without a shoe on one foot and has a sore back so that I spared her myself.

I shall take measures to find out.

What makes me think so is the fact of their carrying their saddles and bridles out with them to the horses instead of having the horses driven up as usual.

Friday Octr. 20th

Left camp 7.30 travelled till 1.15 at abt. 2 miles an hour, in general Westerly direction arrived at large creek or small river at about 10.30 & kept near same remainder of journey.

First 3 hours very worthless country rocky with sand stones & spinifex.

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A little better afterwards but a long way from being entitled to be called good country.

Gave out 4 pots essence of meat today.

Tin of preserved milk left in charge of Old Tom has disappeared & I suspect Sid knows something about it.

Sid shot a horse this morning through poking it with his blessed old gun that goes off at half cock & has always been a dangerous weapon to carry loaded.

I don't see the necessity of having it loaded.

The horse will be a great loss to us.

Have camped at junction of two creeks forming small river.

Passed several hills, denudation. Durack & Kilfoyle report

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good country to south of our last camp, ie, the country they went out to see.

Peculiar kind of grass growing here which might be called chrysalis grass just as that on the Ord might be called caterpillar grass.

Got some seeds.

Not many flowers, those [indecipherable] & resembling Ord flowers.

Cork & bottle trees have reappeared after having been absent from our sight for many days.

Durack & Kilfoyle talk about the dividing range but I hope I have convinced them that Forrest did not take his party over any hilly ground of the dividing range.

They are very hard to convince.

Talked about having to throw away his sextant if it came to walking with him but Old Tom said perhaps it might be better to keep it as a witness in case of any later [indecipherable] hereafter.

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Saturday, Octr. 21st

Left camp 6.30 travelled 2 1/2 hours generally West & camped at 9 at side of creek where there was a little water from recent rains.

Took latitude last night after an hours repairs of Sextant, found it to be 18 11 by altitude of Capella.

Found it to be 10 8 by one reading but the sextant is not to be depended upon.

The index error is now reduced to 2 degrees 35' as near as can be judged.

Country passed over in first 2 1/2 hours mostly hilly & stony granite & quartz.

Ascended to top of hill and saw long open valley extending 8 or 9 miles or more in a Westerly direction & there the hills met and there appeared to be a gap or opening, seemed to be pretty good promise for

travelling.

Shot pheasant & owl last night, black boys ate latter, former stewed with essence of meat & rice.

Left camp again at abt. 4 o'clock & travelled till 6 doing altogether about 22 miles in W direction more or less.

Camped after dark by flank of range at extremity of valley flat already mentioned.

Sunday 23rd October

Left camp 5.30 am travelled 3 3/4 hours, at first for abt. 1 3/4 hours in W direction then south & SW.

I am very thankful that I was able to prevent a serious calamity.

Kilfoyle and Durack were possessed with the idea of going across the Mueller Range though I had often told them that Forrest never went that way.

So today when I found them going to cross the range

I spoke to Kilfoyle and showed him by the map that Forrest's route was south of the mountains.

I also said that we were so far north that it may not be the Mueller Range and if we crossed it we should miss the Margaret River altogether.

At last, I succeeded in convincing him and to my great surprise the route was altered and as I believe all our lives saved instead.

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Camp was at 10.15 by banks of river running south & W.

Left camp again & travelled 1 1/2 to 2 hours, making in about 11 miles or 12.

Country poor, much spinifex but good feed in parts, plenty of water.

River grew larger by influx of creek was when we left it nearly as large as Ord.

Suppose it to be the Margaret or one of its large branches.

Had Essence meat soup, only flesh today.

Flour will not last more than 3 weeks.

Sugar abt. one week.

Everyone is glad that I succeeded in preventing them from entering the range as it would have been certain destruction for us with our small stock of provisions and in our weak state.

God grant that things may end better than they look.

Slept in open area as usual with only mosquito net about my face.

Mosquitos bad.

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Being a fine moonlight night I went down to the river when all the others were asleep and washed several things such as a pair of trousers one shirt one jersey a pair of socks handkerchief a towel etc. and had also a good bath myself.

Laid my revolver on the rock near me in case of any travelling blacks coming by.

One of two blacks armed with spears in the morning very big fellows but they cleared off pretty quickly as soon as they saw us.

One of our black boys said if lot black fellow coming, I run like buggery.

Monday 23rd October

Left camp at 6 travelled 4 miles & camped by river after having lost it and gone above gap or valley at end or near end of range.

Frightfully rough travelling for about 2 miles & then we had to retrace our steps though in my opinion if we had gone up first gully valley or opening on left we should have got through.

Had damper & tea & Essence beef for breakfast.

For dinner we had a very

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plentiful supply of fresh water mussels which we opened by placing on fire & slightly stewing.

They were excellent and all had a good feed.

Got also some nice delicate fish but not large, very good when broiled.

Everyone looks out sharp for Kangaroo, Wallaby or Rat but seldom get a shot.

Went out with gun before dinner after camping but got nothing.

Durack and Kilfoyle are now following the river through hills in the north direction but I am afraid they will find themselves blocked before they have gone very far and be obliged to return.

I am of opinion that it would be better to go further south or travel over better ground and then make our way up north again and so meet the Margaret River in that way.

Durack said we could not have passed over their country but on my showing the map and explaining that we could not possibly have failed in doing so he acknowledged that I was right.

Yet it is hard to deal with such mysteries and suspicion.

It is a wonder that the blacks

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have not cleared out this water hole of fish & mussels as they usually do.

My mare has now lost one of her fore foot shoes and I have lost part of the sole of my remaining pair of boots so that we shall soon be both [indecipherable] done foot sore and crippled.

How we shall get on I do not know.

Pushed on in afternoon through mountain gorge, devilish ground steep in fact perpendicular walls of rocks, deep water, camped where something of river bed.

Gave Kilfoyle to understand that Forrest could not travel in one part of river and asked him if it proved too bad to turn back so I did my duty in way of warning and in fact more than my duty as I am not supposed to advise these fellows but carry out the work myself.

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Tuesday 24th October

Travelled abt. 4 hours first N then NE then NW crossed some hills & reached the Margaret again, rain at foot of Muller [Mueller].

Horribly rough travelling.

Sid & I had conference with Durack & Kilfoyle respecting bad travel & route to be followed.

We objected to going over the ground which they were following as we are both crippled in our feet and our horses [?] are also crippled.

After looking at the maps it was decided that Durack should go on ahead for a few miles and if the river turned to the west we should follow with the horses.

We had a couple of hours fishing but caught nothing.

There were alligators, turkeys [indecipherable] fresh on the muddy shelving rock.

We then saw that Durack had kindled a fire as a sign to come on and on we went.

The travelling was somewhat better and when we reached him we arrived in a large valley there on one side of which the river was flowing with plenty of water in some spots.

The grass was good more green grass and of better quality than we had seen for some time.

This valley was bounded on the north by a range of table land mountains which ran from E to W or rather from a little to the north of east to a little to the south of west.

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We camped here for the night and caught a few fish at least I caught two and Kilfoyle two.

One of the party, Kilfoyle I think, had a shot at a kangaroo rat so we had a good feed for our supper. Mosquitos very troublesome.

Ascertained latitude by Capella to be 10 degrees 18' 31.7" but indicates error to be 2 degrees 20' left of zero.

In the evening Durack said that he was now determined to run down river and whoever liked may turn back but he would not do so.

This was merely the [indecipherable] of ignorance.

He also said that if he had been able to break into the mountains as he wished they would have found the river but feel did not call to mind that we were then in latitude 10 or thereabouts and that by proceeding west we should never have reached the river.

He is as besotted with ignorance and no number of [indecipherable] seems able to improve him.

[indecipherable] so we are passing the target [indecipherable] who said something false.

The double-edged old traitor.

Turkeys, ducks, cockatoos plentiful near river but saw no recent tracks of blacks.

Sid remarked his boorish rude way in which Durack takes no [indecipherable] of advice.

His "how bloody well do you know" spirit of style.

[Crossed through - Wednesday]

There is great realising on the part of Durack and Co. as they think that I have been proved wrong in advising them against taking this route and to go further south but time will tell as I said to Sid Emanuel. Josey has been sweetened over by Durack [indecipherable] by a promise of his expenses being paid and something besides or

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something of the kind for he now defends their ideas and plans and goes against mine.

I did not think he was so soft but on speaking to Sid I find that he has remarked the same thing.

Wednesday 25th October

I feel very thankful that we got off from the hills into this valley and I hope it may continue as my need and my aim is to try and get home as soon as possible but I feel that I shall proved a true adviser and that the road will be awfully bad for us and for our horses to Durack's objection.

The other route is that perhaps we might get water a possibility certainly but then we should feel our way before us in that respect by sending out someone ahead each day.

At present he is making us encounter real difficulty which in our state we are unable to contend with in order to avoid imaginary ones.

We left camp at about half past six and travelled about three hours and three quarters down the valley when we arrived at the end of it and again had to take to the mountains where we were blocked at once but Kilfoyle and Durack have gone to see if they can find a route over the hills.

I fancy they find their [indecipherable] over may be premature but I hope we may get through and not have to go back now as it would be such a loss of time and labour.

That camp is over about 3 hours away given we went on for another hour or so along such creeks and the river making another two for the day's journey, a total of about 9 miles in the west direction for over three hours then more SW.

The river had mostly steep banks like walls perpendicular rocks

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without any vegetation.

Have arrived at one of those gorges which it was impossible to go through without great risk on account of the water being deep and having no banks that could be travelled over.

We went by a side gulley and came into a sort of chasm.

Very poor feed for the horses little or nothing but plenty of water.

Sid shot a turkey and one duck, the latter we ate for dinner.

Old Tom has given another proof of his temper and his laziness.

We went out to fish and he would give no one part of the turkey for bait, secondly no fish were caught.

He took a tomahawk dumbstruck and asked Sid if he wanted it.

Sid said no so then Old Tom went off to cut some tent pegs growling about putting up the tent and saying he could sleep without it.

Sid answered him very politely but the old fellow got or preferred to get into a rage at being asked to do so many things and came back and with some show of temper stuck the tomahawk into a tree.

Sid said he had not asked him to have anything to do with the tent or rather he had not asked him to have anything to do with the tent but if he, Old Tom, did not wish to sleep in it that was no reason other people should not have it up.

Other squirrels shot down and did nothing that was near me.

I can hardly put my feet to ground they are so bad with sores at the ankle.

Old Tom thinks every man should do everything for himself and often [indecipherable] for him who was [indecipherable] so unkind [indecipherable]

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All he does is to get the meals and wants the black boys to fetch the water, any one of us could do that without trouble.

I would willingly do it myself.

Then he complains that is, he becomes pretty angry that it has to be boiled, no great work in that.

He rides the horses and makes a great noise but does very little work though if a stranger were to judge by the noise he makes he might fancy the lousy old bugger does all the work.

When he refused to put up the tent he had been [indecipherable] in the camp for about two or three hours doing nothing but watch the fire or search for the saddle bags.

I regret every day that we brought with us such an old scamp who obeys his own fashion, has been [indecipherable] and various other things besides a firm drunkard, been in gaol twice in Goulburn and runs down the character of any honest man who extols [indecipherable] and [indecipherable].

He has changed his name how many times can only guessed.

Thursday, Oct. 26

Resumed journey early this morning and had to swim the horses at two places, in the 2nd about 80 yds across river.

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We carried packs over projection of rocks at first place, at 2nd we had to carry everything through the water which came to my arm pits.

As I did not put off my clothes I was soon completely wet but an hour or so in the sun dried.

If the river had had a little more water it would have been impossible to travel in this direction as the sides of the river are perpendicular walls of rocks in some places & in others so steep that not even a goat could get a footing.

I hope we shall not have many more of these guts or passes or whatever they may be called.

At midday we had not travelled above 1/4 mile but after tea & damper we made about 5 miles in a

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general W direction.

The river twists & turns a good deal so that Forrest's thirty miles of undescribed Margaret will really when travelled measure about 50 or more miles.

Sid has now altered his tune.

He is as changeable as the wind.

Today he thinks it was the best thing they could do to run the river but as I told him arguments that were good then remain good now.

Of course, we must go through but if I had my way I certainly would have taken Forrest's route as it would have been easier to travel and **we could have seen the property of the Kimberley Pastoral Company.**

Of this fine property we shall not see a bit of and so shall lose their contribution of 200 pounds.

Of this to tackle the vanity of a poor ignorant fellow who has money in the exploration.

I would not have come on such a trip for thousands if I had known what kind of party they were.

Kilfoyle is certainly a splendid bushman, can shoe horses and do almost anything besides which he is nearly as strong as the horses and seems able to bear any amount of fatigue, he is always to the front when any work is to be done. He is by far the finest worker in the camp, worth any three in fact.

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I shot at a turkey and wounded it, Michael Durack followed it and shot it but said nothing about the first shot.

My foot still remain very bad though I am putting carbolic acid on them and I expect that in a few days I shall have no boot to wear.

Had turkey for breakfast this morning.

Noticed Old Tom is cook, as soon as breakfast was ready he went to the pot and picked out the choicest bits for himself and then quickly retired.

His absolute selfishness certainly comes from his own greed. I would like to see such fellows whipped through the town by an angry mob.

He never starts a sentence without an oath or filthy expletive of some sort and is doing Sid a worth of harm by his bad example.

Take a man [indecipherable] a liar on the toll barrier of the selfish set, a noisy wind-bag who preaches and practices selfishness and you have the man in question.

He will expect nothing and give nothing.

And if you do a kind action for him at some trouble or cost to yourself he only laughs and thinks you bloody soft.

We are now camped by a river on a flat.

Had a slight thunder storm on the way.

See red the blue dragon flies like on Ord.

See white flowers on trees about size of 2/- piece fragrant

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like enlarged jessamine and its odd 5 division long trumpet shape [see drawing opposite] two sheath like sepals tree with 6 or 8 leaflets with terminal one.

Also, plenty of scented herbs & sweet scented white acacia. Trees & shrubs with very beautiful light green foliage.

Friday, 29th October

Left camp at 7 am travelled till abt. 11.30 but spent abt. 1 1/2 hours in getting over a hill to avoid gorge so as not to be beside the water being too deep and no means of landing horses at the other end.

For about 2- or 3-hours course was Westerly afterwards the river took SW course, and after passing hills spoken of we came to good sized plain but with hills within

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gloom [?] on each side.

Had turkey for breakfast made into soup.

Durack and parties came to camp of blacks but there was only four gins and some children and they took those to the other side of the river.

Saw a flock of emus which Sid rode after, a foolish thing to do with the crippled horses as he could not hope to get within a gun shot of them and as it was, he only drove them beyond the reach of rifle otherwise he might have had a chance.

Got some seeds this morning of sweet scented white unusual [indecipherable] which is said to be edible though the blacks did not eat it.

Also, of yellow flower and that yellow flower so abundant of the [indecipherable] with brown centre and very handsome flower larger than the green piece and beautiful buttercup yellow.

My leg pained me so much last night so that I had but little sleep and the exercises of climbing over rugged hills this morning will not improve it too.

Travelled about 2 3/4 hours in afternoon crossed river & recrossed.

Crossed creek N & S on banks saw tree marked WF/PA 22 9 81, saw also horse dung of ancient date.

Durack & Kilfoyle shot 4 whistler ducks cockatoo & parrots.

Pity that other members of party had not been supplied with shot guns

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and gun cartridge instead of rifles then the providing wd. not have bn. so much in the hands of 2 or 3 for we with rifles have no chance of getting ducks &c at least they are not worth the amt. of ammunition.

Camped on bank of river.

Travelled W course generally in afternoon.

Got seeds of a kind of musk plant that largely scents the river banks.

Feel a slight degree better but very painful.

I observed Kilfoyle does not divide the bread properly and fairly.

He so arranges that some of the party get larger share than others.

By his talk one would take him to be sole manager and proprietor of the whole affair.

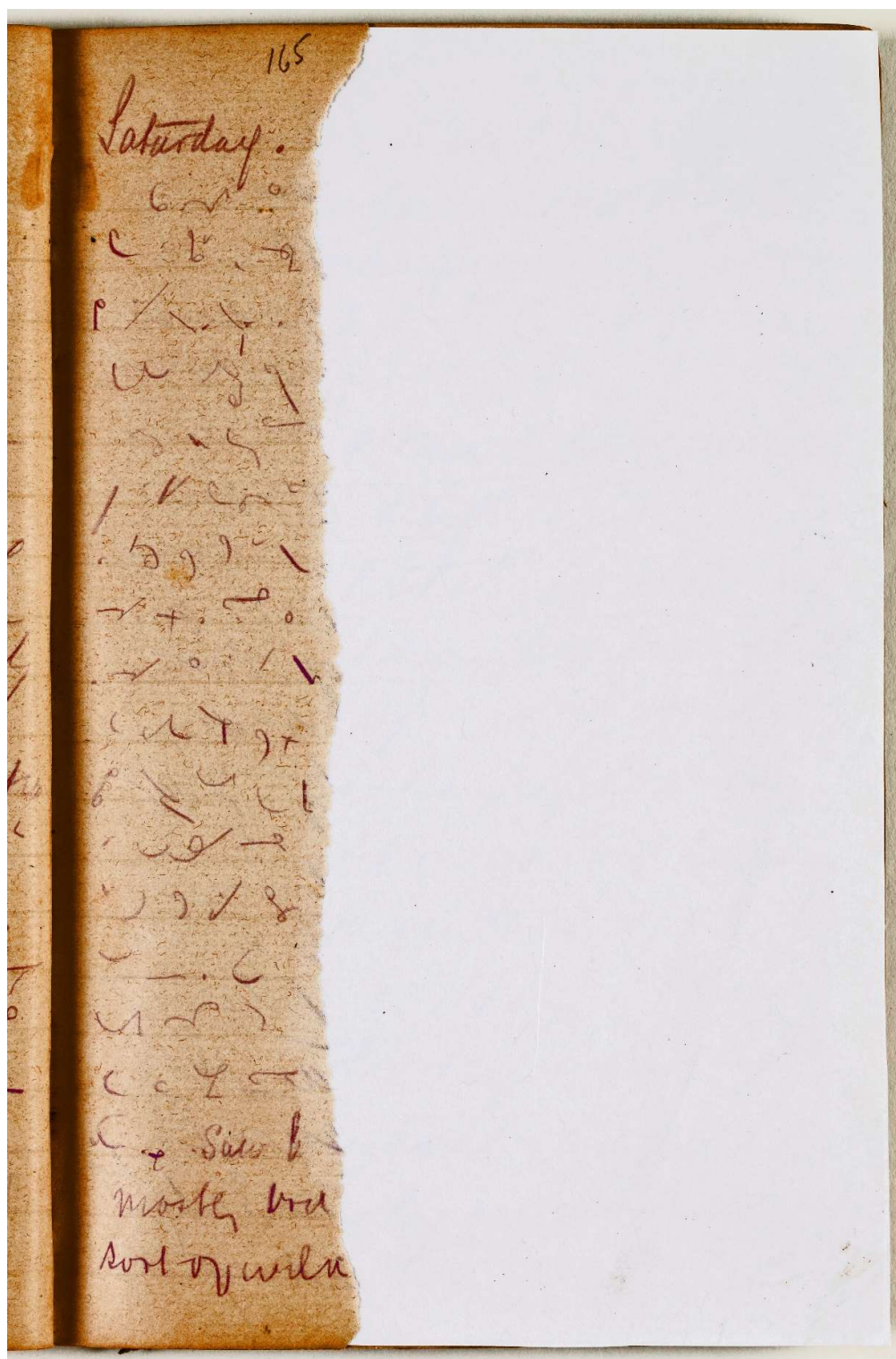
Must be getting near the land of Mr Emanuel and Durack on the Margaret but as they go it seems for him to keep correct course, we shall be able to tell only by distance from Fitzroy.

Had plug of tobacco from Durack on Thursday.

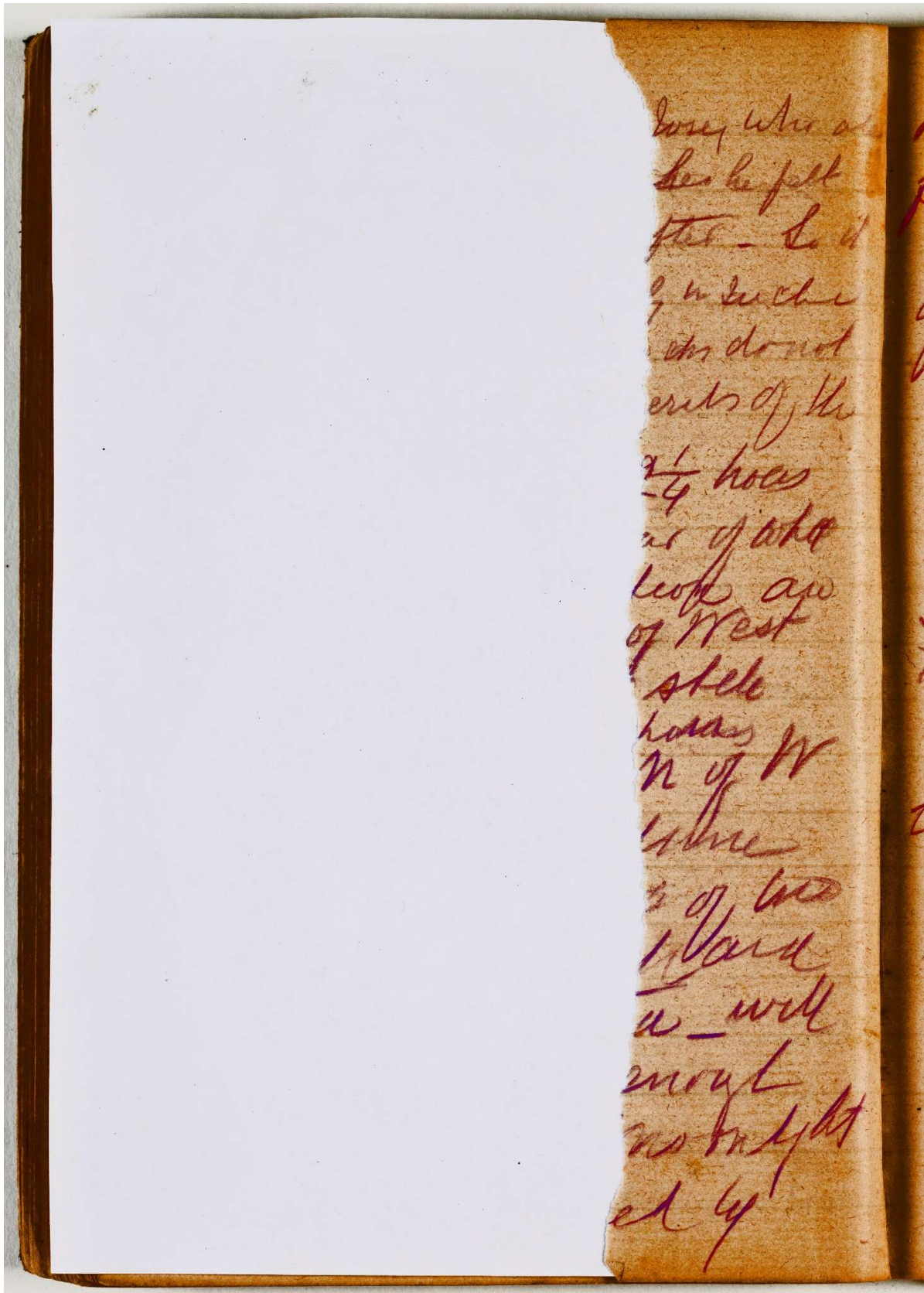
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Saturday, 30th October

Torn page



Torn page



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mosquitos. Find that some fellow has taken one of the three remaining pots of Essence of Meat so I hope the others [indecipherable] may settle back to make sure of some in case of sickness.

Sid's foot much swollen looks very bad & inflamed.

Own foot still bad but not so much pain.

Durack shot native companion yesterday.

Resumed keeping watches last night.

Let Sid have the Waltham watch & take his as it is slower & less liable to be [indecipherable] by rifle knocking against my pocket when resting across pommel of saddle.

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Horses not being hobbled. Went some distance last night so Durack & Josey had 2 1/2 hours after this. Country good, water in river grasses good but dried up no rain for months.

Got seeds of a shrub with fine large good green foliage being racemes of flowers seeds in 4 sided capsules. Also bud of bean & wild musk, & fig trees figs grow in cluster formed bunches & 2 stems, spreading fig large size good foliage.

Another tree with leaves of

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splendid green about 8 inches long & broad in proportion.

Unable to get seed.

Lots of flying foxes at night.

Sunday 31th October

Travelled from N of West 23 degrees NW 10 to 10.30 but stopped an hour for shooting ducks.

Kilfoyle & Sid secured 15.

Had ducks for breakfast native companion for dinner & tea into soup.

Old Tom tried to pump me yesterday as to route and time aspect to give to Kilfoyle and Durack.

He got no [indecipherable] any answer of any kind.

At 10.10 we arrived at Forrest Camp tree marked 137 July 12, 79.

Durack took great credit for himself for reaching it whereas anyone would not miss it if kept by the river following Forrest's track.

I spoke to Sid saying "you see what I told you respecting our being on the elbow was right".

What elbow said Durack, I said the elbow of the river and showed him what I meant on the map.

White said he thought we passed the elbow a mile back and did not see the bend.

I said we were still on the elbow but he would not have it but considered that we had passed the island, as he called it and that we were now ten miles from the Fitzroy.

In fact, the [indecipherable] on the elbow was

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five or six miles back at least speaking from memory but it was no use arguing with such a man who is top ignorant to understand or too narrow minded to receive anything that is done against his own opinion. It shows his way of reading a map lacks confidence in navigating.

I took the latitude last night, too late for Capella but took Jupiter [indecipherable] got 18 degrees 17' but that will be reduced by corrections and we have been travelling 23 degrees north of west for four or five miles so that it may not be so very much out.

Got what looks very like gold in the Margaret.

Very glad to see Forrest's tree marked (F137) and be seen to be able to get to Perth.

My foot still continues very bad.

Resumed journey at 4 travelled 2 1/4 hours abt. 8 miles, fast rate, river first north abt. 30 minutes then NW then W for 1 1/2 hours.

Row with Sid about doing work he thinking Durack thought I ought to help Old Tom for he said it was only within the last 2 or three days I had helped much whilst during the last two or three days I have brought fire wood etc.

He also complains of his food not being attended to.

Fine flat country but very dry as if no water within 9 months.

Old worn

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tracks some months old.

On Company ground hill to S. Prominence of Mt. Pierre & situation.

Prejudices.

River wide but with water mostly in water holes.

Gave Sid medicine and made mixture for foot.

Own foot still very bad. Supper duck 2/4 each.

Monday 1st November

Threw away books & other things to lighten load as want to push on faster.

D expects to reach Kings Sound in abt. fortnight.

I hope he may for sake of all.

Sid has evidently been worked upon by that old mischief maker Old Tom.

Travelled abt. 4 hours by river bank south side course fixed abt. 23 N of W.

I fancy Old Tom has made a mistake in his tactics though for the last few evenings I gathered wood for the fire I intend to do so no longer.

Also, the old fellow who is younger than I may do his own work.

For instance, he gets up early and potters about but [indecipherable] to do except [indecipherable] it is hard to [indecipherable] [indecipherable] real cooking for he makes and bakes the dampers

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We are all plucking ducks between which is the last lot, I plucked three and Sid four, Kilfoyle four, Josey three and the black boys some and Old Tom two.

Then Kilfoyle who missed the cleaning and Old Tom but he was helped in by the black boys who cooked [indecipherable] etc. for themselves.

Then the billy cans are filled with water which is fetched from the river by Old Tom and the boys or by the boys alone.

The way Old Tom has got [indecipherable] [indecipherable] others do it for him but this is not the usual and [indecipherable] task.

Then the four made the billies and Sid sees it to boil and when ready Kilfoyle makes it some of the time.

This is the routine at our meal and as far as Old Tom's work is concerned his whole of it might be done in a few minutes.

He washes up the billy [indecipherable] the soup and that is all the washing done.

Today he had nothing to do with the driving but rode on behind in state and only got two or three little branches for the fire.

When he does do any driving I have often observed that it is more noise than exertion and that by shouting out continually he makes others think he is working.

The rest of us daily labours may be somewhat more by saying he rolled up Sid's swag yesterday, washes his clothes and does it there or now.

Rolls up the tent and partly waits upon Sid.

This is a severe and trivial discussion and who can say it is hard work for a man who has all his life been used to hard work such as fencing etc.

Yet Sid is such a fool as to let this man have complete influence over him and thinks this is nothing but beneficial.

The old fellow runs down the character of everyone else but is [indecipherable] to the faces of those whom he back-bites.

This is what I heard talking to Sid yesterday.

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Durack and Kilfoyle saying Kilfoyle would live on ducks [indecipherable] rather than employ labour and that Durack was no better and that he would be damned sorry to be employed by such buggers.

Yet with two or three others he is absolutely civil.

Plenty of ducks on river today.

Good country nicely wooded just sufficient for shade or shelter, park like and not sufficiently timbered to interfere with growth of grass.

Camped at midday and saw some blacks fishing.

They seemed peaceable but Josey ran, got his rifle, went & shouted to them & fired in the air.

They then ran and six of them passed just before me.

One fellow carried off a nice lot of fish.

He had been watching me & the horses from a bank where he was lying on his belly.

But as I knew they were there & had my revolver ready there was not much danger.

Good water hole in the river for fish & fowl.

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The party can now all ride - the two black boys on one horse & Josey has one for himself.

We must have travelled somewhat at the rate of 3 miles an hour & should reach the Fitzroy this evening.

Sid fell into a water hole.

Tuesday 2nd November

Travelled 10 miles along course of river passing junction where one branch runs NW other SW.

Sid and Josey were driving and crossed the river going along the other arm.

I on the other hand went down by the SW branch for about three miles saw blacks and plenty of water in the holes then seeing no tracks I retraced my steps and found the crossing place and followed the other party.

Going about three or four miles I met them returning namely Jim, Sid and Old Tom, they said they had not seen Durack and Kilfoyle so they were going back.

I returned with them but in a mile they met two others and all went across country to the other arm.

This made us lose about 5 miles.

We camped by the side of the river.

Heard blacks about during the camping time, saw about thirty young and old, they were peaceful but confronting.

In the evening, we heard one black fellow shout to us but as we did not wish to encourage such visitors, we fired off a shot

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which drove them away and kept rather structured watch that night.

Good water poor feed.

Country all burnt up from want of water not a blade of green grass to be seen except by the river banks.

All the country around seems in the same state as though threatened by a drop of rain for a year or two.

Lost my prismatic [indecipherable], went back to look for it but could not find it.

Wednesday 3rd November

Left camp at twenty to 7.

After travelling three hours found that I had left the sextant behind.

It was no use to think of returning for it as I should be six hours behind the party so I have to submit to the loss.

it won't matter much since we shall not require latitude now we are following the course of the river and it was a frightful load to carry.

Camped about 10 o'clock near water where there were plenty of fish and birds, ducks of all kinds.

Yesterday they shot twenty-six ducks and one paddy melon.

Today they have shot several.

Travelled abt. 15 miles today in a W direction some hours sev.

Camped on river bank.

Mosquitos bad.

Country all bare burnt & dry from drought no doubt good after wet season.

Thursday 4th November

Left camp at 6.15 travelled till about 1/4 to 10 abt. 11 or 12 miles in West direction often sev.

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Country flat, inundated in wet season as was that passed over yesterday but now almost bare.

What grass there is dry as mummy.

No rain for one or two years.

Saw small blue flowers [see drawing opposite] like the Lobelia growing in midst of one plain, sorry did not get the seed it was quite a phenomenon must have been left by excrement of bird.

I shd. explain in regard to leaving of Sextant that I had placed it with my saddle at foot of a tree as I have always for some weeks past carried it slung at my back.

When after dark the blacks were near the camp and one fellow of them sung out, I ran & removed my saddle as it was in the dark & might be stolen but I did not see nor remember

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that the Sextant was there. In the morning as it did not happen to catch my eye along with the saddle I went off without it & had gone over 3 hours on the journey before remembering anything about it.

It was then too late.

We got about 2 1/4 ducks each, the most per day besides damper so that we did not do badly all things being considered.

I am in hopes that we shall be able to reach Sydney by Christmas Day.

Camped near river for mid-day camp.

Range of hills about four or five miles from us which would prove very useful to properties and land in times of flood.

Waste of ammunition today, the party except myself firing off about one hundred cartridges at a tree.

I thought it would be better to reserve them for a time.

Great talk among some of the party as to the range of hills near the river most inclined to the view that they are the **King George Ranges**, others that they are [indecipherable] range though these latter are to the north of the river.

My opinion is that they are nothing more or less than the Mt Campbell range.

Sid asked me this morning what I thought of the range but I answered I did not know as I had no idea of taking Old Tom into my confidence to go and repeat what I said to Durack and Kilfoyle.

These two can have my opinion if they ask for it.

They shall not get it through Sid or Old Tom or other parties.

Sid thinks we have only 150 miles to go but I am thinking he will find himself vastly mistaken.

So, it seems there are some differences for these bushmen even in running the river down.

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This day Sid Emanuel has insulted me for the second time his lying being that of a blaggard.

I can heartily congratulate his father in getting such a finishing tutor for his son as Old Tom finished largely abroad whereas Carter sticks to the youngster like a bear

The cause of the row was this, Sid had asked me in the morning what I thought of the range of hills before us.

Now if I had happened to have known I should not have thought fit to tell him this for the old rascal goes and tells everything he hears to Kilfoyle as if he had found it out or wormed it out of me.

But as it happened, I had not given any information of the range and had not formed any opinion so I answered truthfully that I did not know.

Upon this I heard Old Tom give the [indecipherable] of life.

About a couple of hours later I asked Sid what conclusion had been come to as to the range without any lying he said he was entitled to be told what he needed to know.

I said that much must depend upon my discretion.

He said he paid me and expected to be told.

There was a plentiful use of bloody and other less fine words. Since speaking on the matter, I have noticed a running river having got out the compass from the [indecipherable] the river seems judging from our course to run continuously west and the range must be King Georges Range.

In such case the country we are travelling over belongs to the Duke of Manchester and it is of the same character as most of the previous land during the last five or six days.

Old Tom said in camp that Durack and Kilfoyle said I ought to be made pay for leaving the sextant behind.

As they could easily have sent back for it and as I could not go back being crippled and my horse crippled, I think they should be made pay for it.

We travelled now about 15 or 16 miles today and camped by the river south side [indecipherable].

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Camped by the edge of a billabong or waterhole where there was plenty of ducks.

They shot two and I shot a curlew with my rifle so the three birds gave us dinner.

Our black visitors had been at the waterhole fresh down where they had managed to get a couple of good-sized turtles.

They had with them three wild duck's poor looking things.

After the bird dinners ours and theirs were concluded they came to our camp and entered into conversation as far as possible.

I had taken trouble to go near them however I believe both parties completely misunderstood each other. Sid Emanuel got a looking glass and showed some of the old fellows their faces.

One old fellow quickly looked behind it to see if anyone was there or not which seemed to amaze the others.

They talked a great deal about Margaret [?] which some of our fellows make out to be a ship.

In effect all kinds of things are made out of what they see.

Having well looked at the map I find that land to be inspected is just where river begins to run NW then a little to the E 125 E longitude.

The black fellows themselves must have followed us about nine miles.

Plenty of curlews, cockatoos and ducks about here.

Saw emu this morning and would have shot it but for the bad luck to have wedged a spare cartridge in my rifle which I pulled the trigger upon twice, but it was too late.

It was a cartridge given me two days before by Kilfoyle out of the bag.

[The following paragraph crossed through] Travelled in all abt. 16 miles along course of Fitzroy. Ducks & Paddy Melons for supper.

Camped at night by river bank south side. Could

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Friday 5th November

Started at 6 am and travelled till twenty past nine at rate of about 3 miles an hour.

We were accompanied during that time by five black fellows of good firm strength, middle aged, one old fellow.

We gave them a little damper and they followed us to a pool or billabong where there was plenty of water, mussels and ducks.

Durack shot a large flock but did not hit it.

He had second shot with like result he is very poor marksman.

He showed little temper to do about putting up a swag upon a horse, he is not the most amiable being in the world.

Our black friends who are in full dress attire that is they had a string holding a piece of gum twig or leaves in front, one had feather composition to the beard.

They seemed to take great interest in the black boys and we are much amused with the idea of the boys riding horses.

The water they called Wala.

They talked all the way but we could not make out the meaning.

I was longing to know could the black boys understand them.

They were tolerably good looking, powerful, clean, able to [indecipherable] and seemed in good condition only one the oldest being.

Mosquitos were not troublesome last night.

Our stock of ducks being exhausted we had only a half duck for supper and some quantity for breakfast this morning.

I hope we shall be able to get to the King Georges Sound in about 12 days.

My feet [indecipherable] are no [indecipherable] whereas I put on some powdered barks last night.

Sid Emanuel has been saying all along that the lotion and medicines we had made good and that his sores were drying up so today he got black fellows to look at them and try them by putting on [indecipherable].

He is certainly a very consistent and desirable sort of patient.

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I found quite quickly that I shall not make one [indecipherable] but show however last time a healthy temper outside for nothing but I will take care not to make any report or do any kind of work until arriving at the Sound as my pay ceases on that date.

I must try to get a little money for to publish an account of the expedition and make a musical [?]
[indecipherable] of it.

Country good but all burnt & dry from heat of sun & absence of rain.

River still going W a little North in fact about 23 degrees N of West.

Have advised Sid that their country begins at about here and that he should look out if it [indecipherable] necessary.

For my part it appears to me that all the country hereabout is the same on both sides of the river.

The river itself has water only in reaches in most places consists of bodies of sand.

Did about 15 or 16 miles today if we can go on at the same rate, we shall be at Kings Sound in another ten days barring accidents.

Saturday, 4th Novr.

Left camp about 6 o'clock and travelled about 4 hours so that we shall probably do about 16 miles today.

Durack seems to be in the very sulky mood with me.

The reason I cannot tell unless it is that I said that there would be a general calling to account as soon as we reach Sydney but I was speaking to Sid and referring to him and to Old Tom the mischief making old vagabond who ought to have been taught his distance in the first place and not [indecipherable] as [indecipherable] of the contents of private counsel of Sid's.

Today we passed about 9.30 marked tree T/84 so that we are making good progress [indecipherable] during the last week

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done over 15 miles a day. Some ducks shot this morning.

I fired at some native companions but missed the darned rifle not being up to much at least we will put it down to that though some people would be mean enough to blame the birds.

My feet are swollen very bad and I have little hope of curing them till we can get some different diet some vegetable food or acids.

Sid tried the distance on map from here to Kings Sound and makes it about 130 miles so we could have that done in about 10 days.

Saw some flowers growing in the burnt up country where there was no other living plant one blue with light stripes [See drawing opposite] under-piece, another white five pointed star [See drawing opposite] with fleshy leaves like rock plants the blue had fine grass like leaves, the third was a small yellow flower something like the blue infusion.

All continue in good health and the long drought has had the effect of ensuring sanitation, though I doubt if the country is ever [indecipherable] except for a month or two after the heavy summer rain when the ground is saturated and even then, its unhealthiest is only hypothetical.

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Camped near river at abt. W.

My mare Ebony in so low condition that the black boys and myself did not get into camp till about 1/2 hour after the others had arrived.

Asked Sid for the loan of his gun today but he said that Josey had it to go out on foot with Kilfoyle for tucker whichever went out with Kilfoyle must have the gun.

I am exceedingly sorry that I did not bring a gun of my own so as [not] to be dependent on anyone.

I could certainly have shot better than most of these fellows and could have provided not only myself but others also with a certain amount of tucker.

All country around here good but dry and burnt up by drought.

Creeks dry no water except in holes in river trees shrubs growing in bed of river some of which must be at least more than 12 months old.

Travelled in all abt. 16 miles [indecipherable].

Camped on river bank.

Mosquitos troublesome had to light fires.

Course that of river NW about 115 miles to do to Kings Sound.

Mosquitos were bad.

Sid seems to be in good fellowship with things but Old Tom who sticks to me all day long was [indecipherable] anyone has no particular liking of Old Tom's very select speech style and keep alone.

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Sunday Novr. 5

Left camp abt. 6 travelled abt. 4 hours going say 10 miles.

Camped by river, 7 or 8 black fellows came right up to camp without slightest fear, only laughed when rifle was fired.

From what I cd. make out they wanted to know if we were going on to the west at sunset.

I nodded, they seemed satisfied waved their hands and departed seemingly satisfied. I went down and had a wash of some clothes.

I saw about 18 natives old and young crossing the river.

Been out of tobacco since Thursday last and Durack has offered none though it is more than 12 days since he gave any but I hope he will not offer any as I can do without it.

I do not care to be under any kind of obligation.

Sid has left off taking medicine, fancies now it does him no good.

He is just like a child in many things and far too easily led to fail.

My mare seems to be getting used up but if she will carry me another 100 miles or so I shall be satisfied.

Travelled altogether this day about ... miles and camped by river.

Did about 20 miles today.

Overheard Durack and Kilfoyle saying to Sid [continuing at end of next page]

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Heard blacks talking last night.

Monday Novr. 6th

Left camp at six o'clock travelled till 10.30 did about 12 miles expect to do about six or 8 more before night but always now give horses a means of spell for three hours or so in middle of day.

Flies are very troublesome in this country.

Last night mosquitoes prevented sleep altogether as far as I was concerned and the heavy fall of dew made everything wet.

I am in hopes that we shall be at King Georges Sound before next Sunday if all goes well and we keep on at the same rate as we have been doing.

The packs are very light so that the horses which are in pretty good condition have been lightly loaded.

My mare is grand for in addition to my weight she has other things to carry that weigh about 56 pounds I should think.

The country today is rather better as regards grass there being much more of it in fact pretty good picking.

It does not seem to have been burnt off so much.

There was every appearance of rain this morning but the cloud passed over.

The other fellows except Old Tom, Josey and I are shooting ducks.

I do not think our provisions will fall short in fact though it might be noted in the diary it is much more comfortable to think we shall not starve.

Got some seeds of native musk also some nuts of that fine [see drawing opposite] shrub or tree of good foliage.

Sid seems very glum.

He takes no medicine now having come to the conclusion that it is blood that requires [indecipherable] when I told him so before and gave him no medicine, he thought he was neglected.

I was taking none myself.

Travelled altogether about fifteen or sixteen miles and camped by side of river.

Travelled beside grand range for last two hours.

[Following on from end of previous page] that I could not have done the river as they were doing it and advising him generally.

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Tuesday Novr. 7th

Left camp about 6.30 travelled for till 10 or three hours and if so at two miles per hour that is about 10 miles certainly not less.

We have not yet passed the grand range for it is still opposite to us.

It is rather a range of hills than of mountains and not such very high hills.

We passed Forrest's T 77 this morning about 8 oclock and I hope we shall be at our journey's end in another three or four days at farthest.

Country still good pretty fair lines of dried grass.

No signs of sheep or cattle yet.

River still consists mostly of sand with here and there a water hole.

Not seen so many ducks today.

Nor so many cockatoos, yesterday the ducks were in flocks of hundreds and cockatoos even more numerous.

Kilfoyle shot twelve ducks, Sid shot 10 and Durack two.

I tried two or three shots with rifle but the cursed mare will never bring to for ever so long and then the chance is usually lost.

I saw several pleasant and beautiful sights today namely the Bottle tree in flower and with spring foliage.

I plucked one flower but doubt if it will keep dry.

It is within four lines of being the full length of this page, is of a lovely white, a little dun with cream and the cream more perceptible by the outer and ringed margins of the leaves [See drawings opposite] with some petals reflexed at outer broad ed[ge] abt. 100 thread like white showing with another brownish yellow another

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[Crossed through - Wednesday, Novr. 8]

petal central & slightly 1/2 in. longer than stamens all show by petals being reflexed when fully open, has a very delicate & pleasant odour, like that of gossamer but peculiar.

Three sepals rolled back scrolled fashion, green (light on back and unsertated) showing to lighter, is velvety & white in one light & tinted with creamy green in another.

The flower central on stem four young leaves on same and three flower buds green & of this shape,

[See drawing opposite]

this being abt. size of smallest larger 4 times.

It would be a fine tree to cultivate in N.S. Wales if climate suits.

Leaves delicate green, palmate of leaflets, midrib lighter colour (yellowish green) than leaf & branches veins also lighter but less so

[See drawing opposite]

about 15 pairs of veins on each leaflet.

I am sorry that I have no better means of preserving such fine flowers.

Sid and Old Tom generally together still.

They ride together all day and no-one seems to wish to intrude.

I fancy that a good deal of the country this side of river is inundated in summer.

Many of Ord yellow flowers with red brown centre.

Number of paper bark [?] trees & seed palms close [indecipherable].

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Wednesday [crossed through - Thursday] Novr. 8th

Went abt. 20 miles yesterday & left camp today at abt. 6.30 & travelled till 10.30.

Camped at 10.40.

Where we camped sheep had been camped probably last night.

Saw several natives this morning abt. 8 o'clock, about 7 fine looking fellows came to speak to us, one had boomerang, 2 or 3 had swords or something of sort.

A native dog with them was in better condition than any hitherto seen with any of them & for a wonder was not afraid of white men.

It had probably seen them before by sheep being so near.

Travelled about 23 miles this morning.

Natives followed us from where we met them were set to work plucking ducks.

Ducks cockatoos not so plentiful.

Less water at present river mostly sand.

Where camped shingle.

Natives had dinner bones of duck's dampers soup & seemed to like it.

Caught 5 large fish (cat fish) & 4 sm[all].

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[Crossed through - Friday Novr. 10th]

Went on in afternoon making 14 miles abt. altogether & arrived at Station hut.

Riley O'Riley, Poulton, McDermott & had supper with them horse and damper.

They speak very badly of the district as being flooded all burnt up and so Forrest will have to leave the country through having given such untruthful description.

One fellow said he had given up two blocks between this and Beagle Bay.

All spoke alike to the thinking we are opposite camp of Forrest 74 about 4 miles from the river on ground belonging to Kimberley Pastoral Company or [indecipherable] & Co.

They are camped in Palm Plains.

They have had great losses in sheep and are now a sort of joint owners, four small proprietors for twelve months.

The country much burnt up. These fellows had permanent water in the shape of springs.

Thursday

Left Palm Plains about 6.30 and our next Station, Kimberley Pastoral Company's, managed by Mr. McLarty.

They have good food plenty of tucker.

Some black fellows of heads aspect hanging about two pot-bellied children with them.

About this time they are hunting up natives for pearl fishing.

We noted they are captured by means of threatening old men who by their threat bring up young men and this entails some to look painted as good joke to help in catching others.

[indecipherable] their health downing six [indecipherable] and more of water.

Good pearls caught said to be very profitable.

Some of the pearlers also engaged part of the time in digging wells, bringing provisions to stations near the Sound.

McLarty states they have got two landing places in the Sound, if so it will serve as the port and will be the township.

It is proposed to stay here for two or three days as McLarty is going

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[Crossed through - Saturday, Novr. 11th]

to Beagle Bay and some vessels are expected there with sheep.

We have passed about 7 miles from Forrest's tree marked 71 [indecipherable] (?) of [indecipherable] ground.

Had a good drink of vinegar for sake of health.

One of seven fellows at last station had been a chemist.

There had been many sheep.

McLarty has visited a good deal of the country but says it is not country that Victorian or New South Wales visitors would be inclined to judge favourably and requires judgement by Queenslanders.

My impressions I shall give hereafter.

All black fellows about here have many cuts horizontal on back and front, on breast and back, most have their nose perforated for pins, wear their hair knotted top-knot and in this fashion carry their portable property.

There are mostly [indecipherable] and not allowed to marry till they're forty.

About here they are the worst looking lot of blacks I have seen no spirit in them.

We shall not finish our journey till we reach Beagle Bay so I suppose this will make us a week later.

Sid Emanuel and [indecipherable].

His knowledge of game awful.

Friday, Novr. 10th

We have about 7 miles from river to the south.

At the Company's station Old Tom and Jim Josey both wished to go on.

The former because he is sick today the latter because he thinks by staying here a week we may lose a chance of getting off.

I do not suppose we shall stir until next Thursday and then it will take us three or four days to get to Beagle Bay.

A lot of [indecipherable] having killed [indecipherable] sheep of Patterson's intended [indecipherable] brought their own spares under pretty [indecipherable] deals having

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[This page crossed through.]

[Crossed through - Sunday Novr. 12th]

previously asked permission to do so we ordered [indecipherable] backsides kicked before they had a chance about 20 of them remained.

McLarty speaks well of the country is glad to meet with someone who believes in it in fact fellows here McLarty and Cornish, speak very opposite to Riley, McDermott and others.

It will take me several days to keep up this diary and make out my [indecipherable]. Sid talks about getting a black boy here.

Pearling seems to be very profitable at Kings Sound and it would be a good thing for Mr. Emanuel to go in for small farm and get blacks.

The pearling season is from September to April then you bind blacks as servants for 12 months when they are given a share so you can have them whenever you wish to, that is the way and so the law [?] is evaded.

The payment is merely nominal.

The blacks cost you about 2/- for every 22 you put by as profit for yourself so I have heard it said.

Slept out in the open-air last night as usual instead of in the shed as others did.

Josey also slept out.

Later in the night Old Tom came prowling about.

Josey and I had a conversation about him at the last camping place and Josey said he would not have believed he was such a treacherous old fellow who was at once so selfish and who acted as such a bad advisor to Sid, and did little.

He had overheard so many things said when it was thought that he was asleep that he had been obliged to come to the conclusion that Old Tom was a thoroughly abusive old rascal.

And he had such a way of doing or insinuating things such a crafty way.

I notice since we have come to this station that Kilfoyle thrusts himself forward a good deal but I do not think that will serve his purpose much hereafter.

He is so frightfully ignorant and was obviously stupid about things beyond his experience from panic.

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[Crossed through - Monday Novr. 13th]

Old Tom has just been to me to enquire how far it is to Beagle Bay as he intends to walk it, he could not stop here a week so we shall see if Josey goes with him as said.

McLarty has made out a list of native words used here and at Beagle Bay which would be of service to people coming here and which I shall tale back with me or at least a copy of them.

Had pickles with hot meat and damper and tea for breakfast.

I can feel good effects of the vinegar already that is as regards my food.

[The remainder of the page crossed through.]

Saturday

Still at the station waiting for arrival of vessel.

Nothing but rain and thunder storm.

Sunday

Bad all day having been vomiting most of the night.

I have omitted to state that Sid, Josey and one other were bad on Friday on which day as allowed had got flour out and other things ready to start for Beagle Bay as he said he would stay here no longer.

On that occasion I found that Durack's estimate of his character was very much the same as mine, namely a lousy lying cantankerous old fellow.

In fact Durack said they had opposed Old Tom's coming altogether but mainly just brought him so it had nothing to do with them and they had nothing to do with him.

Well, when the old fellow made up his mind to start for Beagle Bay despite remonstrances he took no measures for preparing dinner and advised that he had at Sid's solicitation given up the idea of going, he retired some distance and did not make his appearance till late in the day.

As therefore there was no one to cook I volunteered to do the work and set to work, prepared a plum pudding from fat, sugar

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[The first paragraph crossed through.]

Tuesday Novr. 14th

and raisins.

It was tolerably successful and it was all eaten.

Also boiled some meat so we got through dinner pretty well and I could have managed it all through much better than the dirty way in which the old loafer does the work.

Being so sick I took three doses of carbolic acid.

I was very weary all day and ate nothing.

I tried also a change of diet and change of a habit from activity to inactivity.

Black boy also ill gave him some carbolic acid.

Sid when bad asked for no medicine but got some chlorodyne from Cornish as he had great faith in it so I said nothing.

But later on, he reproached me that I had not given Old Tom medicine for sickness when he had a sick stomach.

I told him that I had only carbolic acid. And I had so often heard Old Tom speaking of the medicine as bloody stuff no good.

I did not intend to give him any.

He said Old Tom had never told him that.

No I replied but I heard him say so more than once.

I still notice that the old fellow is trying to make mischief, still keeps up a spirit of complying with Kilfoyle and stirs up Sid. Thunder storm at night.

Monday

Nothing of importance.

Recovered of sickness carbolic having cured me.

Durack and McLarty went to next station.

We are near Forrest's 73 and 71.

Cornish talks of fine flowers with beautiful scent belonging to what is near the cork [?] tree, here it is a white flower and very beautiful. Promises to get me some.

Tuesday

Durack and McLarty came back last night at dusk and gave all some work to do today.

They intended me to go out and measure some land

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[This page crossed through.]

Tuesday [crossed through - Wednesday] Novr. 14th

but thinking it might be a plan and that Durack had communicated the occasions of our quarrels to McLarty I kept out of the way and did not go.

I should have declined going even if asked as I thought and still think it was planned to try and catch me in some way only I can hardly fancy that McLarty would be so mean as to lend himself to such a scheme though Durack would be quite capable of concocting such.

At any rate I intend to do no work of the kind nor anything pertaining to it until I have gone to Sydney and had matters settled there between us one way or another. Mr. Adams, the Surveyor General NSW will be the best judge of my potency to conduct a party over the country through which we have gone and to him I shall refer on arriving at Sydney.

Gave McLarty remainder of bottle of carbolic acid.

Sid who took out some for himself [indecipherable] about half of what was left so McLarty had about 1/4. Foley and McDermott from their station was here today.

We are to be off tomorrow I believe to Beagle Bay. Durack wants to divide the horses, pack saddles, etc. and Sid came to me yesterday to hear what I had to say about it.

I said I considered the whole belonging to the company and that the horses should be left here and the pack saddles left or taken but not divided until arriving at Sydney when all the company could be [indecipherable].

I thought this was due to more mainly as premature of the whole affair.

So this morning Sid spoke to Durack told him he did not think it would be advisable to divide the horses and other things.

Then Durack whose little game I did not understand said the horses would have to be sold.

But I did not see the necessity for they would not have to be sold if they were divided whether they be sold because they are not divided.

Some little adage in this which has been connected between Kilfoyle and Durack and when cut and dried put before Sid.

I have succeeded in putting medicines and all things into two boxes instead of three as hitherto.

Boils rather bad today but not much so if it is high tide having regard

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Wednesday Novr. 15

[Crossed through - Thursday Novr. 16th]

[This page crossed through.]

I have promised Cornish to send him one of those indelible pencils and one box of leads and he will send me my flower seeds.

I have also promised to send him the paper of the account of our trip.

Further appearance today of thunder storm.

It seems that the summer rains have commenced for each evening about the same time we get thunder and then rain.

I find that the fine specimen of the bottle tree flower which I had pressed in this book had become mildew and I had to throw it away but have particulars about it elsewhere.

Kilfoyle busy in making hen coup, Old Tom and Josey in putting up iron bound shed,

Sid in doing nothing in particular and self in sorting seeds and arranging things.

Poulton at the other station at which we stopped was once partner with his father as homeopathic chemist in Melbourne but quarrelled with father and came away.

Thursday

Left K.P.A. [Kimberley Pastoral Company] in the afternoon about 3.30 and travelled 23 miles in north-westerly direction.

Camped about nine o'clock or little before near small water hole.

Bilious very bad from water or different meat or from inactivity of labour.

Friday

Left last camp at about six party consisting of nine white men and two black boys.

McLarty, Pettit and Cornish of the Murray River Company made up the number.

Travelled until mid-day adding about 22 miles.

Friday

Left camp in morning travelled abt. 23 miles, then in afternoon 15 do. & no water so at abt. 11.00 travelled till 4 in 4 morning 15 miles arrived at [indecipherable] & found was

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[Crossed through - Friday] Saturday, Novr. 17th

Travelled with McLarty Cornish and Pettit abt. 15 miles. Horse knocked up had to walk 2 or 3 miles. Roving also done up & two others. Came to fine water hole described by Forest [Forrest] as 50 Chain long & 2 wide & permanent. Horse on starting in morning drank several gallons water been very thirsty in evening. Black fellows camped with us. No mosquitos or very few.

Sunday.

Went on abt. 5 miles & came to sheep camp 5 fellows, 3 here & 2 at Beagle Bay. Remained here some hours, 8 black fellows loafing abt., threw spears & boomerangs for amusement. Water lilies mauve colored got seed capsule & tubers. Got native companion shot by Durack.

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[Crossed through - Saturday] Nov. 18th

Passed natural springs abt. 7 ft. in diameter above surface of ground by surrounded 2 or 3 feet with palms & cajeput trees around, fine & permanent water, water 4 or 5 ft. deep in some cases 9 feet. Natives swim

from Lacedped [Lacepede] Isle 20 miles in 24 hours carried up & down by tides, several taken by sharks, sleep on water sometimes. Natives abt. here upper front teeth 2 or 3 extracted not lower also marked with [indecipherable] across breast & tribal mostly on back shoulder-blade, more of older ones rather spongy texture fond of finery, paint, scarf across breast & back, feathers. Spoke to McLarty about inspecting country for anyone. Going I believe an hour to here till ship comes.

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[This page crossed through.]

Sunday, Novr. 19th

Sent messenger to Beagle Bay respecting ship coming to send us word. Kelly of Lacepede Islands wrote reply. Washed clothes &c.

Monday Novr. 20

Had a note from Kelly (said to be blunt fellow not very particular as truth needs checking) saying vessel coming into Bay supposed to be Mary Smith with sheep for this camp. Several of party went to Beagle Bay and stayed a day there. The vessel proved to be the Dana a pearling cutter of Murry Co. which had brought 12 cows and bull for Mr. Cornish. He goes with her tomorrow back to Kings Sound. This has been a great disappointment to all of us. Party came back from Bay a little after 12 that is time they arrived at camp. During the day Legs a tall black fellow very slight and somewhat of chief among them brought in Sid's revolver which he had left behind at another camp. I gave him two plugs of tobacco and got them to give him some damper to eat. There were 13 black fellows hanging about camp all day or rather 10 as three carried things to Beagle Bay.

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Monday, Novr. 20th. contn.

They had nothing or rather only one or two days rations. Others waited for tucker. They bring in spears and boomerangs and woomerahs or throwing sticks with them into camp which ought not to be allowed or before long we shall hear of mischief being done by them. As they told at Patersons Station that at which Cornish is partner where they intended to spear whites about 2 years ago after having speared a shepherd. It was through Cornish suspecting their movements and going for his rifle that they were dissuaded and ran. They were bringing their fight and spears into camp between their toes dragging them along as they came and advancing little by little on the party. Mr. Pettit has a beautiful spear head of crystal as clear as any fine glass. I saw a spear in camp today topped with glass nicely cut into shape. All the natives here seem to have a great respect for Legs and would stand around him. He is the only native in this district that is allowed to go among other tribes on the Meda, Fitzroy & other districts and seems to be a privileged person going and coming as he likes. He has been a great service to the whites and on one occasion prevented bloodshed by speaking to a lot of natives who were preparing to attack a few whites by telling them to stop it as they would surely get the worst of it. His wife was taken away by another black fellow with whom he had several fights and at last succeeded in killing. He is very intelligent and I got the translation of several words from him by Mr. McLarty's assistance. One of the fellows belonging to this camp in Kingaroy cutting off hind quarters for the dogs after which the natives had the rest and roasted it and shared it among them. At night they are supplied with

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Tuesday Novr. 21

a portion of flour which they bagged in the spirit of weighing and divided among themselves.

They divided everything they got in this way and I noticed Legs got a good share.

He remained at the camp all night.

Three of the fellows living about here have been prowling but can speak no English.

Durack and Kilfoyle have not much to say to Sid and myself and we are almost two distinct parties.

Old Tom is still treacherous, that is he got all the ideas or information he could out of Sid and carries it to Kilfoyle although he is much more civil to him actually obliging sometimes.

I suppose this is the consequence of Sid telling him as I told him that our day was now coming and that strangers did not take so much to Kilfoyle and Durack and they were not such important persons as they think.

Cornish and Pettit said they supposed we had been favoured with plenty of talk about bullock driving on our journey as this seemed to be all these fellows could talk about.

Kilfoyle [indecipherable] in giving people advice when they know a great deal more about the matter than he.

For instance, gave advice to McLarty as to how he should make [indecipherable] etc.

He is very officious and meddling but then he knows no better.

I wanted to let the mare go which had been tied up all day and hobbled but he said it would be mistaken kindness as she would be off, yet in about an hour he let her go himself.

We get flour, sugar and pork and the fellows here think I do not know what arrangement has been made with them.

Sid sold his Winchester rifle to McLarty for nine pounds ten [shillings] the price Kilfoyle said was given for it and the money will pay our expenses to Perth

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[Crossed through - Wednesday Novr. 22]

when we must telegraph for more to take us home.

It must not be forgotten that I have Sid's watch and instruments [?] that which Mr. Emanuel supplied him. McLarty in answer to a proposal from him as to inspecting country if any persons in Sydney or elsewhere should want it done said he would willingly do it but the expense would depend on the distance.

He would have to take three or four men and six horses to go any distance and I could calculate the money that would have to be paid for this great length of journey and time taken with a little more for the latter but that I might depend on an accurate report of country and thorough inspection of it.

Horses die quickly about Beagle Bay district.

It is thought that they eat some poisonous plant then they go to drink and often fall dead while drinking or immediately afterwards.

The sheep seem to get on pretty well but this party lost fifty percent through [indecipherable] them so badly and from taking in so much salt water.

Large number of paper bark trees many being cajeput trees, also palms &c not much grass numerous springs with elevated banks perpetual water and which seems to be very good.

This party have had some sheep drowned in some of the springs.

They seem to take things pretty easily beside when they should be making yards or minding the sheep though they seem to be good young fellows enough.

Pettit is going back to the Sound to go to Cossack in the Dana.

Re Legs, Mr McLarty met him travelling one time from the Fitzroy and asked where he was going and was told that Legs had heard that a woman had been put up a tree

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[Crossed through - Thursday Novr. 24th]

from a mud barrel and that he Legs was going to crack her thigh bones to get the marrow to eat.

This evening some brought in repulsive looking lizards which they roasted.

When the party returned from the Bay we heard that the Mary Smith had met with an accident and had to be repaired which would delay her a week or two so she will not be here till the end of the month even, so then this is unfortunate for us.

McLarty suggested that the Dana should call round here instead of waiting three weeks in the Sound and that she should take us to Cossack and she could bring back some things for him and for Cornish and would be more useful employed than in doing nothing at the Sound but waiting for her [indecipherable].

I have been told that the Western Australian Government have made Paterson and Cornish a grant of 100,000 acres of land each to be taken up where they please and both rent free for twelve years in consideration of their having been the first to open up this part of the country, pioneer settlers as it were.

I think they deserve it.

They have been here about 2 years, McLarty about one year.

Legs was for some time at the Lacepede Islands serving as the Government Caretaker of the Islands because he had been mixed up in some row with other natives and it was necessary to have time in which to allow the affair to blow over.

We had an exhibition yesterday that I think I have previously sighted of boomerang throwing and spear throwing.

So, the only two ferns I have seen since I landed at Cambridge Gulf one again a climbing fern if it be a fern at all.

Yellow number for butter cup at Maclarty.

Sandalwood

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[Crossed through - Friday Novr. 25]

for the bowel complaint through inactivity.

It disappeared when we resumed our journey from McLarty and I was not troubled for 100 miles but in doing nothing it is coming on again.

Am in a sweat by day and by night a sort of a cold clammy sweat which is not agreeable.

This part of the country has had very little rain.

Lake Louisa which Forrest called a lake sixteen feet deep is now dry land no drop or sign of water.

Fitzroy River where we crossed it had no water and I believe has none anywhere.

Sid wants to know when is the best time to speak about the black boys, I say when he gets to Sydney for Durack's paying their passage, there will not, I think make any difference as real ownership he can only claim to be refunded his expenses in the matter.

Heavy dews fall at night sufficient to wet the blankets through.

Marked Legs' pipe with this pencil and it seemed to give him great pleasure he was very proud of the ornamentation.

Boab trees in some parts of this district.

Anything taken out of bags from pack saddles as Kilfoyle says they will have to go in the hold of ship.

Have to dodge about here to get out of scene.

Felt a few mosquitoes last night but nothing to speak of whereas I believe they are frightful at Beagle Bay both for horses and men.

Country unhealthy for horses at Beagle Bay here and for some few miles onward but not at McLartys where they seem to do exceedingly well.

Legs belongs he says to Hamlet, that is, to Hamlet Cornish. McLarty has best memory of any man I have ever met especially for literary [indecipherable] seems to have Chambers Encyclopedia by heart.

Pettit has country on the Meda.

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[Crossed through - Saturday Novr. 26] Wednesday 22nd Novr.

Yesterday Will Green [?] one of the fellows minding sheep here was using some rough play to the black fellows to some of the old ones, another old fellow his brother picked up a boomerang and made as though to throw it.

Sid took it away from him, kicked his backside and sent them all out of camp.

Yesterday also Messrs Pettit, Cornish and McLarty left us to return to their stations.

Mr. Cornish went in the Dana which had brought 12 cows and one bull for him and not for McLarty as was reported.

No meat for dinner today only damper and tea.

Old Tom still remains rather more civil but is very treacherous and promised McLarty to write to the papers for him before leaving.

Jim Josey went off yesterday to the Bay in order to get shells on the beach.

I fancy he expects to get some pearl shells or even pearls themselves besides which there is a cask of dried apples there and Jim is a glutton, not to mince words in the matter.

On board the Vortigen he sometimes made me ashamed that he was a member of the party.

I do not know what he will do if he got on board the mail boat.

Have today erected a bower of branches to keep the sun off by day and the dew at night.

It is I find much more comfortable than sitting in the shade of a tree.

Bowel loose again sort of due to inactivity and leisure through inactivity of body.

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[Crossed through - Sunday Novr. 27th]

Had three plugs of tobacco from Sid.

He spoke about ten shillings he advanced me in Port Darwin but I told him the Company would have to pay that as it was part of my travelling expenses, it was part of hotel bill for board.

I also paid fifteen shillings out of my own pocket but that I said nothing about.

Pettit spoke to me before leaving about the character of the country that a great deal of it is bad.

He has seen hundreds of miles between the Fitzroy and Meda with not a blade of grass on it.

Nevertheless he intends to stock some land on the Meda because he says he can get it cheaper in this place than anywhere else.

He will take up twice as much as he wants so he will be able to get sufficient good land out of the lot.

Sid says Durack and Kilfoyle are sweet with him now.

I told him yes, because they have no-one else to talk to.

Everyone about the Kimberley seems to think that Forrest mis-described the country partly through ignorance of what good country is and partly through the season in which he travelled to be a fine one not much wet and he got near the course of the rivers where the best water and land is situated.

It is now certain that we shall not be home for some time after Christmas not till sometime in January I am afraid.

No good flowers or seeds about here.

Mr. McLarty took away the horses to be kept till called for with order from Emanuel, Durack or Kilfoyle.

The pack saddles have been divided.

I have high information that Michael Durack intends to have as little to do with this country as possible and that much of his praise of it is only with the intention to blind others off, not him, so as to give him an opportunity of getting rid of the land he now holds.

If this is his game I hope he will not succeed.

My agreement with the company is to get paid only when we arrive at Kings Sound a most unfair

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[Crossed through - Monday Novr. 28]

arrangement as it takes from me all my time in going back without paying for it whereas I can earn nothing more during that time.

I wonder what they will think if I refuse to make out any report or send through report of mentions to the papers.

They cannot push me to give any report as I did not agree to do so.

But I shall serve them as they intend to serve me.

As we shall not reach Kings Sound at all my pay will at least have to go on till we go on board ship at Beagle Bay and if I do not get pay for that time, in fact till I have returned, I shall not report.

Have today written out some paragraphs for Perth and Fremantle papers but do not know whether I shall use it or not.

Shall now finish with this book except to state when the ship arrives and we leave by her.

23rd Thursday.

None of the usual natives present today but a fresh lot of 11 in number have come in from the east painted with ochre strong built looking fellows.

Last thing Old Tom brought in a small black boy from a camp about 1/2 mile distant.

There were only two boys in the camp and the older one ran off, the little fellow about 3 or 4 a little pot bellied fellow remained behind and came off readily with the strangers.

When about leaving camp an old black fellow appeared who with English impressed upon Tom the necessity of bringing his boy back in the evening.

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[This page crossed through.]

He was brought to the camp and caused some amusement.

Ate an enormous quantity for one so young of damper and meat and smoked pipe like an old man.

Also chewed tobacco with great relish.

Was rather good looking too.

Old Tom told us that he had had an invitation to go and see a corroboree in the evening when the gins would be there.

So, we all started by moonlight to witness the performance.

On getting to the camp found fires nearly out and only four or five old fellows there, one of whom owned the boy we brought back.

Sid asked where their women were upon which they looked ve uneasy and suspicious and we were evidently unwelcome visitors.

Here I tasted one or two of their little yams which I found to be very sweet and palatable they were eating them for supper.

We soon took our

[Crossed through - Wednesday, Novr. 30]

departure, the whole affair being silly and our going was evidently a relief to our black friends.

They had a few spears in camp attached with chipped glass heads.

Today Sid saw a large snake about five feet long in the camp but it escaped.

We have been expecting fish to be brought in by the other black fellows.

They have not made their appearance yet though expected yesterday.

This morning Durack was chatty and pleasant, after breakfast he was sullen and moody.

He is a very suspicious sort of man and as nothing has been said or done by him ever, I have not spoken to anyone.

Meantime it is hard to deal with such men so fitfull and moody.

Some talk yesterday of getting a black boy for Sid from this locality but he does not seem to care for the idea.

The fellows who have sheep here have to take them to the Meda when all have arrived.

The flour they have makes excellent bread but seems as if current flour we mixed with it it is

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Thursday, [Crossed through - Decr.] 23rd Novr.

Friday Decr. 2

May this thy Christmas happy be [**Crossed through** - pleasant & useful as Boab tree] Thy joys numerous those nuts of Boab tree numer

Bright thy leaf, pure white thy flower, Travellers joy, odorous bower, Sweet the nut though plain the shell Goodness within each part doth dwell.

[Crossed through - welcome]

Gladsome sight in [crossed through - parching plain] torrid clime Giving food from burning soil [Crossed through - Friend to whom [thee] this card is sent Emblem fit of joy & peace]

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Saturday Decr. 3

Sunday Decr. 4

More numerous the fruit of Boab tree May [crossed through - thy] Christmas joys [crossed through - be] attend on thee [crossed through - Sweeter the odor of its pure bloom] As its opening buds give promise of food May thy new years

Sweet the nut though plain the shell

[crossed through - Queer the stem]

Gladsome sight in torrid clime Creating food from burning [crossed through - soil] sand [crossed through -
God grant] When we rest seek in weary times God grant

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Monday, Decr. 5th

Tuesday, Decr. 6th

[See drawing opposite]

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Wednesday, Decr. 7th

[See drawing opposite] Centre & one petal at back of Baobab.

Wednesday, Dec. 8th

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Friday Decr. 9th

Saturday Decr. 10th

Friend may thy life be sweet as this [Crossed through - sweet as joy of Thy laden] Shedding around an
odour of bliss Thy toil be ever productive of pleasure

The fruit that gainest be heaped above measure.

[Crossed through - Heat of thy labour] Heat of some day may hardly be borne But after night cometh the
morn [Crossed through - Though] Sorrow at times doth visit the heart

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Sunday Decr. 11th

Monday Decr. 12th

Friend may thy life be sweet as these Seeds around.

May youth time of blossom be bright Greenness of vigor attend they Fruit

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Tuesday Decr. 13th

Wednesday Decr. 14

coonjuree = one coojarra = two cokinjoey = sheep yowarda = horse yell = dog woneen = emu fri or kni or knigh = I or me co = yes (B.B.) libe = good or like cahjerry = yes (Fitzroy) meta = no beeliga = close or near whyah = frightened wahlee = fish minnewaw = Fitzroy roora = river kahylhree (kahyllree) far, distant maanyan = humpy

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Thursday Decr. 15

Friday Decr. 16th

pulpee or pulpy - to like or be found walki - B.N. to walk injee = to walk jewey = you yan (Yan) - there noolah - there (B.B.) coombarra - stone or hill peer - a lie jewey - pen wawlah = water (wala - over by river) marriah - full or enough katejo or culya - enough or that will do nimbel - foot tracks naaminah - mother yantberry - ship pinnand - sandy land no clay, country without water warroo – quick

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Saturday Decr. 17th

Sunday Decr. 18

moona-moona - near or close moncherry B.B. - [crossed through - near or close] quick valaljee - before wanjiberry - understand neela (Fitz) - understand caramick - now or presently minnywarra - bye bye younga - you or yours unca (unka) - a hat nacheroo - see mamma badjak - very cross or angry werrigo werrigo - sick boorah - native country bownook - come cullum B.B. – come

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Monday Decr. 19th

[See drawing of flower opposite]

Tuesday Decr. 20

Young digitate leaf of Baobob tree.

[See drawings opposite]

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Wednesday, Decr. 21

Thursday, Decr. 22

[See drawing opposite of "water lily"]

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[Crossed through - 1st Day]

Friday, Decr. 23

Mauve Water lillie 24 petals 12 [indecipherable] in inner row & 12 larger [indecipherable] with these in outer 4 sepals green [indecipherable] [indecipherable] mauve

Saturday Decr. 24th

inside pistel little flattish bottom in centre with beady surround & numerous stamens bright yellow like arms of anemone surround shorter ones recurved in centre & getting longer & longer to margin

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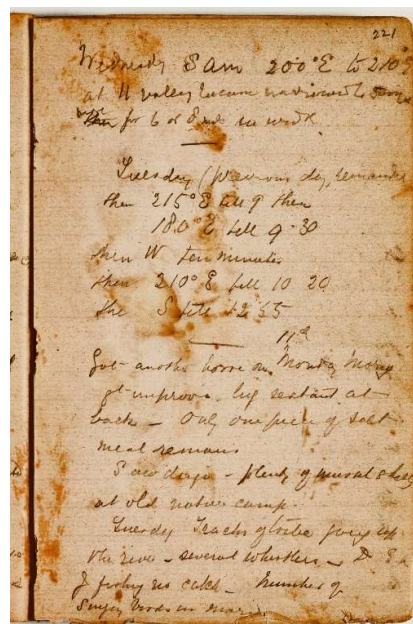
On 8th Septr.

divided the tobacco 12 plugs. Rat holes dangerous to horse feet.

In level or flat parts of country numerous from 2 to 5 miles wide from 2 miles to 10 - our side north west bank of river vary in width.

Monday & Tuesday. Grassy flats on in wet season. Stony patches. Land seen on Tuesday mostly inundated. White butterfly tipped & edged with black. Striped & spotted small fish. Orange dragon flies instead of scarlet & beautiful doves, and very pretty small birds.

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Wednesday

8 a.m. 220 degrees E to 210 degrees E at 11 valley became narrowed to 300 yds more for 6 or 8 miles in width.

Tuesday (previous day remained then 215 degrees E till 9 then 180 degrees E till 9.30 then W ten minutes then 210 degrees E till 10.20 then S till 12.55

Got another horse on 11th Monday morning gt improv't. big sextant at back. Only one piece of salt meat remains.

Saw dingo - plenty of mussel shells at old native camp.

Tuesday. Tracks of tribe going up the river, several whistlers. D, E, J fishing no catch. Numbers of singing birds in [indecipherble].

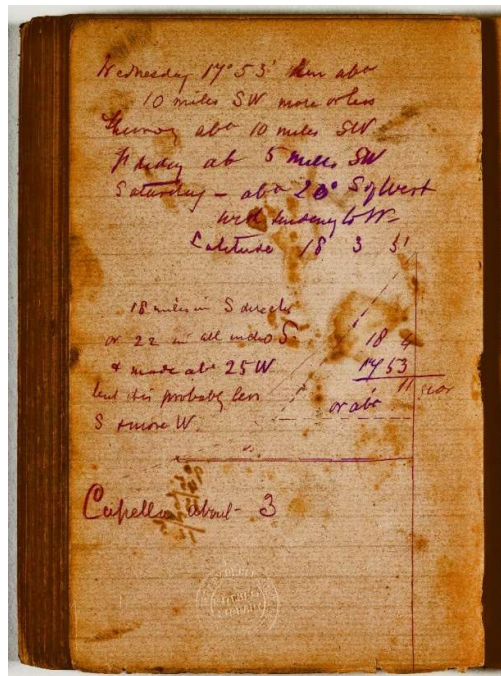
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90 45 135 20 115

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Wednesday, 17 degrees 53' then abt. 10 miles SW mor or less.

Thursday abt. 20 miles SW

Friday, abt. 5 miles SW

Saturday - abt. 20 degrees S of West with tendency to W. Latitude 18 3 31

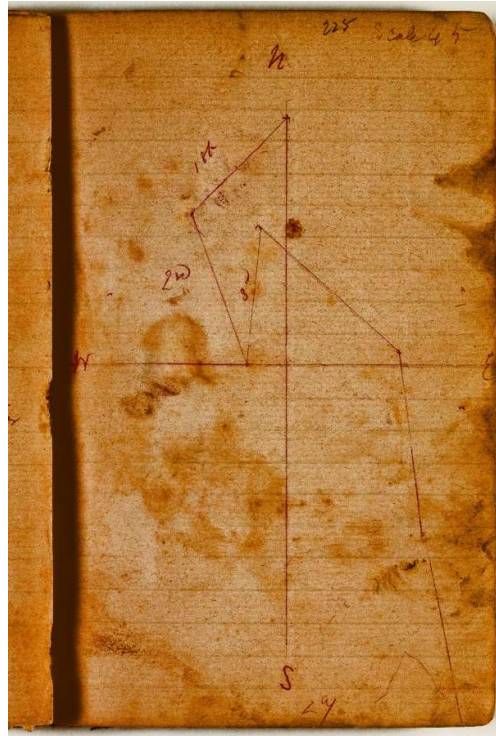
18 miles in S direction or 22 in all incl. S & made abt. 25 W but this probably less S & more W.

[See opposite for drawing of triangle with numbers - 184, 1753, 11 [indecipherable] or abt.]

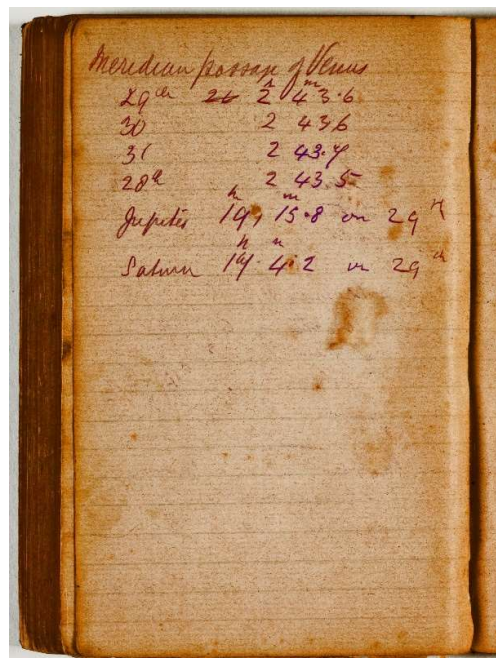
Capella about 3

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[See opposite for drawing.]



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Meridian passage of Venus

29th - 2n 4m 3 6 30 - 2 4 3 6 31 - 2 4 3 7 28th - 2 4 3 5

Jupiter 19n, 15.8m on 29th

Saturn - 17n, 4.2m on 29th

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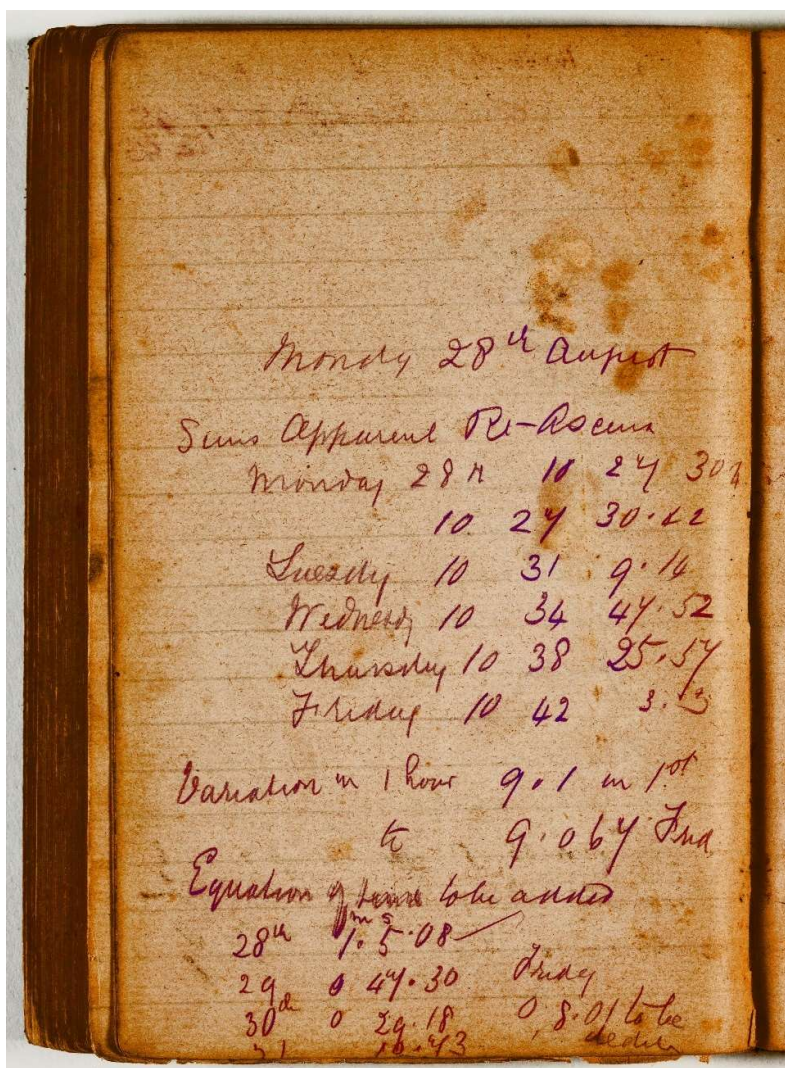
Lunar Distance	Midnight
28 th Antares W 89	23 45
a Aquila W	42 38 42
a Arietis E	58 33 25
Saturn E	79 12 17
Aldebaran E	91 28 50
29 th a Aquila W	55 17 59
a Arietis E	43 34 22
Saturn E	63 58 25
Aldebaran E	76 15 47
Jupiter E	95 5 13
Moons Meridian passage	
at Midnight on 28 th	
on 29 th at 0 ^m 27 ^m 4 ^s	
30	1 22 4
31	2 17 4

Lunar Distance - Midnight

28th Antares W 89 23 45 a Aquilx W 42 38 4 A Arietis E 58 33 25 Saturn E 79 12 17

29th A Aquilx W 55 27 59 a Arietis E 43 34 22 Saturn E 63 58 25 Aldebaran E 76 15 47 Jupiter E 95 5 13

Moons Meridian passage at Midnight on 28th on 29th at On 27m 4 30 at 1 22 4 31 at 2 17 4



Monday 28th August

Sun's apparent Rt. Ascent

Monday 28th - 10 27 30 20 27 30.42

Tuesday 10 31 9.14

Wednesday 10 34 47.52

Thursday 10 38 25.57

10 38 25.57

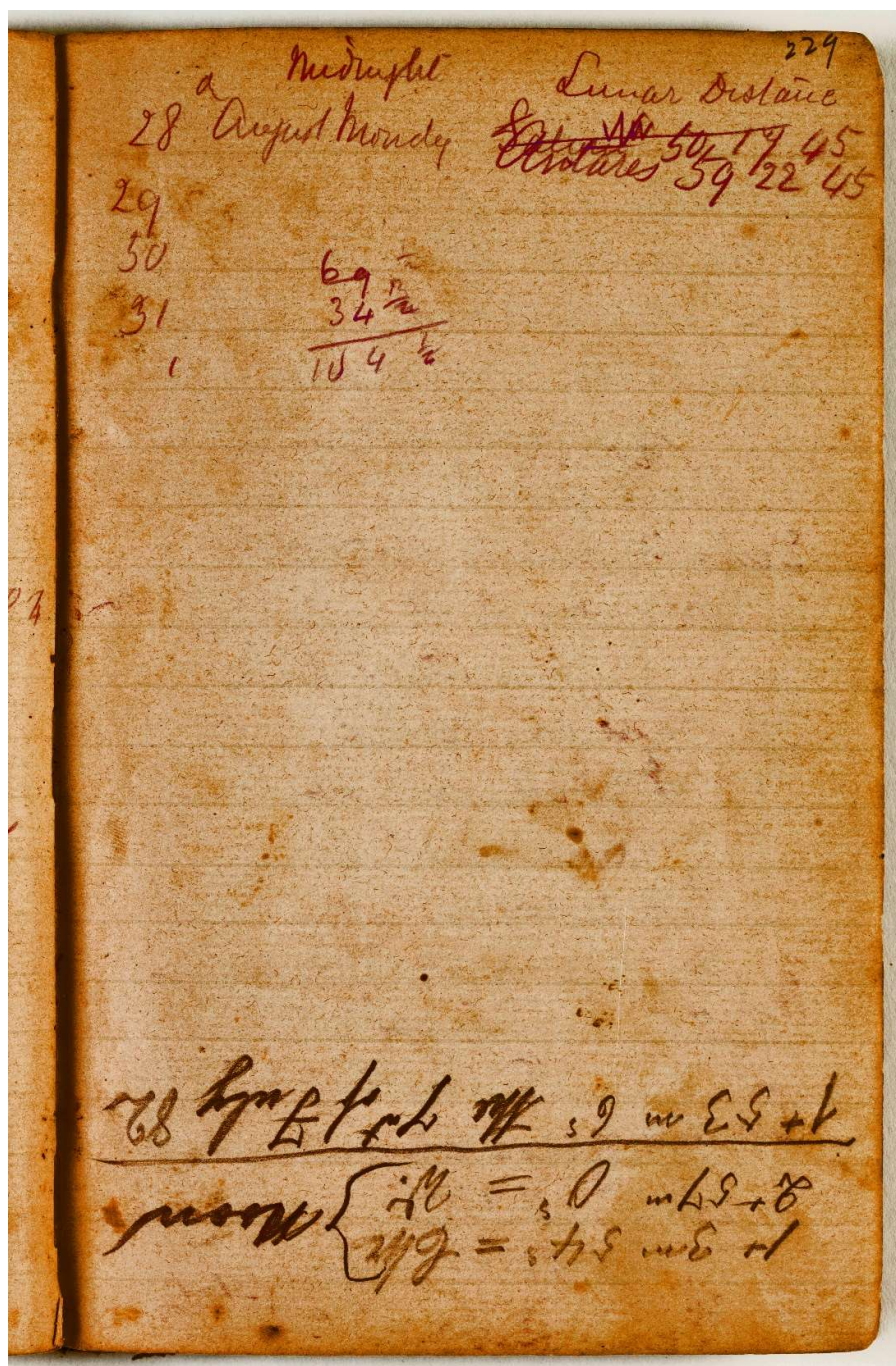
Friday 10 42 3.3

Variation in 1 hour 9.1 in 1st to 9.067 Frid.

Equation of time to be added

28th - 1m 5s.08 29th 0 47.30 30th 0 29.18 31 10.73

Friday - 0 8.01 to be deducted



Midnight Lunar Distance

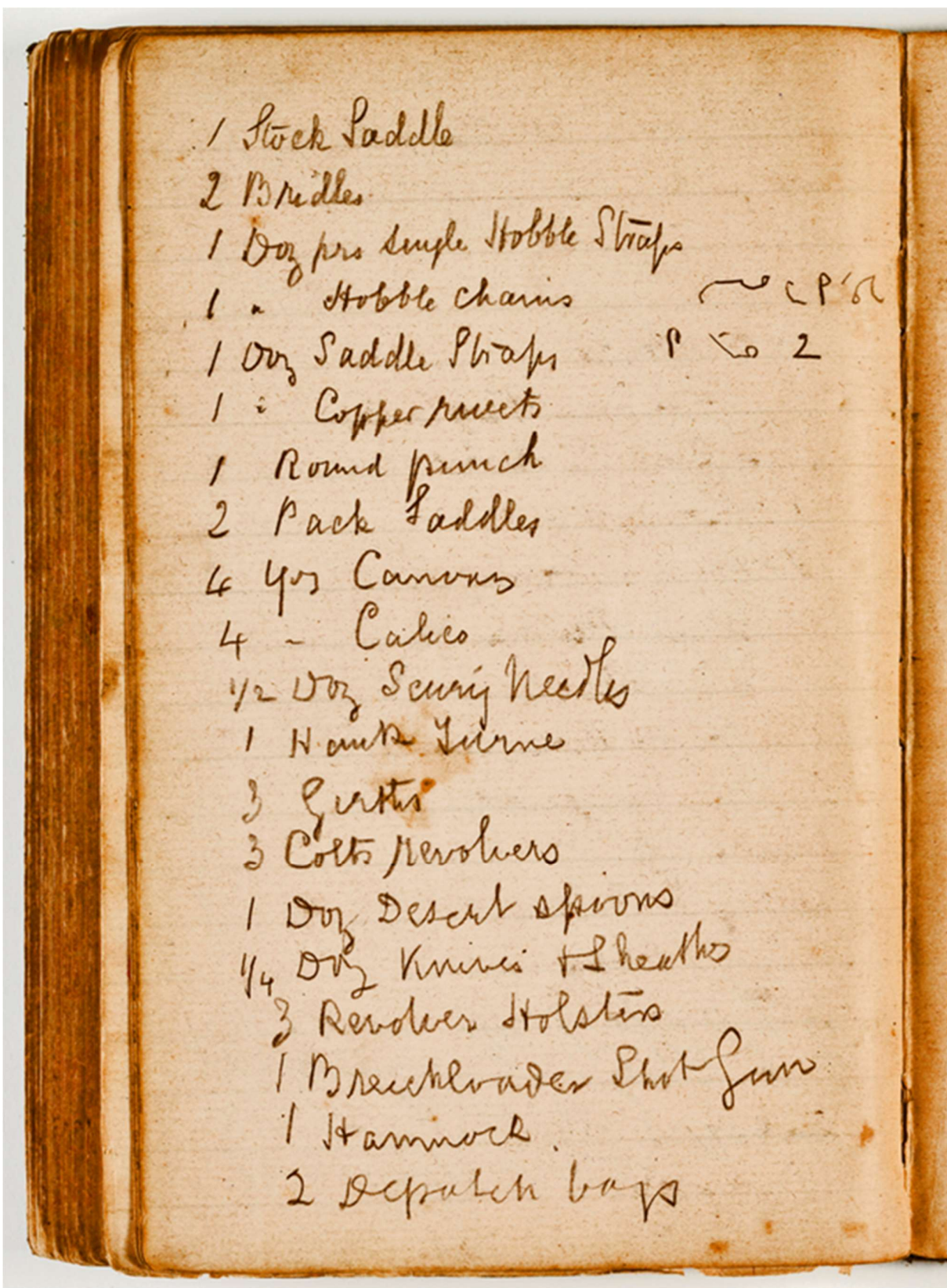
28th August, Monday, Antares 59 22 45

29 30 31 1

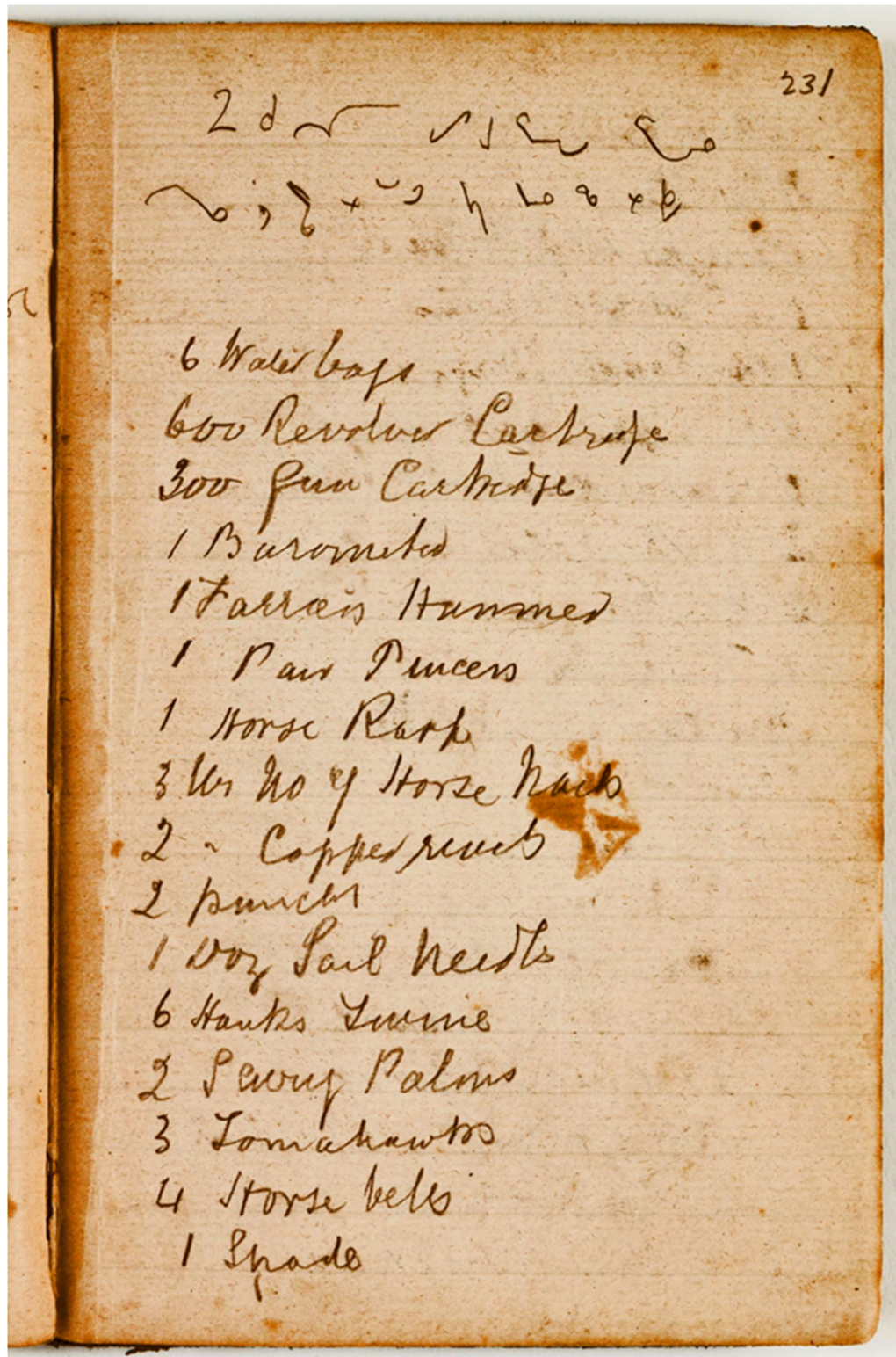
69 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ 104 $\frac{1}{4}$

1+ 3m 54s = C $\frac{1}{2}$) noon 2+ 57 m Os = W)

1+ 53m 6s the 7th of July 82

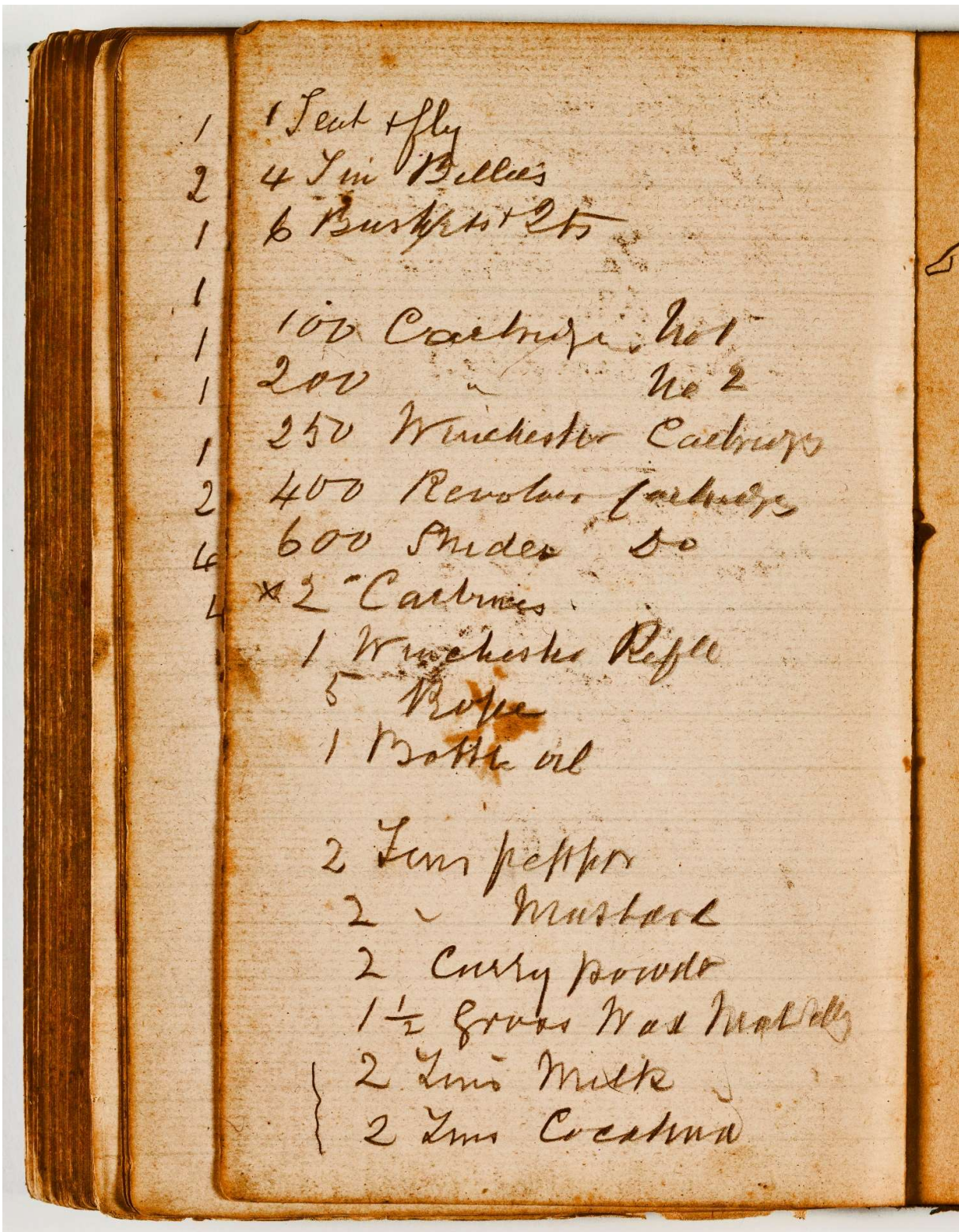


1 Stock Saddle 2 Bridles 1 Doz prs. single Hobbles Straps 1 Doz Hobbles Chains - leggings for Sid and self 1 Doz Saddle Straps - saddle packs 2 1 Doz Copper rivets 1 Round punch 2 Pack Saddles 4 yds Canvas 4 yds Calico 1/2 Doz Sewing Needles 1 Hank Twine 3 Girths 3 Colts revolvers 1 Doz Desert spoons 1/4 Doz Knives & Sheaths 3 Revolvers Holsters 1 Breechloader Shot Gun 1 Hammock 2 Despatch bags



2 tins milk, one tin blacking, blankets maps, boots. [indecipherable] paper books spirits, etc.

6 Water bags 600 Revolver Cartridges 300 gun Cartridges 1 Barometer 1 Farriers Hammer 1 Pair Pincers 1 Horse Rasp 3 lbs No. 7 Horse Nails 2 lbs Copper rivets 2 punches 1 Doz Sail Needles 6 Hanks Twine 2 Sewing Palms 3 Tomahawks 4 Horse bells 1 Spade



1 Tent & fly 4 Tin Billies 6 Bush [indecipherable] & Qts.

100 Cartridges No. 1 200 Cartridges No. 2 250 Winchester Cartridges 400 Revolver Cartridges 600 Snider do. 2 Carbines 1 Winchester Rifle 5 Ropes 1 Bottle oil

2 Tins pepper 2 Tins Mustard 2 Curry powder 1 1/2 Gross Wax Matches 2 Tins Milk 2 Tins Cocatina

233

1 Doz Extr Meat
 1 Doz Biscuits
 1 Case Preserved Meats
 2 lbs Tin Tag Tobacco
 2 Sides Bacon
 1/2 Doz Sweet oil
 Bars Soap

1 Cask Beef
 5 bags Flour 700 lbs
 Fishing Lines & Hooks
 Sextant Compasses Thermometer
 a - e To

93 15 4 1/4

1 Doz Extr. Meat 1 Doz Biscuits 1 Case Preserved Meats 2 lbs Tin Tag Tobacco 2 Sides Bacon 1/2 Doz Sweet Oil Bars Soap

1 Cask Beef 5 bags Flour 700 lbs Fishing Lines & Hooks Sextant Compasses Thermometer Medicine case mathematical instruments

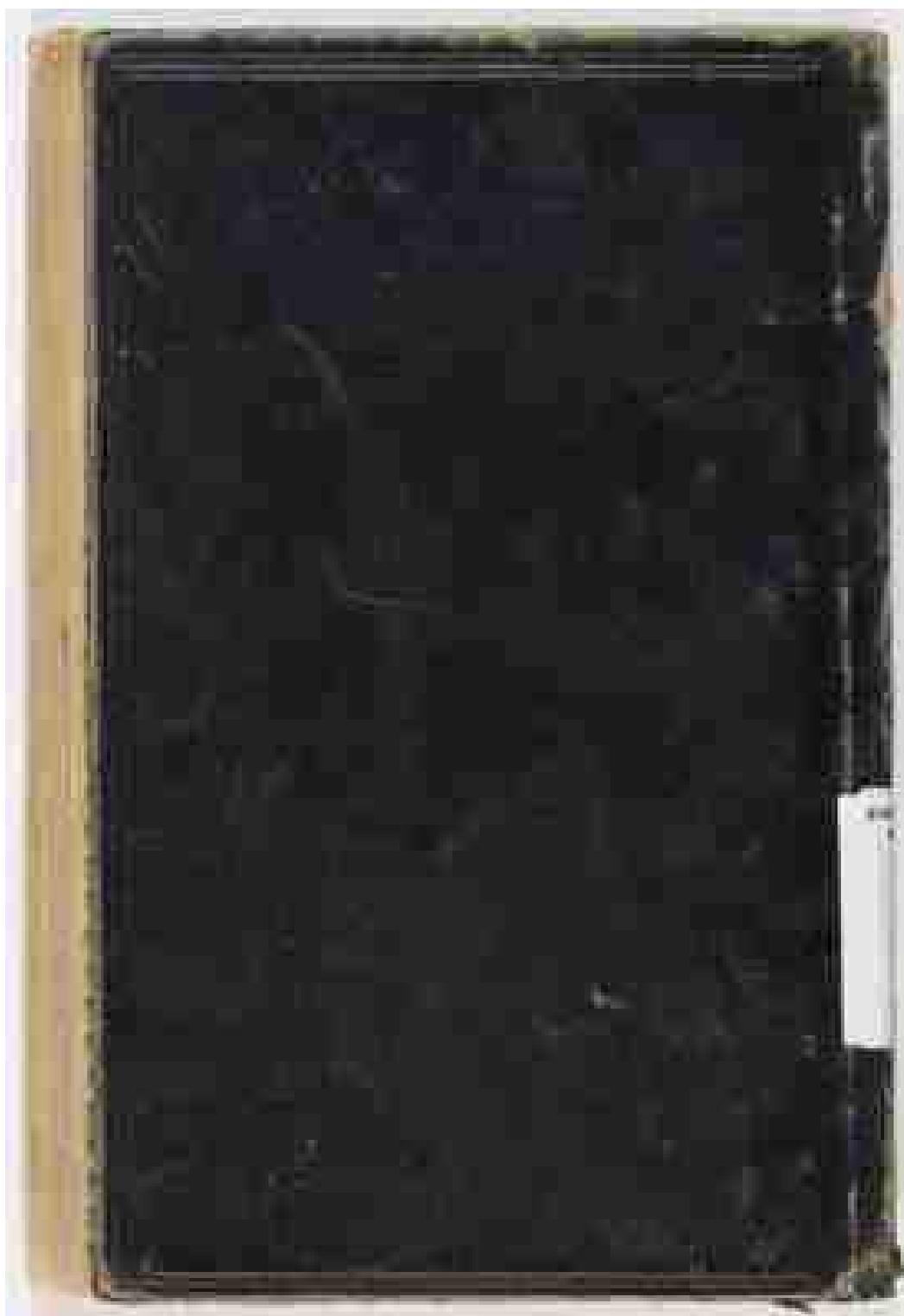
93 15 4 1/4

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[Back cover of diary]



ZZ02 Pastoral leases of the Kimberlys by John Pentecost.

Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW: 1871 - 1912),

Published on Saturday 7 April 1883, page 631

The Explorer.

Explorations in North-West Australia.

In 1879 the Government of West Australia sent an expedition under the command and leadership of Mr. A. Forrest, a government surveyor, to explore the northwest coast country from the De Grey river, 119°11' E., 20°10' S., to King Sound, and thence northward.

This route was pursued as far as the Fitzroy River, which, from inability to cross it, Forrest followed for about 250 miles to the east, then turned to the north-west, regaining the coast at Collier Bay.

Here he was compelled to retrace his steps to the Fitzroy, being unable to penetrate to the north from his way being barred by the King Leopold Ranges.

After proceeding along the course of the Margaret, an eastern branch of the Fitzroy, and some intervening rough country, the party came to a fine river which Forrest named the Ord, flowing to the north-west, and probably having its mouth in Cambridge Gulf.

Further exploration in this direction had, however, to be abandoned, for the food supply having become nearly exhausted, the rations being eked out by the aid of horse flesh the party made as rapidly as possible for the overland telegraph line and then to Port Darwin.

Forrest's report, published in 1880, contained such a favourable description of the country that many capitalists and men of smaller means, but with enterprising energy, were induced to take up extensive areas for pastoral purposes, the Government granting the land on 12 years' lease at a rental of 10s. per thousand acres.

A few gentlemen of New South Wales and Queensland, who had invested largely in the new field, being desirous of verifying Forrest's report before sending stock, and of ascertaining whether a safe landing port was to be found in Cambridge Gulf, with a good travelling route thence to Nicholson's Plains, south of the Ord, determined on sending an expedition to obtain the requisite information.

The exploring party, fitted out under the superintendence of Mr. S. Emanuel, of Lansdowne, Goulburn, one of the principal promoters of the expedition, consisted of six white men, three of whom were Mr. S. Emanuel, junior, Mr. M. Durack, of Queensland, and the writer as surveyor.

Twenty horses having been shipped, the party left Sydney on the 16th of July, last year, in the steamship Vortigern, for Port Darwin, calling at Brisbane, where three more horses were added to the number, and at Townsville, Cooktown, and Thursday Island.

On arriving at Port Darwin everything was transhipped into a schooner, and, two small black boys having been engaged, the party proceeded to Cambridge Gulf.

Under favourable conditions this passage might be made in two days, but calms and head winds protracted it in this case to a week, during which period the horses suffered considerably from the imperfect ventilation of the small hold, where the atmosphere was not only oppressively hot, but also so saturated

with ammoniacal and other gaseous fumes as to cause great irritability and bleeding at the nostrils of some of the animals.

This unwholesome state of affairs was aggravated by ignorantly giving the horses a quantity of water which, from standing in a tank in the hold, had become thoroughly foul and redolent of sulphuretted hydrogen. Under such circumstances, it was a subject for gratulation that only one horse died during the passage, for the death of others was daily expected.

From the prolonged duration of the voyage, and the consequent scarcity of water and fodder, fears were entertained that it would be necessary to land at the entrance of Cambridge Gulf, which would have added 60 miles to the length of the land journey, and some weeks to the time occupied in accomplishing it, for it was country of the very roughest description— steep, rocky, barren, sandstone hills.

Water was found here in a kind of natural dam, but there was no feed for horses and the utmost difficulty in travelling.

Cambridge Gulf is about 70 miles long and about 12 miles wide at its entrance, where it is divided into two channels by Lacrosse Island, a rocky sterile place, off which the schooner lay becalmed for a day. Some of us landed on the east side of the gulf, a little south of Lacrosse Island and ascended one of the steep, rocky, sandstone hills which here form the coast.

After going a quarter of a mile along its ridge, as there was no inducement to tempt one to further labour, a descent was affected into a swampy flat, where fresh water was found and gratefully appreciated, and where we saw the first Boab tree and tasted its fruit.

On the return journey along the margin of the shore a cairn of stones was seen, but time did not permit of delay for its thorough examination.

From Lacrosse Island the schooner sailed up the gulf in a S.S.W. direction, passing Adolphus Island, which is about 10 miles long, and anchored near the northern entrance of a narrow river-like channel, called the Gut.

For nearly the whole length of the gulf its water had a peculiar mottled appearance, as if muddy river water, of different specific gravity, had flown into, but had not assimilated with, salt water.

This appearance might naturally lead to the inference that a river of some importance would be round flowing into the southern part of the gulf; but this would hardly account for the mottled appearance, and sub-sequent experience explained the effect as due to the disturbance of the slimy mudbanks, mangrove swamps, and small salt-water creeks by the ebbing and flowing tides.

There were many fish seen, and near Lacrosse Island several turtles were perceived swimming on the surface of the water, but no sharks or alligators were noticed.

From its entrance, for some miles south, the gulf is bordered on both sides by sterile hills of ferruginous sandstone, covered with massive angular blocks of the same, which give them the appearance of being composed wholly of quarried stone prepared for the builder.

Farther south, whilst there are hills of the same kind in the background, the shore in front of them consists mainly of large plains of mud and sand, covered with an incrustation of salt.

These salt plains are intersected by small salt water creeks, and mostly fringed, where they face the gulf, with mangrove thickets so dense that passage through them was impossible.

The gulf is bounded by precipitous hills descending abruptly to the water's edge, and is only a quarter of a mile wide, 2½ miles long, opening at the south into another large lake-like expanse of water which is, however, very shallow.

From its great extent, depth of water, shelter, and good anchorage, Cambridge Gulf is one of the finest harbours in Australia, but its hilly shores are rocky and sterile, its plains barren, and subject to inundation ; it has no good landing-place on the southern portion, whilst during certain months there is little or no fresh water to be found near the coast.

The Schooner anchored about 150 yards from the land, and a roadway of saplings and brushwood having been con-structed on the face of the mudbank, the horses were towed ashore and landed without casualty.

They then proceeded about two miles inland to the first camping place, situated on the northern flank of a range of low hills (about 15°30' S.), near a creek with a few made waterholes, in which the quantity of water noticeably diminished from day to day by evaporation and would probably disappear entirely in less than a month if no rain fell in the interval.

The hills to the south were very scantily timbered with stunted trees and saplings including some gums, acacias, wild nutmegs, &c.

There were also many varieties of small wild flowers in no way remarkable for brilliancy of hue, beauty of form or structural peculiarity.

Bronzewing pigeons, and prettily marked little doves, hawks and crows were numerous, the last named being most audacious thieves, with a peculiar propensity for carrying off soap.

On the salt plain the tracks of a blackfellow and the tracks of a dingo were discerned.

Though it was the winter season the thermometer marked 92° in the shade and 116° in the sun at 9 a.m., the aneroid indicating 30.2 at 11 a.m. temperature was 94° in the shade.

On quitting the first camping place the party proceeded over rough, but low, hills in a S.W. direction towards the southern extremity of the gulf where the river Ord was supposed to have its mouth.

Within a mile from the camp, by going up a creek which deepened and widened considerably in that distance, **a waterfall was reached**, the dry rocky bed of which was two chains wide and about 25 feet high, with a deep pool of water at its base, where some wallabies were disturbed while drinking.

Above the waterfall the bed of the stream, bare flat sandstone rock, became much wider and exhibited in places large patches of ancient ripple marks.

It was evident that during heavy rains in the wet season a great quantity of water fell on a comparatively small area of hilly land, and rushed impetuously over the rock bed, carrying with it boulders of no mean magnitude, though no indication of the existence of such a stream was perceivable near the shore, for on reaching the landward boundary of the salt plain it spread over the level ground, and on diminishing in volume ran off through several saltwater creeks of comparative unimportance.

In this manner probably a large portion of the sur-rounding ragged country discharges its rainfall into the gulf.

From the western side of the gulf we travelled generally a S.E. course, though from the nature of the country the deviations were by no means inconsiderable and the line of route as mapped presents a very suggestive zigzag appearance.

With a few exceptions in the form of valley plains, the whole of the country from the first camp to the junction of the Ord and Negri was mountainous and rugged, ranges after ranges of stone covered steep hills thinly timbered and largely productive of spinifex.

So difficult and toilsome was the travelling that on some days four- or five-miles advance would represent the results of a day's work.

A tidal river was forded which, flowing from the north, entered the southern extremity of Cambridge Gulf.

This river, which at the fording place, where the tidal influence ceased, and boulders took the place of mud, was two chains wide,

I named the Durack after M. Durack, who was the first to cross it.

It ran between precipitous hilly banks, with scarcely space for a single file of horses to pass between the base of the cliffs and the treacherous slimy banks.

The exposed rock surface weathered red from the quantity of iron contained in it and large fallen blocks exposed very distinct ripple marks, as fresh looking as though made yesterday,

instead of thousands of years ago.

At camp six we had a splendid view of the entire west side of Mount Cockburn from the hill-top on which we were located.

For over 20 miles it was seen at intervals along the route, and, judging from the difference in latitude of its northern and southern extremities, it must be nearly that in length; and, as was subsequently judged, about 12 miles in width at the south.

It is, as regards peculiarity of form, one of the most remarkable mountains in the world.

No verbal description could give an adequate representation of its appearance, resembling so closely as it does an immense fortress with bastions, ramparts, and towers.

On the east side are 10 projecting square-faced hills, with rectangular valleys running in alternately between them, and terminating abruptly and squarely, the whole seemingly fortified.

The towers and upper parts of the mountain resembled in form columnar basalt, but may have been sandstone, the mountain being the result of circumdenudation.

A few days later on, arriving south of Mount Cockburn, a valley plain presented itself.

This was from 12 to 14 miles across, and on the west of it ran a small river. There was a fair show of coarse grass.

After traversing a part of this plain on a S.E. course for two days, rough ground was again met with for several miles, after which another level vale was entered, about seven miles in width, but gradually narrowing till, at the end of the second day, it had contracted to a mile across.

A river flowing through this valley was larger than either of the two previous seen, but was not of sufficient size to suggest the probability of its being the Ord.

Both plains are subject to inundation, and the last-mentioned one was much fissured and had many claypans.

It was thinly coated with young grass, which had sprung up since the older crop had been burnt off by the blacks; and there were large patches of spinifex.

Latitude 16°16 S. The thermometer indicated 114° in the sun at 9 a.m., 140° at 12.

On the next day's journey, we passed over rich chocolate-coloured soil, sparkling with scales of white and yellow mica, and frequently saw abraded crystals of selenite.

Very near latitude 16°21 we passed a dark-looking hill several miles in length, with a particularly rugged or saw-like crest, which was named Mount Emanuel, after the principal promoter of the expedition.

It had the appearance of a limestone hill, but there was no time or opportunity to verify the idea.

The country now again be-came somewhat hilly, the flatter parts being covered with stones, and for about six miles of spinifex plain there was an abundant show of quartz, much stained with iron and giving promise of gold.

Several Boab trees were passed, and some of the fruit obtained— but further reference will be made to them hereafter in connection with the flora and fauna of the district.

In a limestone hill, near which we camped was a cave wherein **one of the party discovered the skeleton of a black encased in bark placed on a ledge of rock** ; from this circumstance and from its weathered dark aspect this craggy mass obtained the appellation of **Blackfellow Hill**.

The next latitude ascertained was 16°39 where the country was gently undulating with but little spinifex, much better grasses and a plentiful covering of small stones.

Here, a fine river, supposed to be Ord, was found, but two of the party who then preceded the others affirmed that it became lost in a dry sand bank, and the course was altered accordingly.

There was no opportunity for testing the correctness of the assertion as to the river running out, and from the character of its bed and from its size, though it contained water only in stretches, the statement was to me incredible.

I was not commander of the party, and the course was regulated on this occasion as he desired.

How such a flow of water as would have filled a river several chains in width, and after rising above its banks, spread over the country to a height of 20 feet above the base of trees on the banks could have accumulated within so short a distance was incomprehensible and tends to suggest that some mistake occurred, and that this was probably the Ord River as first supposed.

This river had a N.W. course, and near it we passed over level country for five hours, the only exception being a mile or two of very rough, much exposed limestone of nearly black appearance.

This was greatly eroded, leaving pillars of the rock from 4 to 16 feet high, standing erect on the surface.

There were many crevices, and the bare rock emitted a hollow sound under the horses' feet which caused the animals to exhibit some uneasiness.

Since leaving the last river the grass has been good, mostly blue grass, but with numerous intruding patches of spinifex, and with small stones almost everywhere.

A few days later (the 27th September) we again struck a river, undoubtedly the Ord — its course the same as the last one, N.W.

It contained water only in long stretches, and we travelled along its banks, crossing and recrossing several times.

The banks were from 30 to 40 feet higher than the bed, and the water in flood time not only rises above these, but attains a height of 20 feet above them, as shown by the drift in the trees.

Hence it spreads over a large area of country, an immense rush of water conveying and depositing sand and small stones over much of the land.

The country bordering the Ord is far better than any previously seen, and shows little or no spinifex.

As followed to the south it becomes narrower but deeper, water occurring in less quantity.

On the east side are fine open plains with good grasses, and very lightly timbered.

No hills to be seen in that direction, but three tributary rivers fed by numerous creeks intersect it, affording a valuable supply of water.

On the west side of the Ord the land is also a plain for about 4 miles in width, gently rising hills then succeed, and about 12 miles from the river steep ranges of hills form the back ground.

Horse tracks were seen after four days' journey up the river, which we at a later date had reason to believe were those of the animals belonging to the prospectors who had gone through from Western Australia to Port Darwin.

For three days more we kept a S.W. course, the country to the East still remaining good, that to the West narrowing and becoming hilly and worthless.

For many miles there was much ironstone gravel in patches.

The rocks passed were limestone, sandstone, and conglomerates.

On October 5 the river came from the west and our course was more or less in that direction for two days, when the Ord was found to come from the north-west through exceedingly rugged granite country badly supplied with water and growing little but spinifex.

To the north of the granite slates and shales which here constitute the country, prospectors might expect more success than in other parts of the district.

After following the river a few miles to the north-west, finding the country to become frightfully hilly and rugged so that all the party were obliged to travel on foot to save the horses, it was determined that we **should go south-west and make for the Nicholson Plains so highly lauded by Forrest.**

For six days the journey was mostly on a S. and S.W. course, and all the time over hills from 600 to 1000 feet above sea level, with occasional small tableland flats of about 1000 acres or so, where grass and water were fortunately obtained.

Most of the country, over which we with great toil and difficulty travelled during this week, was covered with acute angular quartz stones, and almost the only representative of vegetation was spinifex and a very few scrubby trees— no flowers, seldom grass, even of the coarsest description; no game; no blacks; birds scarcely ever seen.

The idea of meeting blackfellows, even if hostile, was entertained with pleasure, for their presence would be an indication of the proximity of better country.

Different courses were followed to break through the hills to better country, but rough barren mountains hemmed us in on every side.

One wallaby was shot, and later a few pigeons were seen, whilst the discovery of a pool of water, the accumulation of hill drainage, on a small piece of tableland, was looked on as a godsend.

Here, at 12 a.m., the thermometer stood at 95° in shade, and the aneroid indicated 27.7, with the prospect of a thunderstorm.

The party descended on to Nicholson's Plains on the 13th of October. Here they found plenty of water from recent thunderstorms, and tracks of emus and turkeys.

Young grass was beginning to appear, and the country was a delightful change from that through which we had for several days been journeying.

On these plains we went as far south as 18°20, when two of us went S.E. for five miles, and ascended an isolated hill whence a view was gained of the country for 15 or 20 miles in various directions.

To the east the horizon was bounded by hills from north to south, and to the south and the west were fine open plains ; a few hills to the N.W., but fine, open country extending away to the S.W.

From the camp at 18°20 S. the course was westerly, varying two points to the north of west, over good level country, well grassed and watered; but on the second day there was some scrub, granite rocks, and chalcedony, then white quartz for some miles, this being then succeeded by a light coloured sand stone.

Continuing the westerly course over very poor land, sand and stone, covered with spinifex, we struck a small river, after which the country again improved, but with here and there solitary hills of circumdenudation.

On October the 13th we were in latitude 18°11 by meridian altitude of Capella, on hilly and stony ground of granite and quartz, still pursuing a westerly course, and then S. and S.W. over mostly poor spinifex country, but with plenty of water, **we at last reached the Margaret River.**

The course of this river was followed through the mountain ranges— that forest avoided as a route which it was impossible to travel.

For about 30 miles we had terribly difficult work both for men and horses, having to climb the barren mountains at times, and swim the horses on other occasions.

The only useful piece of land on this route was a wide level valley about 10 miles long or more, through which the river ran, and which was bounded on the north by a range of tableland mountains running from a little north of east to a **little south of west, latitude 18° 18' 31."**

In this valley there was an abundance of good grass and water.

Very shortly after emerging from the mountainous country a tree was passed bearing these initials and date, **cut into the bark — W.F. | PA over 22.9.81,** which gave rise to many conjectures as to the travellers who had thus left their mark.

Near this tree the footprints and other indications of the presence of horses still remained undisturbed and unobliterated, thus affording evidence that no rain fell here during the previous 12 months; and as during that period a so-called rainy season had passed without a rainfall, the probability is that a two years' drought had visited the land.

This view was strongly supported by the aspect of the country between this place and Beagle Bay, where for over 260 miles the whole of the country had a parched burnt appearance.

After passing the marked tree there was no further difficulty in travelling, for the remaining part of the Margaret's course and that of the Fitzroy was through fine plains, the grasses being those of the Blue and Mitchell varieties.

The first of Forrest's marked trees which we saw was that on which was cut AF. 137. 12 July 79.

This was near the Margaret River, where the land is described by him as 'extensive grassy plains,' and for over 200 miles to the west the same description applies, though of course some parts are superior to others.

Forrest's journey was under-taken shortly after the copious rainfalls of a very wet season, when consequently all vegetation, which grows rapidly in this climate, was luxuriant.

Our journey was after a drought, when the grasses were dry and some-what scanty, so that we saw the country under a very different aspect.

No one, however, could fail to recognise its productive power under favourable conditions as to rain. Forrest describes the Fitzroy as a fine running river, navigable for — miles.

As we saw it, the sandy bed was mostly dry, but with many long stretches of water.

Under no circumstances could it be considered a navigable river. Lake Louisa, which he speaks of as "a large fresh water lake, with a depth of 15 feet," contained not a drop of water when we rode across it; and a running, permanent stream, which he named the Fraser River, was, at the time of our crossing it, a dry sandy bed.

About seven miles from Forrest's tree, marked 71, which is situated a few miles from the mouth of the Fitzroy, sheep tracks were seen, and following these we came to the camp hut of Messrs. M'Dermott, Poulton, and Riley, the first white men seen since leaving Cambridge Gulf.

They were camped on land belonging to the Kimberley Pastoral Association, where they enjoyed the advantage of permanent springs of good water, and were close to a large palm tree scrub in which kangaroos were plentiful.

From their expectations having been raised unduly high from Forrest's description of the country, they were now disappointed by the difference caused by the drought, but had no intention of abandoning their enterprise, intending to move on leisurely to their own land.

Proceeding on our route the following day, a few hours sufficed to bring the party to the station of the Kimberley Pastoral Association, where we remained a week, the guests of the manager, Mr. M'Larty, who has sanguine expectations in relation to the future prosperity of the Kimberley district.

His sheep and those of M'Dermott and Co. looked well, despite the dryness of the grass.

This station has been established about 12 months; and during our stay he measured 100 acres of the leasehold land, which the company intended to purchase in order to secure the water supply from being bought by others.

From here we proceeded towards Beagle Bay, under the guidance of Mr. M'Larty, and accompanied by Messrs. Cornish and Petter, the former being a partner with **Mr. Patterson at the Murray River Company's station.**

Patterson and Cornish are the pioneer settlers of the district, having arrived about two years ago, and they appear to be doing well, transporting their wool to Cossack or Fremantle in a cutter which they have purchased, their stores being brought on the return voyage.

When not so engaged the cutter is employed in pearl-fishing, the divers being aborigines of the district.

These natives on the termination of the pearling season are allowed a holiday or engaged in work about the station, Anthony Cornish, recently murdered by a blackfellow, was at the time of our visit an assistant of M'Larty's.

The distance from the Kimberley Pastoral Association station to Beagle Bay is about 100 miles, and a large part of the journey was travelled by night to escape the heat and to get through the long stages that intervene from water to water.

At about 7 miles from the bay was the camp of the Meda River Company, where the employees were awaiting the arrival of another lot of sheep (1200) from Fremantle.

There was a small lagoon of water close to the camp, and the surface of the country for some miles was thickly dotted with permanent springs of good water.

These springs were of a peculiar character, each being surrounded by a sort of embankment of fine earth.

Three or 4 feet above the level of the adjoining ground on this embankment, a circular cluster of palm trees flourished, together with ferns and long grass.

In size the springs vary in diameter, of the waterhole from 4 to 14 feet, and are more than 9 feet deep.

Some show no water, but on attempting to walk across the raised centre water oozes out beneath the feet. Looking down into one of them, water could be seen rising from below, and bringing up flocculent earthy matter of a rich dark colour, which, de-deposited at the margin, contributes to the formation of the embankment.

The natives were more numerous in this locality and at Beagle Bay than elsewhere, and differed from those in the Gulf and Ord districts, in being familiar with white men and by no means hostile.

To them, however, I shall have occasion to refer hereafter.

From Beagle Bay we proceeded in the brigantine Mary Smith, which had just brought a cargo of sheep to Fremantle.

Nearly, if not quite all, the land in the north-west, or Kimberley, Meda River, Lennard River, Prince Regent's River, and Ord districts has been taken up on lease, and is about to be surveyed and stocked.

There is undoubtedly a large quantity of first-class land in the district, on which, even in time of drought, sheep seem to do well; but of course, much depends on the length of a drought's duration.

There is also a large extent of sterile, hilly country, and stone-covered spinifex ground of an utterly worthless character.

Our party suffered no inconvenience worth mentioning from lack of water, and there was an abundance of game on the rivers.

The climate is, I consider, as healthy as in any part of Australia — no one of the party suffering from anything more severe than a slight attack of diarrhoea, and this occurred only twice.

During four months I slept in the open air, with a waterproof sheet beneath and a blanket around me without the shelter of a tent ; and though the blanket was often nearly saturated with dew, I never enjoyed better health.

The temperature during the day varied from 92° to 96° in the shade, and rose to 140° in the sun.

At night it sometimes fell to 70° and 75°, the atmosphere and soil being much cooled on such occasions by unusually heavy dewfalls.

Between Cambridge Gulf and the Ord the ferruginous sandstones of the north were succeeded by limestone, trap-rock, porphyry, conglomerates, and granite, with slate and shale in places.

The Ord district appeared the most promising for metallic ores, good specimens of carbonate and oxides of copper having been obtained, and some of the numerous quartz reefs may hereafter be productive of gold.

The northern border of Nicholson Plains was largely covered with small fragments of quartz, clear, white, and variously coloured, which had been washed down from the hills, white and yellow micas were almost everywhere constituents of the soil.

There were no indications of metal in and along the Fitzroy.

MR. M. DURACK'S EXPLORATION OF THE KIMBERLEY DISTRICT, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE " SOUTHERN ARGUS."

Sir, —Believing that the following particulars of my exploring trip, in conjunction with Mr. Emmanuel, through the Kimberley district will not be without interest to many of your readers, I venture to send you the same for publication.

Left Brisbane July 19, on board the Vortigern, O.S., Captain Brown; pilot, Captain Dark.

Our party consisted of six—S.P. Emmanuel—one of the promoters; Thos. Kilfoyle; John Pentecost, surveyor and geologist; James Josey Thomas Horan, and myself.

We started with twenty-three horses and about 15cwt. of rations procured in Sydney.

Arrived at Port Darwin August 1, after a rough passage between Brisbane and Townsville.

At Port Darwin we transhipped to the schooner Lavuka, Captain Murray.

Left for Cambridge Gulf August 6, and landed August 14. Distance from Port Darwin about 270 miles.

A trouble-some voyage. Greatly delayed by adverse winds.

The horses suffered considerably, and two of the best died.

I myself met with a nasty accident on August 13.

We were hauling up a dead horse at night time, the pole upon which I was partly standing rolled from under me, and I fell a distance of ten feet ; breaking a small bone below the spine ; for a few days afterwards I was incapacitated.

We had no small difficulty in landing the horses. We had to improvise a kind of landing stage. Every assistance was rendered by Captain Murray, who was really indefatigable, and of whose courtesy I can speak in terms of the highest praise.

The ship was anchored about 100 yards from the shore.

There was plenty of water when the tide was in; but at low tide the vessel grounded, and heeled slightly over; but we were out of the channel at the time.

The depth of water in the channel itself at this place was nine fathoms. Our landing place was at the north-west of the gut.

It would have been much better for us if we had landed on the north-east side, in order to reach the Ord river; but our impression was that the Ord river was there and then before us.

It is so shown on the map, but wrongly.

After landing we camped ten days for the sake of the horses. Fortunately we found good water, and a patch of good grass affording plenty of feed, though the country about there was of a very barren character.

Marked a tree " D. 1." - August 24. —

We made a start at 9 a.m. with twelve of the horses packed. Travelled six miles in a westerly direction; four miles were over very rough country, the last two miles over country excellently grassed.

Camped on a creek heading north into the ranges.

Marked a tree " D. 2." - August 25. —

Travelled five miles still westerly, till blocked by a large creek well-watered and running strong.

We ran it up north about a mile and crossed; water up to the horses' knees.

We found a large fishing party of blacks of all ages and both sexes. They ran away some distance on seeing us, but after a while they gathered together in a mob on the plain, and sat down watching us.

They made no demonstration in particular, friendly or otherwise, beyond flourishing their spears ; the men, numbering about half, were well made, strong-looking fellows.

Went on ten miles south along the gulf, till we came to a large river coming from the north.

Pentecost named it the Durack.

Camped. No fresh water that night.

The country passed over to-day was really splendid, all open, a variety of good grass, and abundant. One plain nine miles long, the creek running through the middle of it.

Plenty of game seen, chiefly turkeys and ducks. (Two hundred thousand acres of this country is now owned by Hill and Durack.

Over 2200 heifers have started from the Barcoo, and are now en route to stock it.)

August 26. —

Started at sunrise, and went five miles north up the Durack. We crossed where a large fresh-water creek from the west junctioned.

We ran up this creek about a mile and camped. The latter part of to-day's journey was over country rather rough and not well grassed.

We had a good view from one of the eminences crossed to-day. To the north and north-west there were ranges as far as we could see. To the south the country looked nearly as bad.

Mount Cockburn was seen in the distance, about 15 miles S.E.

Marked a tree " D. 4." August 27.

A very hard day. The country was so broken and rough as to render travel-ling impossible. On foot ourselves all day, leading and driving the horses. Some of the ravines gave us great trouble in crossing, and obliged us to travel at all points of the compass. We camped two hours at noon.

Not much grass, but horses too tired to eat.

Resuming our journey, we experienced fresh difficulties crossing the range. We swerved off to the left as soon as we could and made for the lower country, which we reached at sundown, greatly to the relief of both men and beasts.

We resolved to camp a couple of days to spell the horses.

Splendid country again. Most of the horses lost their shoes during to-day's severe travelling.

We made only about 6 miles in a straight direction (S.E.).

Marked a tree " D 5." August 28.

Camped all day.

August 29.—I shot a turkey—our first.

August 30.

Eight miles S.E. over excellent country; then four miles more over rather rough country but fairly grassed.

We struck here a large river running into the Gulf, which is supposed to be the Ord, as the Ord is represented on the map as running into the Gulf at its head.

Water in the river was still salty, but fresh water every where else.

Marked a tree " D 6." August 31

Travelled eight miles S.E. up the river. We saw coming up behind, a large mob of blacks, all men, and well armed with spears. They set up a loud shouting as soon as they saw us, gesticulated defiantly, and set fire to the grass in several places. Being very high and dry grass on the river banks, it blazed furiously. On riding slowly towards the blacks, our guns in our hands, they fled precipitately, crossing the river, which was very rocky, and dis-appearing on the other side.

Rather rough country all day, well grassed, however, on the flats occasionally met with. Three men on watch all night.

September 1

Travelled about three miles S.E. up the river. The country was very rough, with scarcely any grass. I now felt certain that we were not on the Ord; for it by no means answered to Forrest's description.

We named it the Pentecost.

September 2.

Four hours continual travelling, yet only one mile made in a straight line. We camped in a fine valley of about two miles, extending from the river into the ranges. A well-watered creek ran through it. We saw blacks on the mountains at various places as if watching us.

We caught a large quantity of fish, some weighing over three pounds.

Marked a tree " D 9, 82." September 3.

In camp, Kilfoyle and I inspecting the country.

September 4.

Left the Pentecost, and proceeded four miles up the valley in a south-easterly direction.

We saw a large number of blacks who ran away over the rocks, yelling and gesticulating as usual. We made friendly signs to them, but they were too frightened to come near us. Of course, we understood nothing of what they said.

Our two black boys, obtained at Port Darwin, endeavoured to converse with them but neither party could understand the language of the other. Camped.

Marked a tree "D 10." September 5

Camped all day,

Kilfoyle shoeing the horses. Emmanuel and I climbed up a cliff about 1500 feet high, and could plainly perceive that further progress in that direction (S.E.) was impossible.

September 6.

Pentacost and I rode on this morning about twelve miles N.E. Ranges on all sides. Discovered an outlet.

Returned to camp.

September 7

Travelled about 14 miles N.E. from one valley to another, all well grassed and watered.

We camped at the S.E. corner of Mount Cockburn in a splendid valley varying in width from five to seven miles.

Marked a tree " D 11, '82." September 8

Found one of our horses dead this morning. He had shown signs of weakness a day or two previously.

Travelled about five miles E. S E. over very good well-watered country and camped on a creek running N. and S. close to two very remarkable bald hills.

We named them the Sugar Loaves. From the summit of one fully 1,000 feet high we could see high ranges in various directions, and fine fertile valleys between, some of which we reckoned to be several miles wide.

September 9

Stopped in camp.

Kilfoyle and I explored the country for two miles to the S. E., crossing some splendid flats, till blocked by a perpendicular part of the range.

We directed our steps N. E. down a beautiful valley, about two miles wide and six long; opening out into well-timbered country.

Went on two miles further. A high range on the right, but the fine-timbered country extending for miles on the left.

Night coming on, we pulled off our saddles, made beds of grass, and slept soundly, thoroughly tired—no fire, no water, no blankets.

September 10.

Three miles east brought us to a large creek running S. E. We ran it down about two miles and breakfasted. Seeing that the country ahead bore the same character—all fine-timbered country as far the eye could reach—

we returned to camp.

September 11.

Brought up the party to the creek mentioned. Two horses very lame ; packs getting alarmingly light ; only one piece of salt meat left ; and still not more than fifty miles—in a straight direction—from our starting point on the Gulf.

Marked a tree " D. 13." September 12

Six miles south by east brought us to a large fresh-water river—at least twelve chains wide—which I considered must be the Ord at last.

These six miles were across a flat extending many miles left and right, up and down the river ; and as suitable, I should think, for sugar growing, as is to be found in Australia.

As fine a piece of country as I have seen anywhere.

We went up the river six miles in something of a south-westerly direction ; the country being the same all the way.

Marked a tree "D. 14." September 13

Camped ten miles further up the river, the latter five being over country not so good for travelling (though almost equally as good for pastoral purposes) owing to the spurs coming in occasionally on both sides of the river.

I noticed for the first time to-day, various familiar grasses—such as the blue and the Mitchell, and likewise a large amount of the edible bush found in Western Queensland, including those known as " Supple Jack," "White Wood," &c. Shot a kangaroo to day.

Curry for all hands ! Much relished!

Marked a tree " D. 15." September 14

Ran up about seven miles further, the river veering off more and more to the west, and narrowing considerably. Here a large creek came in from the south.

Concluded it was not the Ord River.

Named it the " Dunham."

Camped. Kilfoyle and I explored ten miles further (up the creek) to the south where we camped by ourselves after dark.

September 15.

Explored seven miles further to the summit of a dividing water-shed, where, seeing that the country to the S. and S.E., was all open, we returned to camp, reaching our party at about 9 p.m.

Mr. Emmanuel rather unwell. Query—Too much curry ?

September 16.

Horse lost. Kilfoyle and Josey remained to look for it.

I left the Dunham, and took the party eighteen miles south, over well-grassed country, but rather stony.

A mare, heavy in foal, knocked up on the way. Left her behind with the two black boys.

I returned, after choosing a camp, six miles to look for them. Got the mare within four miles of the camp, and had to leave her a second time. Overtaken by Kilfoyle and Josey. Unsuccessful. Reached camp at 9 p.m.

Marked a tree "D. 17, '82."September 17

Camped all day.

I brought up the mare, but she shortly afterwards died foaling. One of my saddle horses—poor horses—poor old Doughboy—also died later on in the day.

September 18

Left four pack saddles in a tree. Travelled S. E. about twelve miles. Very fair country all day. Emmanuel and I ascended a high limestone cliff. Level plains south and east.

Considered ourselves in close proximity to a large river ahead. Hoped it would prove to be the Ord.

Camped on a large creek running to the N. E. Water slightly brackish. Country very good indeed.

Marked a tree " D. 18." September 19

Reached a large river about 8 miles E. River coming from the S., and about 15 chains at this point. Very steep banks.

Ran it up about two miles and camped. Really good limestone country. Mostly plains. Belts of bloodwood on the right.

September 20

All day in camp. Emmanul and I crossed the river, water running up to the horse's knees, but very deep in places.

Country on the east side all bald ridges; densely grassed to the summit. Kilfoyle shot a duck of a species quite unknown to any us ; colour black and white, larger than a black duck.

September 21

Left behind a weak mare. Eight miles W. 3. W., the river turned considerably, heading finally to the N. W.

Decided not Ord.

Called it the Bow.

All the country today well grassed, but stony Bald ridges, thickly grassed, frequently coming in to the river on both sides.

I shot our second turkey. Caught an abundance of fine fish. Very welcome; our stock of tinned meats getting very low.

September 22

Left the Bow River and travelled eight miles S.E. over the same de-scription of country as yesterday.

Camped on a spring creek, running, I think, into the Bow.

September 23

Travelled 8 miles almost E. ; country same as on last two days.

Reached a good-sized creek running towards the Bow River.

On the S.E. and S.W. there is a very high range, and how we are to get over it I cannot imagine.

Marked a tree "D. 23." September 24.

Camped all day.

Kilfoyle engaged making shoes for entire party ; cutting up the leather saddle bags for that purpose.

We had suffered much previously for want of shoes. Emmanuel and I rode six miles to top of range ; and could see good level country and open plains stretching for miles on the other side.

Returning we took a short cut down the range, each leading his own horse, Mr. Emmanuel being ahead. Huge boulders everywhere. Emmanuel managed to get his mare down a very steep pinch on to a ledge below ; and when there found he could neither go on nor return. Our united efforts were fruitless.

I then went round a couple of miles and got underneath the ledge ; but found 300ft. of a perpendicular to the ridges above.

Emmanuel contrived to scramble down some distance off; but he had to leave the mare all night where she was.

Returned to camp riding my horse turnabout.

September 25

Emmanuel and Josey started early to release the mare, taking Pentacost's cold chisel and a tomahawk, I, in the meantime, leading on the party.

After four hours work on the rock, they cut a narrow footway, and got the mare up; joining our party at about two-o'clock. Six miles E. to-day brought us to a fine creek, permanently watered—very good country. Camped.

September 26

About two miles E. N. E. brought us to the Ord at last.

This is the largest river we have yet seen; being from 15 to 20 chains wide.

Running it up about six miles we came to where another large river junctioned in from the E; and we concluded at once it was the Negri, as described by Mr. Forrest.

Our satisfaction at this discovery can be better imagined than expressed. Camped.

Marked tree " D. 24."

As the country from here to Fitzroy has already been described by Forrest, I need not continue any further these extracts from my diary. Forrest's description, are, on the whole, very accurate. We followed the Ord about sixty miles to its head; finding the country everything that could be desired, and suitable for all kinds of stock. Nothing to be apprehended from floods.

Leaving the Ord River and crossing the range to Nicholson Plains—a distance of about thirty miles S. W.—we had exceedingly bad and rough country. Nothing but rocks, spinifex ridges and mountains. We noticed some promising quartz on these mountains; but saw no further indication of gold, nor had we time to look, as we were now on very short rations, especially as regarded flour and sugar.

Of meat, in any shape, we had none and over 300 miles to go before we could hope to procure supplies.

Along the Nicholson Plains for over eighty miles, we traversed first-class pastoral country.

We occasionally camped for a day or two in order to examine the country in different directions, especially to the south, and can-not speak of it too highly.

On the north nothing, so far as we could see, but high ranges all these eighty miles. Having had quite enough of them, we religiously left them alone. From the head of the Margaret—till we got through the Mueller Ranges—a distance of about fifty miles down the Margaret we had wretched country again with here and there a good patch. limited in extent and subject to floods. Thence to Fitzroy, about forty miles good country again, and the river as broad as the Ord. Stretches of water for miles unbroken, and no part of the Margaret less than 10 chains wide. About thirty-five miles above the junction of the Margaret with the Fitzroy, we found a large gum tree marked W. F., 22, P. A. 9, 81, We could learn nothing about this marked tree neither on the Fitzroy nor in Perth. Ten miles lower

down, near Mt. Pierre, we saw Forrest's marked tree—" F. 137." This was the first marked tree of Forrest's that we had

seen, and its discovery cheered us greatly.

Any amount of game now of all kinds. No more privations on that score. Could shoot more ducks in two hours than we could eat in two days. Whistling ducks especially abounded in thousands. Two hundred and fifty miles hence to the Kimberley Pastoral Company's station. —Minnie. Most kindly received by Mr. McClarty, the company's manager; enjoyed his hospitality for one week. Inspected his stock—sheep and horses—and that on the two neighbouring stations. All in excellent condition, though enduring a drought of over two years'

duration.

Mr. McClarty accompanied us all the way to Beagle Bay, over 100 miles distant, and brought back our horses (reduced to eleven in number) to his own station. In Beagle Bay we had to wait three weeks for a chance of getting to Fremantle, a most tedious and vexatious delay, especially considering that our friends had heard nothing from us for over four months. Left Beagle Bay finally in the "Mary Smith," schooner, on December 1. A most disagreeable and rough pas-sage to Fremantle—1400 miles. Head

winds nearly all the way, with occasional storms. Landed at Freemantle on January 1. Received with the greatest kindness by everybody, especially by Mr. Alexander Forrest, whose warm-hearted welcome I shall never forget. I can safely predict that in a short time there will be very little vacant country worth taking up in the Kimberley district. Emmanuel, Kilfoyle, and myself have, of course, taken up large portions of the country through which we travelled, both for ourselves and for others. I hope, however, that the Legislature of Western Australia will turn their attention to this part of the colony, and amend certain laws which bear rather onerously and unfairly on the pioneer squatters. The rents are too high in proportion to the rents in the settled districts—being just double—no pre-emptive rights, and a lease limited to only fourteen years. These are real drawbacks.

Michael Durack, Archerfield, August 27, 1883.

ZZ04 The Durack's were perhaps the only owners of the Archerfield

station to actually live on the property.

Michael / Stumpy Durack married Catherine McInnes in Goulburn in 1873.

Archerfield House brief history

One of its earliest owners was a solicitor called William Edward Murphy. It is thought that a Henry Farley may have lived at Archerfield in the 1870's.

Farley and Murphy were joint owners of two nearby properties purchased in 1877 and 1878.

When Murphy died in 1881 the property was passed on to his sister Miss Murphy.

The property was then purchased on 6 June 1882 by Michael Durack of Thylungra.

The family lived at Archerfield House from 1882 until 1886, and the contemporary birth notices show that two Durack children were born at Archerfield House, in 1884 and 1885.

Michael Durack was one of the famous family of pastoralists who had pioneered outback Queensland.

But after twenty years out west, Michael sold and moved to Brisbane and Archerfield Station for personal reasons.

(Western Star and Roma Advertiser, February 1 1882 p2.)

We have sold during the past week the Archerfield Estate, 8827 acres, stock, furniture, plant &c, for £7000 to Michael Durack, Esq. ...



Family photo – Michael, Kate and children. Source: Durack family

The name ‘Archerfield’ for the first Forest Lake property first appeared in a newspaper advertisement in April 1880. Earlier newspaper references to the property simply refer to ‘Selection No. 2815.’

The nearby Brisbane suburb of ‘Archerfield’ was not named until almost 50 years later when Archerfield Aerodrome was established and named in 1929. Neither is part of this story of the origins of Forest Lake.

Who named the ‘Archerfield Estate?’

It is theorised that the property is named after Alexander Archer, the Brisbane manager of the Bank of New South Wales who held the lease of the property briefly in 1879-1880.

There is a direct link between Archer and the second lessee Murphy.

Murphy had transferred the lease of the property to Archer in January 1879, possibly as security in a financial arrangement.

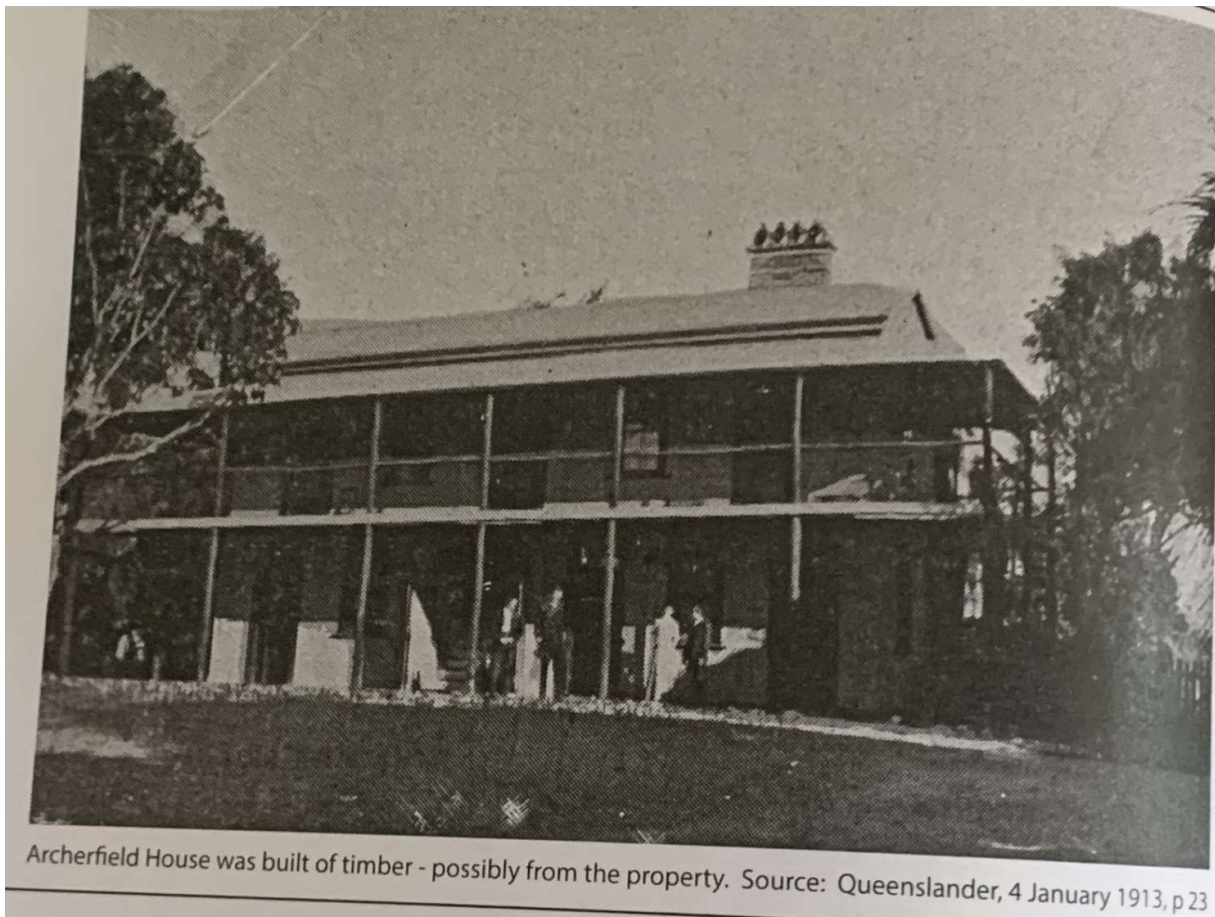
But by February 1880, Archer had transferred the lease back to Murphy.

It was a month later in March 1880, that Murphy converted the lease to purchase of the property and became the first owner of the selection; perhaps this prompted him to choose a name for his new property.

The advertisement first naming the “Archerfield Estate” appeared the following month, in April 1880. Since Murphy had effectively owned the property since 1878 and still owned it at his death in 1881,

it seems reasonable to infer that it was Murphy who named it ‘Archerfield.’

“ARCHERFIELD ... Beautifully situated on a rising ground, in a climate which from the elevation is much breezier and cooler than that of Brisbane, is the dwelling-house, a well finished two storied structure containing twelve rooms with veranda’s, balcony, porch, and hall.



Archerfield house burned down in 1928 and was not replaced. However soon after the fire, a timber cottage was built on the same site to house a caretaker and the building survived until at least the 1960s.

The Kimberley

However, even then “While Kate moved in with her family her husband’s attention was fully occupied organising the Kimberley expedition (Durack, p213).

Almost immediately, in July 1882, with his two brothers and family friends, Michael set off from Archerfield Station to explore the Kimberley region of Western Australia. “Stumpy” Michael was the leader “since he combined all of the necessary qualities of bushcraft, leadership, and sure judgement of country...” (Durack, p211.)

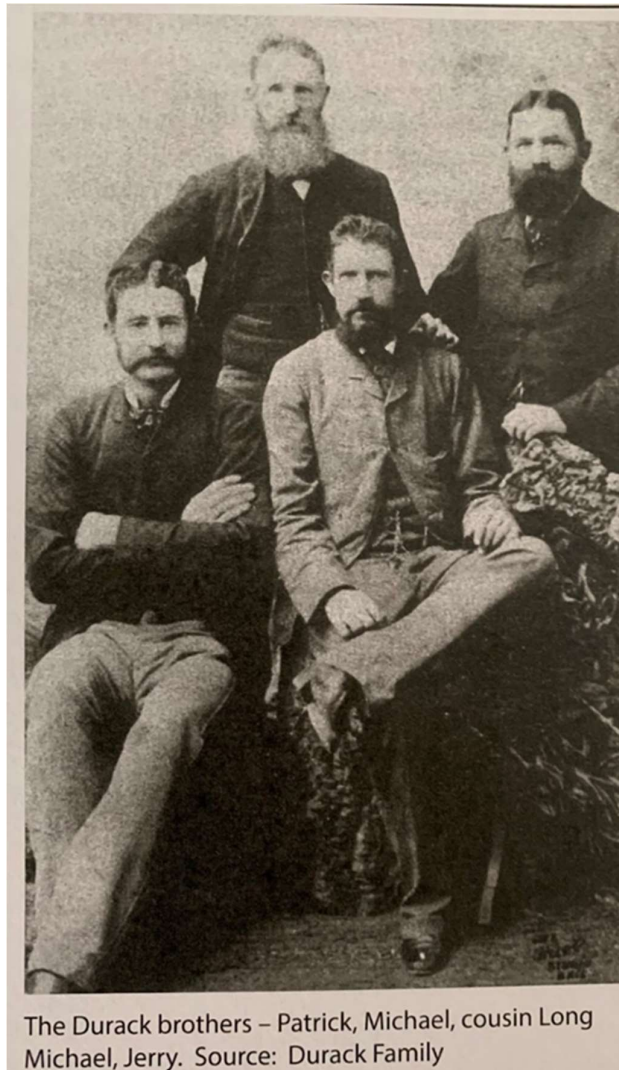
Returning to the Archerfield house in 1883,

Michael wrote an abstract of his diary of the expedition, which was published in a number of newspapers across the country, including “Mr M Durack’s Exploration of the Kimberley district, Western Australia...” in the Southern Argus on November 10 1883, page 4.

At once, the Durack’s sent four mobs of cattle on the famous overland droving trek from Queensland’s Barcoo to the Ord River in Western Australia. Even before it started, the trek was famous among drovers:

“Many would be over-landers ... turned up at Archerfield, Stumpy Michael’s place outside Brisbane, asking to be put on.”

“Stumpy” Michael, with L Hill, sent a mob of 2000 cattle. The 2500-mile trip took over two and a half years (1883-1885) with his cousin Michael J Durack (“Long Michael”) in charge. “Stumpy” Michael provided his experience and travelled largely by ship between Archerfield station, the new lands, the Ord River and business meetings in Perth.



In Brisbane, Michael and his brother J J Durack “Galway Jerry” pursued horse racing enthusiastically. Jerry built a racecourse at his property Moorlands (near Rosewood) and

Michael kept a string of top racehorses at Archerfield Station.

Both were foundation members of the Brisbane Tattersalls Club in 1884.

Michael was also involved in local racecourses – he was the starter at Goodna Jockey’s first meeting in 1885 in Wacol, and the first president of Rocklea Jockey Club formed in 1887.

Michael bought a thoroughbred horse Quamboneson in June 1884, but a year later financial pressures forced him to “give up the turf” and he sold this and other horses to his brother JJ (Jerry) in May 1885.

On December 11 that same year, Quamboneson won the Tattersalls cup.

Durack had added to the Archerfield property in 1884, He also advertised part of Archerfield house for lease, however, his brother Patrick Durack was right: “we are kings in green castles that may be blown away upon a puff of wind.”

Poor seasons, the depressed times and unsuccessful events led to Michael losing the Archerfield Station.

The Brisbane Land and Coal company took ownership of Archerfield House, though the Duracks were still living there.

The Durack's moved out of Archerfield House in 1886, but the bad times continued, leading up to the 1893 economic crash.

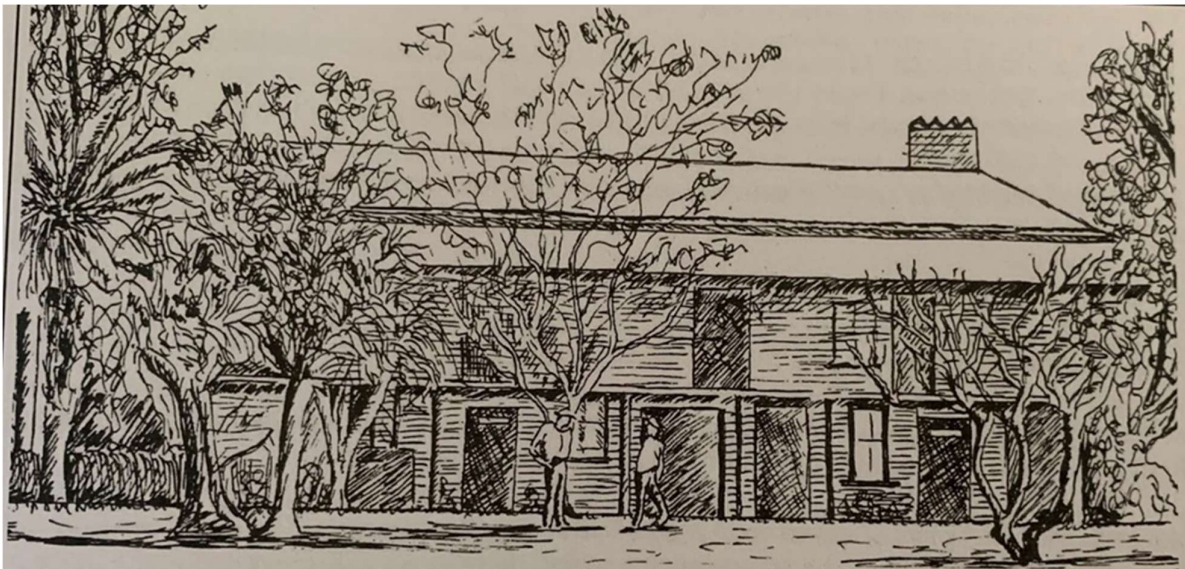
Michael was again in Kimberley when he became ill and eventually returned to Brisbane.

A few weeks later Michael Durack died – greatly in debt – on 1 August 1, 1894.

The Durack's were the fourth owners of Archerfield.

They were only there for four years, and Michael spent a considerable amount of time away. Yet it is the Durack name that is honoured locally in the suburb of Durack, in Durack suburb and Durack State School, though neither was ever on Durack land.

By Vicki Mynott from Before Forest Lake –Adapted for print by Jamie Furness.



Sketch of Archerfield House (made from an old newspaper photo)

Source: Donated to the author in 1995 by Kathleen MacArthur, Michael Durack's grand-daughter.

The MESSRS. DURACK'S EXPLORING PARTY from Kilfoyle IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

We have much pleasure in publishing the following correspondent; which has been kindly supplied us by Mr. Patrick Durack, to whom we beg to express our thanks: and, at the same time, we assure him we will only be too happy to find room for any further letters he sends us on the same subject: —

Thylungra, November 28th, 1882. To the Editor of the Southern, Argus, Goulburn.

Dear sir, —

I herein beg to forward to you a letter that my brother has received from Mr. Thomas Kilfoyle, who forms one of the exploring party that we have sent. out. to explore and take up country in Western Australia;

Mr. Micheal Durack is the leader of that expedition.

Should you desire it, I shall be happy to send you any further information that I receive from him or others of the party.

They started from Brisbane in last July—

chartering a steamer for that purpose; left Port Darwin early in August in a hired schooner, and are now proceeding up the Ord River, in route to Perth via the Margaret and Fitzroy Rivers and King's Sound.

They have seen Mr. Alexander Forrest, the well-known explorer, at his residence in Perth; and that gentleman kindly gave them every aid by the way of chart, tracings and even thought he would likely accompany my brother.

I think that the fact of there being such a large extent of splendid pastoral country—unsurpassed in this colonies—only waiting to be taken up in Western Australia, must induce many of our wealthy squatters to cast longing eyes in that direction.

True, there is, we might say, little or no local market, nothing much known about the ports, difficulty to be overcome regarding supplies, &c., &c.; but a very few years might see most (if not all) these obstacles overcome.

We had much the same difficulties to contend with when we came into Western Queens land some years ago, and see the change now I .. or must the natural advantages that Western Australia possesses be forgotten.

In my opinion, one need not be much of a prophet to predict that there will be something like a rush for country, especially in the northern part of that colon before many months are over.

My brother Michael has written me several letters (of a later date than Mr. Kilfoyle's that quite bear out that gentleman's statements, and describe the country generally as being really excellent for pastoral purposes

We have already taken up about three millions of acres in Western Australia, v ;;; , , !■; I am, sir, your obedient servant, PATRICK DUKACK, Thylungra Station, Thargomindah, . - , . Queensland.

Port Darwin, August 4th, 1882.

To jerefniah Durack, Esq. 1..

Dear Sir, —We have been all this day getting ready to continue our journey.,

We must been all day getting ready to continue our journey. We must be on board our other ship, to-night. This new schooner is not of much account its regards accommodation for the horses; they are in a very small compass. We shall start in the morning if lucky.

August 5th

Started this morning. Very little wind at first, and even that little calmed down in the afternoon, leaving our small vessel at a complete standstill. Evening coming on, and not a breath. of wind; and no prospects of any.

August 6th

Going very slowly; scarcely any wind. - We did not' make five miles last night; as yet we are not twenty-five miles from Port Darwin, and the horses are already beginning to suffer. The closeness of the hold and the warm weather causes them to sweat greatly. –

No chance of getting at them, neither, to clean, them, or the place in which they stand; they will only have to suffer it.

August 7th

Making very Slow headway; as yet only seventy-five miles from "Port Darwin.

Wind unfavourable, our little vessel is going in all directions but the right one as It is quite depressing to see 'how the poor horses are' falling away; standing up to their knees in dung, and we totally, unable even to clean out their stalls.

August 8th

Slow progress a little over one hundred miles from Port Darwin

Very warm weather. Horses- suffering-fearfully. we had to bring up one of the mares last night, as something' was wrong with her she was very bad all night.

I regret having; to record an 'accident that, happened, to Mr. Michael Durack. He was, holding the light as we were lifting the mare out of the hold; when a sudden lurch came that overbalanced him. He fell to the bottom of the hold, distance of ten or twelve feet, and was considerably shaken by the fall arid bruised by the stones. No bones broken, thank God!

Our surveyor, fortunately, understands something about surgery, and is attending him.

August 9th

Still slowly going ahead. Splendid weather but no wind. ,

Mr. Durack feels very sore and stiff but the surveyor tells him he will.be quiet, recovered in four or five days. He keeps his bed, meanwhile. The mare is better, but the, others are falling away fast. The sooner we are out of this the better.

August 10th

Weather still calm arid hot and we are making slow progress, but this afternoon we can be insight of some land, which the captain says is our, destination.

August 11th

We anchored near the entrance of Cambridge Gulf last night, being afraid of going any further in the dark.

Made a start this morning, but the wind adverse, and the tide also against us.

The consequence was we were taken out to sea again, and were all the rest of the day getting back to our starting point.

Anchored close to same place as last night,

One of the horses died this morning so we had to put him overboard.

About 10 o'clock four of us went ashore to have a look at the country. We found plenty of water and some grass, but not a very good sort of grass.

We also saw numerous tracks of the natives, and the places where they had made their fires but of themselves, we saw, nothing, although they could have left one water hole just as we came to it.

Mr. Durack was on deck again today not much the worse for his accident.

August 12th

Our usual luck this morning.

We could not start until the turn of the tide, unless we wished to have yesterday's work over, again, so we had to wait until 1 o'clock.

In the meantime, we visited a small island—Lacrosse Island—close by.

All the country, we have, seen about here is very stoney, In several places we found nice little springs in the creeks at the foot of the hills, all good drinking" water.

This afternoon we. started again with the tide and fair wind we advanced 22 miles from fi' o'clock until 7 in the evening, and anchored for the night in a large bay.

This bay would make a very fine harbour, and has very deep water,

We have about 25 miles further to go up the gulf before we land.

August 13th

Mr. M. Durack and I have been on shore again this morning looking for a good landing place for the horses, this is about the roughest spot that I have ever seen, a solid mass of stones and rocks some grass, but not a good kind.

Any amount of blacks camps and tracks, but no blacks visible.

We returned on board at 12, and started again with the tide at 1 o'clock.

We are now anchored 3 miles from the place where we shall have, to land, and about 43 miles from the open sea.

This' also is a very fine bay, and ought to make a good harbour, being of a very fine size, containing very deep water all over it, and being well protected from heavy winds and rough seas.

August 14th

Safely arrived at last. Went ashore to look for a good place to land horses also for grass and water. Found some fine water and a patch of good feed about 2 miles away. It will do for a start though how we shall fare after that I cannot say.

Your black mare died last night I do not know what was the matter with her, unless it was the long and close confinement on board.

All the horses have fallen away very much.

The schooner is, so inconveniently small that you can scarcely turn round without hitting against something.

It is a blessing that we shall soon be on shore again

It has taken all the afternoon to prepare a landing place for the horses, the shore being so boggy. They will have to swim the first 200 hundred yards from the ship.

August 15th

Commenced landing the Horses at 5 o'clock, and got them all right on shore by half past 10. We had Some difficulty, however, in driving them to the water and grass 2 miles away. Some went one way, some another. I and Joe and Mr. Emanuel were running all over the country after' then}, and could get only 10 to the water.

By sun down however we managed to get all together again. Some of the horses look wretched, especially those that were away all day without water. We did not see much grass in our pursuit of the horses today; where we are camped is the best.

August 16th

Mustered all the horses this morning. They are beginning to look clean and fresh already. You could track them wherever they go, they roll so much, and leave so much of their hair on the ground wherever they roll. You would think it was summer and they were losing their winter coat.

We pre landing some of our stores to-day.

August 17th

The horses stop here well. They come to the water of themselves when dry they will soon improve. We shall remain here till Monday,

August 18th, -

when we shall commence our journey however the schooner returns to Port Darwin tomorrow, so I shall not be able to write to you again for some time.

Will wire to you from Perth. no blacks visible since landing, but the smoke of their fires been everywhere.

THOMAS KILFOYLE

RIVER OF DESTINY - By MARY DURACK

OUR own history of the Ord River goes back only to 1879, when Alexander Forrest and his party were rewarded by its discovery for the long and arduous journey they had undertaken.

Its unwritten history recedes into the unknown ages of the aboriginal legend the "narungarni" or "time long past," when the sacred heroes of the dream-time bestrode earth and sky.

To the East Kimberley native, the river is part of his spiritual life.

"Cunnunurra" he calls it. meaning simply "the Great River."

A name that has recently been immortalised by a scientist who, in classifying its soils, has called the most common of these Cunnunurra Clay. Lazing for hours on the smooth, warm rock between the water-holes, in the halcyon days when there seemed nothing particular to, he bustled about, cooling off between times in the still clear pools, along with a crowd of natives on the look-out for crocodiles, I learnt, piece by piece, the legendary background of Cunnunurra.

The lubras would always giggle and whisper amongst themselves when my sister and I went bathing in a certain pool, but it was one of the less self-conscious small black boys who told us the secret. Spirit children were particularly prevalent in that spot, and it was thought a comical possibility that the two "white missus" might "catch" a black piccaninny by bathing there.

It seemed that long ago Bremturer, the rainbow serpent rose out of the Timor Sea, which was his home up to that time, and wriggled inland to sun himself. His twining, twisting serpent shape stretched away through three tribal territories, and as the grass tickled him, he wriggled himself gradually into the earth.

Towards midday it grew hot, and, too sleepy to crawl back home again, he drew a deep breath and sucked in the water from the sea till it came running in along the groove he had dug for himself and covered him from head to tail. He slumbered on happily, but other mightier sky heroes were not pleased because, although Bremurer was very powerful and was called Father of the Waters, it was not his business to make rivers or any features of the landscape.

The sky heroes were very jealous of their rights, and they said sternly, "All right. Father Bremurcr! You have made yourself a river and you may stay in it!" So, it is from the depths of the river that he has since carried on his restricted duties as guardian of unborn life and director of a few other departments.

Since he is a spirit, even the greater sky heroes cannot keep him locked up for ever, but he can only escape from time to time in the ephemeral form of the rainbow.

Every explorer of early Australian history hoped it would be his lot to discover the mighty river, then popularly believed to exist, that would lead him on into the very heart of the unknown continent. Captain Stokes believed he had discovered it when he sailed his craft into the tremendous tidal stream of the Victoria.

Philip King believed it to be one of the rivers opening from Cambridge Gulf, which he discovered in 1819. Hopefully he sailed up the river which bears his name, the King, to near the present site of Wyndham, but was soon disappointed, forced to leave the Gulf, he made a memo for future explorers that another large and promising river entered the Gulf on its western side.

When Forrest came upon the great water-course which he named the Ord after a popular Governor of the western State, he believed it might flow into some undiscovered inland lake or sea, but when, at its junction with another river which he named the Negri after Baron Negri, a German scientist, the Ord swung

north, he concluded it was the Gulf River of which King had spoken and entered it as such on the current map of Kimberley.

He was tempted to follow it to its conclusion, but sickness had broken out in his party and supplies were short, so he hastened on to the Overland Telegraph at Daly Waters.

What he had seen, however, was enough to convince him that the country watered by the Ord River was some of the richest pastoral land yet discovered in Australia.

“A country of outstanding beauty and boundless possibilities as a pastoral proposition,” he stated. “As far as can be ascertained there is nothing to be apprehended from either drought or flood.” ^{MM\(\)} M Daly Waters the news—and such things were news in those times—was telegraphed the length and breadth of the Continent, and soon more detailed reports made headlines in all Australian news-papers.

The story of what occurred from this time onwards is known to me in some detail from records in the keeping of my family, which was amongst those greatly stirred by Forrest’s report.

Settled in the Cooper’s Creek district of western Queensland and menaced constantly by drought and flood, they were eager to look further into the possibilities of this new pastoral land to the west.

My grandfather, with his friend Solomon Emanuel, in one of those not uncommon Jewish- Trish partnerships which seem to provide the essential elements of success, financed and organized an expedition to Cambridge Gulf—an exploring party that was to follow the course of the Ord from its junction with the Negri, where Forrest had left it, and thence to Beagle Bay, near the present port of Broome.

My grandfather’s younger brother, Michael Durack, who had come from Ireland as a child of three years and was then in his early thirties, was chosen as leader of the expedition. It was a wise choice, for Michael, a simple and retiring person, had already gained himself a reputation as a bushman of outstanding ability.

In the early days in western Queensland, it was upon him that the settlers had depended for most of their sustenance.

It was he who had taken the teams and the heavy swaying wagons back to Bourke and the more distant town of Wilcannia for stores; who had brought the Cooper cattle to market across a third of the continent, back and forth tirelessly, coming through the peril of drought and flood and fire, living often weeks, even months, at a time “off the country,” in the manner of the blacks, on crows, galahs, wallabies and the pounded brown seed of the nardoo, four-leaved clover o-f an arid wilderness.

Men had perished or won fame in the performance of lesser feats than were part of his yearly itinerary.

Tom Kilfoyle was his second in command—a hardy Irishman and one of the unforgettable “characters” of Australia’s pioneering days.

Kilfoyle was a staunch companion but a hard man to travel with, for he set himself and others a rigorous programme of efficiency, including the inevitable cheerless morning rise at “piccaninny daylight.”

Emanuel s eldest son, Sydney, was also one of the party. He celebrated his twenty-first birthday on the journey.

John Pentacost went as surveyor and geologist, and with two other young men the party was complete.

They sailed from Brisbane in July, 1882, and at Darwin chartered a small schooner to carry them and their twenty-seven head of horses, their equipment and provisions for six months to Cambridge Gulf.

They had an unpromising start, for the monsoon sprang upon them half way to their destination and they and their precious horses were buffeted about in tempestuous seas for a solid week.

The two native boys they had picked up in Darwin nearly died of fright and sea-sickness, and declared that the old men of the Cunnunurra tribes were “singing them dead.”

Miraculously, only two of the horses perished, but by the time the storm had subsided and they sailed into the brown, alligator-infested waters of the Gulf the surviving twenty-five head did not look fit for an arduous exploring venture.

When the schooner lay grounded at low tide they made a rough bridge of mangrove saplings and got their horses ashore just ahead of the incoming tide.

This was on the western side of the Gulf, where the Ord was shown to empty into the inlet on the existing maps of the time.

They camped for ten days in a pocket of good grass and water in order to refresh the horses before setting off on the inland journey, while the rugged bastions of the Gulf blazed with the signal fires of the blacks.

Alas for their illusions of having been landed near the mouth of the Ord! River after river they encountered, creek after creek, much of the country barren and mountainous, heart-breaking to the would-be pastoralist, ruinous to his horses, and never a stream that could be remotely identified, after following it for many weary miles, with the great Ord River of Forrest’s recent discovery.

They named rivers, ranges and landmarks as they encountered them, including the Durack, Pentacost, Bow and Dunham Rivers, the last after the first priest to visit the hardy Irish settlers, on Cooper’s Creek.

It was not long before they encountered their first natives face to face; the encounter was friendly. They had learnt from experience that the native was seldom hostile on first encounter, and that the brandishing of firearms could be a fatal mistake.

Trouble was started inadvertently later when, firing at an alligator that had caught one of their horses by the nose, they were surprised to observe what had appeared to the charred trees along the bank of a river suddenly come to life and scamper away in terror.

Holding branches over their heads, natives had been closely watching them, and this evidence of the strangers’ “fire magic” filled them with awe and apprehension.

Word of the white men’s coming travelled swiftly through the country. Fires were started in the hope of preventing their approach, but no spears were launched, despite much brave show of mounting them in fiercely ornamented woomeras.

Over mountain country and plain, horses dying or shedding their shoes, and provisions running very low, members of the party were now forced to walk most of the way, and their own stout boots were torn to ribbons over the rugged, stony country. Tom Kilfoyle, an amateur saddler of some skill, saved the situation by cutting up the saddle flaps into rough and ready footgear, and hammering out copper rivets to serve as nails.

But one fine day they came at last upon the welcome sight of Alexander Forrest’s marked tree at the junction of two rivers and knew they had discovered the Ord at last. Their unexpectedly long and arduous journey had been due to the mistaken idea that the Ord entered the Gulf on the western instead of the eastern side, a misconception they were now able to rectify.

Here indeed was the country of their heart's desire—rich pastoral land with wide plains of Mitchell and Flinders grass, watered, apart from the big river, by many streams and billabongs teeming with fish and wild game.

Already they saw their herds spread about this country, fattening and multiplying. The journey was far from finished, but once they had located the Ord the journey was more or less plain sailing.

Even so, the last few hundred miles from the Fitzroy River to The Ord River to the coast found them nearly spent, their improvised boots worn to ribbons, their feet cut and blistered, their provisions exhausted, and their twenty-seven horses dwindled to eleven head.

At Beagle Bay they were picked up at last by a chartered vessel and taken to Fremantle, where, met by the Forrest brothers, they discussed the glowing future of the Kimberley district.

To stock it, they knew, meant a journey of untold miles across the continent, driving cattle every inch of the way, at the mercy of drought and flood, of wind and weather, following the courses of many rivers from water-hole to water-hole, pushing out west but turning and twisting in the process to even point of the compass.

It was a challenge to the skill and endurance of a cattleman to whom for years the silent mystery of the far north had presented a tantalising problem. It was those two immortals of early droving days, Nat (known to his intimates as "Bluey") Buchanan and Bob Button who led the first cattle on to the Ord River for the Melbourne millionaire firm of Osmond and Panton.

The Durack-Emanuel syndicate had wasted no time in laying claim upon the splendid country nearer the Territory border line, so the first drovers took their cattle west to the head of the Forest River, where they established the Ord River Station.

Osmond and Panton brought their private yacht, the "Cushidoo," round to the Gulf with stores for the new station, and despatched a drover, Sandy Maugher, whom they had picked up in Darwin, to inform the settlers of their arrival.

It seems to have been a tall order for a lone man, but Maugher was game. He followed the course of the Ord in all its twists and turns as far as the great gorge, site of the proposed dam of later years, where he was baulked by the impenetrable rocky walls.

Forced to make a detour of some sixty miles, he was a month in reaching his destination.

That he ever reached it at all is the wonder today. In three weeks, when he was strong enough, he returned with Bob Button to the Gulf, where they found that the "Cushidoo" had set sail and that of their precious provisions only a heap of ashes remained.

The blacks had got in first, and Maugher and Button were forced to return to their station empty handed.

Close upon the tracks of the first party came the cattle for the rich border country, Rosewood, Argyle and Lissadell, watered by the Ord River and its tributaries—stock far travelled from Cooper's Creek on a journey of two years and nine months' duration.

Soon the pads of stock bred on Queensland pastures wound down through thickets of pandanus and paperbark to the broken water-holes of the Ord.

Queensland cattle drank long and lustily of clear Ord water and forgot their nagging home sickness. The subsequent history of the Ord is the story of East Kimberley itself, for the great river is the main artery of the countryside, beating a monotonous but ever-changing tempo of the years, wet season and dry, good season and bad.

She exerts a strange fascination on the beholder, giving rise to a local legend that anyone who drinks Ord River water must inevitably return to it, be it from the farthestmost ends of the earth.

Never, in all the sixty years since white man first laid claim upon the country she embraces, has she failed our trust.

Every year, fed from the many streams and minor creeks of her upper reaches, she has come surging to the Gulf, gathering up the fallen timber and debris strewn upon her part-dry bed, bearing it aloft in urgent cataract.

“The Ord’s down!” they say, hearing, often at some still hour of the night, the increasing roar of the oncoming torrent.

Woe betides man or beast who lingers then in the river bed! In the morning black and white turn, out to view the spectacle—a regatta on the Ord of floating logs and driftwood—brown waters swirling smoothly to the sea, filling the channels and breakaways into which the fish and crocodiles dive for safety.

To the Ord River black that is the happiest time in all the year, when he strips off his clothing and sets off with his fishing spears, to return at evening, he and his mate groaning beneath the weight of a pole supporting a line of barramundi, rock cod and mullet anything from fifteen to fifty pounds in weight.

Your Ord River darkie would scorn the white man’s fish stories, for many of the monsters he has speared could scarcely be spanned between his outstretched hands.

So, every year the Gulf receives, without a murmur of thanks, a wealth of water that, if utilized, would turn a naturally rich country into an immensely richer and more prosperous one; which brings us to the newest phase in the history of Cunnunurra.

Today we see her waters being plumbed and her gorges surveyed for the post-war project of a mighty dam that, when completed, will dwarf even Australia’s largest reservoir, the great Hume Dam. The richness of Ord River soil and the variety of industries it is able to support will be famous then, even though the country may remain primarily a beef-producing area, and the finest sight she has to offer may be the great herds of fat cattle, no longer urged on their way by patient droving hands, but trucked down the river road to Wyndham, a town destined perhaps, in the not remote future, to be one of the world’s busiest beef-exporting ports.

It will be good to see the prospering of a country in which one has faith, but the thought of it brings regret that then the lovely loneliness of the Ord will be gone forever.

Somehow, I feel Father Bremurer would not approve.

Old Paddy, king of the bush tribe that still camps near her bank, declares that the waters will surely disappear if such a liberty is taken. He himself may even refuse to “sing rain,” but I fancy that old Paddy, always an opportunist, will not be backward in accepting the fruits that will spring from the irrigated Cunnunurra clay when mighty man-made gates imprison the waters of her wanton flood.

ZZ06B - MARY DURACK'S VERSION FROM

KINGS IN GRASS CASTLES – CHAPTER 20 - TO FIND A RIVER

The years 1881 to 1882. Organising for the expedition to inspect the Kimberley district.

Leave-taking of Stumpy Michael Durack and party from Brisbane.

A disastrous beginning and a second start.

Arrival at Port Darwin and hiring of the schooner Levuka to Cambridge Gulf.

Rough passage.

Arrival in a strange land.

Letter from Cambridge Gulf.

Hard travelling and hostile natives.

Deep rivers and open plains.

It was agreed on the return of the travellers from the western State that the proposed journey of inspection called for a party of expert bushmen of proved toughness and resource, including at least one scientist, and that their horses must be the best procurable.

A supply of rations and equipment must be selected with an eye to weight and with foresight to any possible emergency and arrangements made for the chartering of three vessels—one to take men, horses and gear from Brisbane to Port Darwin, another to convey them from there to Cambridge Gulf and a third to pick them up when they had battled through to the west coast.

Distances and travelling times had to be nicely calculated, for once in the unknown wilds of Kimberley they would be cut off from all means of communication until their journey's end.

The estimated cost of the expedition was £4,000 which Grandfather and Emanuel agreed to share equally.

That Stumpy Michael was to be leader of the party was already a foregone conclusion since he combined all the necessary qualities of bushcraft, leadership and sure judgement of country with a reputation, amounting almost to a local superstition, of always 'getting through'.

There remained only the difficulty of breaking the news to his wife, who with their three children was then awaiting his return in Brisbane.

Kate Durack had already said goodbye to the home at Thylungra and she and her husband had been inspecting small properties within reasonable distance of the coast when Grandfather had wired from Sydney suggesting the interview with Forrest: in Western Australia.

Leaving his family comfortably enough accommodated at his brother's recently acquired hotel in South Brisbane, Stumpy Michael had obeyed the call with his wife's words ringing in his ears:

'Go to Perth if you must, but remember, Michael, your pioneering days are over.

We are settling down in a comfortable home as you promised, where the children can go to school and you can have a rest from all this travelling.'

Even with the support of his elder brother, Stumpy Michael found the interview with his wife one of the hardest hurdles to surmount.

'It's an imposition, Patsy!' Kate gasped when they broke the news.

'Hasn't it ever occurred to you that poor Michael has a right to live his own life?'

Grandfather was astonished.

'But my dear sister, Michael has always led his own life!'

'If I was your sister, Patsy, I would probably agree with you, but I am a McInnes and a Scot. We never lived each other's lives like you Durack's. Besides, Michael hasn't the strength any more.

There's that chest trouble of his and the doctor said...'

'Nonsense!' Grandfather scoffed, irritated as always by any suggestion of ill health in his family. 'Anyone'd think he was an old man to hear ye and what is he?—thirty-five and never fitter in his life!'

'Just this last time, Kate,' her husband promised. 'I'll select the finest piece of country in Kimberley for young Ambrose and get someone to manage it until he's old enough to take over.'

'And by that time my boys and probably Uncle Darby's too, will be there,' Grandfather enthused, 'all making their fortunes. What would your son be saying if he knew ye had spoiled his chances?'

Kate made a final bid to reason.

'Tell me, Michael, do you really want to go?'

Stumpy Michael hesitated.

How explain to a loving and commonsense woman the lure of new country, good, bad or indifferent? How find words to say that for all his passionate devotion to his family the thought of leading this expedition to find the course of a mysterious river was the breath of life to him?

'Yes, Kate. Yes, my dear. In a sense, I do want to go.'

The intended leisurely inspection of 'likely little properties' went by the board.

A 14,000-acre estate near Darra, a few miles out of Brisbane, of which Kate and her husband had been doubtful on first sight, suddenly appeared to Stumpy Michael as having endless possibilities and on June 6 **he purchased Archerfield from one Mary Elizabeth Murphy for £15,000.**

Grandfather, assessing his brother's new acquisition, inspected the stock and scratched about for mineral possibilities.

'Some fine horses there all right, Michael.

The land's not up to much but ye might find ye've got a coal mine here.'

'I'll put down a drill when I get back,' his brother said.

While Kate moved in with the family, her husband's attention was fully occupied organising the Kimberley expedition.

There had been no need to advertise for men.

Emanuel had enlisted the services of one John Pentacost, surveyor and geologist who had been for some time tutor to his boys, and had asked that his eldest son, Sydney, be another member of the party.

The remaining three, Tom Kilfoyle (Darby Durack's brother-in-law), James Josey and Tom Horan, all tried and experienced men, had been contacted by wire in various parts of Queensland:

WILL YOU JOIN EXPEDITION KIMBERLEY DISTRICT W A STOP AWAY ABOUT FOUR MONTHS STOP WIRE IMMEDIATELY IF INTERESTED AND MEET US BRISBANE EARLIEST DURACK

In a week all three had materialised at Grandfather's Bowen Hotel.(LOCATED IN SOUTH BRISBANE)

'How soon do you want to start?'

'Two or three weeks from now. Time to see your folks and cancel your commitments for a few months.'

'We're on!' - 'You haven't asked about the pay.'

'I thought we might be paying you to let us come,' Horan said.

Kilfoyle, bluff and down to earth, dismissed this suggestion, though he too had probably not given much thought to the financial side of it before. 'And them with all the money in the world! Not on yer life!'

'It'll be a hard trip,' Grandfather said, 'and we're prepared to pay handsome for the best men. What do you say to three pound a week—all found?'

'Three pound ten,' Kilfoyle said.

'It's a deal!'

Twenty-three tried and well-bred horses were purchased for an average of £30 a head from breeders around Brisbane, while Emanuel busied himself with the selection of fifteen hundredweight of rations and equipment from Sydney stores.

The items ran as follows:

800 lbs flour (16 bags.)/ 30 lbs tea / 140 lbs sugar / 10 lbs rice / 250 lbs salt meat / 10 lbs currants / 15 lbs tobacco / 50 lbs salt / 20 lbs soap / 1 box caps / 6 pint pots / 6 each knives, forks, spoons / 6 tin plates / 1 camp oven / 1 gun / 2 cwt horse shoes / 1 axe, and sundry tools / 2 billies / 6 tins / pepper / 4 tins mustard / 6 tins curry powder / 12 tins jam / 5 lbs shot / 1 can gunpowder / 60 doz. Matches / 14 lbs horse nails / Saddler's tools / 12 blankets / 10 pack saddles / 6 riding saddles

The list, by reason of its rigorous simplicity, makes interesting comparison with the cumbersome equipment of other exploring parties that set forth with wagons, drays and herds of sheep for killing on the way.

Stumpy Michael, like Nat Buchanan and John Costello, had a simple formula for such expeditions:

'Travel light and ride good horses.'

On July 6, 1882, friends and family farewelled the travellers on the chartered steamship Volmer.

Kate Durack's apprehensions for her husband's safety increased to near frenzy when two days after the departure fierce storms lashed the Queensland coast.

Several wrecks were reported during the next few days but no word of the Volmer until a wire came from Rockhampton, 350 miles north of Brisbane:

VOLMER AGROUND ALL ASHORE SAFE AND WELL RETURNING COACH BRISBANE IMMEDIATELY DURACK

Gathered again at Archerfield the travellers told their tale of seemingly miraculous escape from the fury of the hurricane.

Half the precious horses had been battered to death in the hold, most of the provisions washed overboard or ruined by salt water.

The remaining horses had been swum ashore and left at John Costello's Rockhampton property, Cawarral, since it had seemed impractical to return them to Brisbane in their shocked condition to begin the voyage anew.

This misfortune increased the cost of the expedition by well over £1,000 but the organisers considered themselves fortunate in being able to charter another steamship almost immediately.

A second start, with a fresh supply of provisions and horses, assembled with astonishing speed, was made by the 900-ton steamship Vortigen on July 19.

Stumpy Michael, starting his diary from that day, commented blithely on our colourful crew, skippered by Captain Brown, pilot Captain Dark, first mate Jack Green!...

Passage between Brisbane and Townsville extremely rough.

Spend most of my time in the hold with the horses, at one stage fearing another disaster...

Smooth waters Townsville to Torres Strait. We have now named all the horses and selected our respective favourites for the journey.

Mine, a piebald of the circus kind which I have named Doughboy.

Thursday Island...One thousand, two hundred and thirty-five sea miles from our dear ones...

Another 730 miles of tropic calm and colour brought them around the tip of Arnhem Land to the little Territory port on the red cliff above the mangroves where everything upwards from the jetty, indicated at high tide by tins stuck up on sticks, bore the mark of makeshift and lassitude.

Ramshackle tin sheds, Chinese huts and Malay shanties hugged the edges of the steaming mud alive with hermit crabs and scavenging seabirds.

A white-clad Customs official in tropical topee and sandals, waving a palm-leaf fan, enquired their business and directed them up the rough roadway to the straggling town on the jungle's rim above.

As the port of a new land boom, Darwin would hardly have inspired confidence, with her few Chinese stores and government offices, private houses built on stilts and straggling tumbledown shanties, all partly obscured by long rank grass and fighting a losing battle against white ants.

The population was preponderantly Chinese with a sprinkling of European, Malay and Aboriginal. Blacks and Asiatics dozed in the shade of trees or lounged in narrow doorways, while white men in a state of chronic ennui reclined in cane chairs on latticed veranda's, syphoning soda water into whisky, rum or 'square face' gin.

Sight of strangers in the port caused a stir of interest and the newcomers were pressed for confirmation of rumours that cattle were soon to start overland from Queensland into Kimberley.

Armchair politicians under every veranda in the rambling streets propounded upon what should be done with the Territory, half a million square miles, then boasting hardly more than a thousand white inhabitants, four or five thousand Asiatics and a few thousand Aborigines.

The Asiatics, encouraged to supply cheap labour for the seventies, had quickly graduated from work on the plantations or on the railway project between Darwin to Pine Creek and had either gone prospecting or set up as shopkeepers in the port.

The newcomers listened with some bewilderment to a variety of opinions.

It seemed generally agreed that the land was rich and that rice, cotton, sugar, tobacco and tropical fruits could be grown in abundance.

Some contended, however, that transport must come first, that a railway run up from Port Augusta along the route of the OT would transform Darwin from an obscure tropical port to ‘the Singapore of the southern hemisphere’.

Some said the country’s first need was more white women,

others more amenities, or a strong-minded Vermin Board to deal with dingoes, tick, buffalo fly and troublesome blacks.

Some held that the natives should be gathered into compounds and trained for service, others that it was impossible to train or educate them for anything since as a race they were mentally backward and congenitally treacherous.

Another faction held that success could only come from the organised development of mining, beginning with the immediate despatch of ‘the bloody Celestials’ at present engaged in systematically smuggling Territory gold to their home land.

Others argued that this was primarily a pastoral country, that the cattle industry should be developed, with meat works in Darwin to ship away frozen and tinned beef to the world’s markets.

‘A great place for talking,’ Stumpy Michael wrote to his family, ‘but very little done.’

Enquiries for a ship to take them to Cambridge Gulf brought forward one of the few really energetic inhabitants of the sleepy port—

Captain Murray of the 120-ton schooner Levuka, who bustled about arrangements with every show of zest for the adventure.

It was on his suggestion that they engaged two Aborigines of the local Larakia tribe—reputedly reliable fellows and good trackers revelling in the white man names of Pannikin and Pintpot.

A combined farewell and twenty-first birthday party for young Syd Emanuel was organised at the Palmerston Club, and ended uproariously when an improvised band, marching to the tattoo of kettle drums, escorted the wayfarers to their ship to catch the midnight tide.

All through the Timor Sea adverse winds lashed blue walls of water against the Levuka’s, frail hulk.

The horses, whinnying in terror, were thrown from side to side in the narrow hold and the native boys, huddled together, too sick and frightened to eat, seemed likely to die before they could touch land. When Stumpy Michael spoke to them encouragingly, they rolled hopeless eyes.

‘Finish, Boss! Finish.’

On the seventh day out two of the horses were so severely injured that Stumpy Michael was forced to shoot them.

While hauling the carcasses up, the pole on which he was balancing rolled in a sudden pitching of the ship and he was hurled ten feet into the hold, badly spraining his shoulder and injuring his back.

After eight miserable days, when the ship swayed towards Cambridge Gulf, he was just able to limp about again with his arm in a sling.

As the schooner rounded a small island, rugged and cleft with gullies and ravines, its beaches criss-crossed with turtle tracks, the Gulf channel could be seen swinging away between broken sandstone ranges.

'The last man in here, as far as I know, was Phillip King, in the Mermaid, about sixty years ago,' Captain Murray said. 'I wouldn't care to be navigating these shoals and reefs and tidal rips without his charts.'

Stumpy Michael, comparing these with the map of later years, picked up what he judged to be the mouth of the Ord River, but Captain Murray was doubtful.

'It might be any one of a number of streams coming in from either side and this is hardly an inviting country to be lost in.'

Evening closed in over the lonely gulf.

A dark cloud of vampire shapes, wheeling and squeaking, rose from the mangrove thicket and white cockatoos went screeching off into ranges whose fortress shapes, rising 1,000 feet sheer above salt marsh, King had well named The Bastions.

By morning, on a swiftly receding tide, the ship lay careened in mud.

Flat-topped ranges, touched by the opal colours of sunrise, glowed like the mountains of dreams, lending false colour to the tide-churned waters of the Gulf.

Getting the horses ashore before the turn of the tide was an anxious business.

The animals had finished all the water and hay aboard the day before and stood dejectedly in the hold with hollow flanks and drooping heads.

They seemed scarcely fit to walk ashore, let alone carry men and packs more than 600 miles over rough country.

Michael was confident that they would pick up after a few days' spell on fresh feed and water but Captain Murray, now thoroughly sceptical about the whole venture, reminded him that King had failed to find drinking water thereabouts and had remarked even dingoes and kangaroos lapping from salt pits.

Stumpy Michael and his men, however, were already over the side with helpers from the ship's crew, ploughing through the reeking mud to cut mangroves for a rough landing-stage to the shore.

When all was ready the horses were hoisted from the hold and coaxed across the branches. They floundered and sank in mud and, as the tide turned, jibbed, weak and trembling, on the edge of deepening channels.

Water was swirling over the mangrove bridge before all horses and equipment were ashore.

At once the search for fresh water was begun.

Stumpy Michael and Captain Murray climbed a steep point to look across a vast expanse of marsh, shimmering like a hoar frost under a layer of salt, patterned with the tracks of wild creatures, scattered with the branches of trees washed down by rivers from far inland. Isolated ranges with the buttes and talus slopes of African table mountains rose from the level plain, intensely blue and purple in the hard light of afternoon, some seeming to float above the horizon on shimmering drifts of mirage.

Captain Murray said he could hardly bring himself to leave his friends with their near-spent horses in so fantastic and desolate place and urged that, failing to find fresh water, they would abandon their project.

Stumpy Michael informed him that he had many a time found water in more unlikely and barren spots than this, and pointed to where the others on the plain below were cooeing and waving their hats.

A recent storm had filled a number of holes and shallow billabongs, and brought on isolated pockets of good grass to which the horses were led and hobbled out to graze.

A camp was made and a tree marked 'D1.', the first of twenty-four marked trees denoting stages between Cambridge Gulf and the Negri River.

Nightfall found them in a circle of blacks' fires, glowing in pinpoints of spinifex from range and pinnacle like a chain of festive lanterns.

Faintly, from the darkness, came the sharp tapping of hardwood sticks, the hollow far-carrying throb of a didgeridoo, the wailing notes of Aboriginal chanting.

A homely sound [Stumpy Michael recorded], bringing me back in memory to our people at Thylungra.

The boys, Pintpot and Pannikin, very much afraid and huddled in their blankets at the fire, for always with the blacks it is the same old story of the terrible tribes next-door, but after meeting them in many parts of the continent I must say I have found them everywhere much the same.

Having entered the day's events in his journal he wrote his wife a letter to be cherished and preserved for the grandchildren he would never see.

Cambridge Gulf,

17th August 1882.

My dearest Kate,

I hope these few lines will find you and all my poor little children in good health as this leaves all of us at present...This is the 4th letter I have written you since I left home.

Oh, how I would love to hear now how you all are...

Well, since we left Port Darwin till we came here we were eight days.

Bad weather all the time so we could not sail and we had two of our best horses died on the voyage.

I had a fall into the hold myself while hoisting one of the poor creatures overboard and have come ashore here with my arm in a sling.

We have only twenty-one horses now.

We got goods and horses off on shore today and pitched our camp.

We will have to give the animals a week's spell here before we start. They are very poor, in fact it is a marvel they did not all die on the little schooner.

The day we got here we gave them the last drink of water we had on board and the last bit of hay, so you see they had a narrow escape.

Now they have plenty of grass and water, thank God.

Although the country on the coast along here is very rough there seems to be plenty of fresh water in every gully.

We had a great job landing the horses and were very lucky we did not drown any of them.

My dearest Kate, I think we will be much longer over this trip than I expected on account of the horses being so poor so I don't think you need expect to hear from me now for about four months at least.

The day I get to a telegraph office I will send you a wire and as soon as you get it send Patsy a wire that same day and let him know how we got on.

The day you hear from me, wherever I am, you may depend I will travel as fast as the mail till I get home, if God spares me.

Don't forget to write every fortnight to Perth for the next three months and please God I will get your letters all together when I get there.

Give me all the news of the children and how they are getting on...and has the baby begun to walk yet?

Don't forget to kiss them every morning and night for me till I get back to them.

My kindest regards to all the friends and a thousand kisses to you and all my poor little children and believe me, my dearest Kate,

Your fond and loving husband till death,

MICHAEL DURACK.

Three days later the travellers watched the departing vessel out of sight and resigned themselves to camp for another ten days while the spent horses recovered from their sea journey.

John Pentacost became absorbed in examining rocks and looking for the colours of gold while others amused themselves fishing and shooting at the big man-eating crocodiles that dozed in the mud or floated on the turbulent brown waters.

Some of the party waded to the gulf islands at low tide, returning with hawk-beaked turtles and hats filled with turtle eggs.

Stumpy Michael and Tom Kilfoyle, his second in command, walked for miles surveying their situation and became increasingly confident of having landed at the mouth of the Ord River.

The stream ran west from the gulf but they had no doubt it would presently turn south and lead them to Forrest's marked tree at its junction with the Negri.

They broke camp at dawn on August 24 and, saddling packs and riding horses, set off along the mangrove-bordered river.

Four miles of rough country opened on to good grass prairies, ribbed with sandstone ridges and cleft with a bewildering network of nameless streams among which the original watercourse was lost.

They ran up what seemed the largest of these many creeks until the jagged arms of cliffs dropped down to hold it to an impenetrable northward course.

Unlike the sprawling Queensland rivers that spread far and wide after the rains to disappear sometimes completely when the floods had run their course, the larger of these Kimberley streams had bitten deep, tortuous channels in the plains and worn towering gorges through the ranges.

Expanses of dry bed alternated with deep green reaches where waters were held between high banks, creviced by centuries of wind and water, luxuriant with trees, creepers and trailing palms.

Disappointed, they crossed where the waters ran between heavy cedars, Leichhardt pines and drooping pandanus palms and where the horses, bending to drink, stiffened and drew back.

The cause of their fear was not far to find—a party of natives on the bank above, standing solemn and withdrawn with their long-barbed fishing spears.

They appeared strong and well-made, like a people who lived well, their naked bodies heavily decorated with tribal scars, the men with hair pulled stiffly from broad foreheads and bound at the back in peculiar elongated knobs.

A woman screamed and ran for hiding, dragging her child by the hand, but the men remained standing.

Stumpy Michael stretched out a hand to them in a friendly gesture, whereupon they turned stolid backs and sat down, as though determined to show neither interest nor fear, hoping perhaps that when they turned again the apparitions would have passed on their way, out of sight and out of time, a thing for wonder and memory, a daydream to record in corroboree.

The white men rode on, through spreading eucalypts with trunks smooth and clean as though freshly white-washed, to where another river entered the channel from the north.

They struck uneasy camp, for the water was salt here, the horses thirsty and nervous and the two native boys apprehensive of a night attack.

They were not disturbed, but in the morning, they found a maze of footprints encircling their camp.

Following the course of this new river they were cheered by the sight of open plains and abundant grasses—

a wonderland of pasture and fine trees. Huge bottle-shaped boabs—friendly giants of the plains—dangled big velvet brown nuts from their dropsical branches silver-grey and leafless in the dry season.

The slender stems of wild cotton bore a dazzle of saffron blooms and red-brown pods spilling a froth of white down.

Bauhinia branches were heavy with the scarlet blossoms whose pistils swelled to gleaming seed pods that rattle on the wind.

Cork-woods spurted fierce flames of flower from leafless branches.

Between the trees the even spread of golden grass gave an impression of park land, artistically planned, a reserve of wild life where bustards strutted in stately families, pausing to regard the strangers with haughty surprise.

Wallabies and kangaroos stopped in their tracks to turn soft bibbed fronts in curiosity.

Brolgas rose in great flocks and with them many bright birds familiar to the Queenslanders, with some others that were new to them.

Stumpy Michael recalled how his wife had lamented the lack of colour and variety in the western Queensland scene and longed to tell her of this country—

an artist's paradise of scenery in the grand manner.

If one were to paint this country in its true colours [he wrote], I doubt it would be believed. It would be said at least that the artist exaggerated greatly, for never have I seen such richness and variety of hue as in these ranges and in the vivid flowers of this northern spring.

PROMISED LAND

The year 1882. A crocodile attacks.

Durack River found and named.

Hostile natives on Pentacost.

Splendid grass country.

Naming of Dunham and Bow Rivers.

Marooned on a precipice.

Loss of horses and worn boots.

Shortage of provisions.

Auriferous country.

Failure to short-cut Leopold Range.

Fever.

Arrival at Minnie Station,

Long wait at Beagle Bay.

Arrival at Fremantle in the Mary Smith.

The river swung north, south and west on a tortuous route through plain and range, cutting through dense pandanus thickets and tattered cajuputs, cascading over rocky falls and into still reaches of pale blue lotus where jabiru and ibis preened and fished.

When the water ran fresh they rode in to drink and leaning forward in their saddles dipped down their pannikins.

The sudden, terrified scream of a horse, a wild lashing of water, sent the packs scattering up the bank and set the riders instantly on guard.

One of the horses, seized by the nose between the teeth of a twelve-foot crocodile, was pulling and scrambling for a foothold on the slippery bed.

Kilfoyle fired quickly, the monster unlocked its jaws and disappeared and the horse, shaken and bleeding, stumbled from the water and up the bank.

In an instant the quiet scene became pandemonium.

Cockatoos and flying foxes rose in noisy alarm and what had seemed a forest of small charred trees on the opposite bank turned to running, gesticulating black figures, streaking off with terrified cries into the long grass.

The horse, caught half a mile across the plain, relieved of its packs, and the severe wounds on its nose, neck and shoulders treated with coal tar, was soon moving quietly along with its mates.

When the river turned north to be joined by a large creek functioning from the west, it was realised that this too was not the Ord.

Pentacost, sketching its course on the empty map, named it the Durack.

Now plains and parklands faded into rugged country where they rode in weird cities of termite strongholds.

Scarcely a shape that human sculptors might devise had not been wrought by these myriad white ant builders, working in the dark, conjuring fantastic biblical images, hooded and cloaked, squat Buddhas, gorillas, and madman's castles with domes, turrets and minarets.

Each took its colour from the surrounding earth—red, ochre, dun-grey—some so small and fine as to crumble under the horses' hoofs, others looming fifteen feet above the spinifex.

The party made camp on the Durack tributary and Stumpy Michael, Kilfoyle and Emanuel climbed a nearby vantage point to survey the lay of the land.

Far and away to the north and west, ranges fell from flat tops or rugged pinnacles in folds like sculptured drapes of pallid gold studded with emeralds of spinifex.

Trapped in hills, there was no choice but to proceed on foot to the south-east, leading and driving the horses over dangerous ravines and sheer rock crevasses, with nothing to be seen from every summit but spinifex ranges and jagged rocks clutched by the talon roots of stunted eucalypts.

Anxiously they watched the horses falter, too tired to pull at the scattered grass, some casting their shoes and limping on bleeding hoofs.

When lower country opened at last they made painful progress downward to a good camp, resolved upon a two days' spell to renew shoes and gather energy for a south-eastern march—time at last to shoot a wild turkey and cook it, feathers and all, in an earthen oven covered with coals

A river, running swiftly to the gulfs head, gave every promise of being the Ord at last.

They ran it up for eight miles through rough country and rank kerosene grass towering high above their heads, where Pintpot and Pannikin, fearing ambush, rode warily, their eyes keen as hawks on every movement of grass and foliage.

'Look out! Blackfellow come up behind!'

The riders turned to see over one hundred naked warriors, painted, befeathered and armed, stamping down the grass, springing with flourish of spears and boomerangs from behind trees and boulders.

Every man had his hand upon his firearm, but Stumpy Michael ordered restraint.

He had faced angry blacks before but had never found them over-anxious to hurl the spears they brandished so bravely.

Most genuine attacks took place under cover of darkness or from behind rocks or trees, when men least suspected their danger.

A cry of savage rage went up as he rode forward slowly with hand outstretched.

Spears quivering in throwing sticks were sullenly lowered as a dervish dance of old men leapt from behind, waving branches of leaping flame. In seconds the rank, resinous grass along the river bank was blazing to the tree tops, fanned by an east wind.

The frightened horses reared and balked but the fire was blowing the other way.

'Hold steady,' Stumpy Michael told his men. 'Don't fire and don't run.'

They remained as quietly as rearing horses would allow while the blacks, trapped between river and fire, turned in disorder, plunged into the water and disappeared.

The party followed the river until it dwindled into ranges to the south-east, whereupon they named it the Pentacost and camped to consider their situation.

While scouts went out to survey the countryside others caught barramundi, cat-fish and turtles in the newly named river.

Sentinel tribesmen, perched at safe distances, watched quietly, ignoring peace messages shouted and mimed by the Territory boys who disdainfully pronounced them 'myalls' ignorant of a superior language.

The boys were less nervous now and found merriment in simple incidents, delighting in the discovery of familiar birds, animals and edible roots in this alien country.

Inspection showed that days of hard travelling had been in vain.

Cut off by ranges to the south-east, they were forced to retrace their tracks and strike camp under the shadow of Mt Cockburn south.

From here Stumpy Michael and Kilfoyle followed fertile valleys and fitful streams in anxious search of the lost river, camped on beds of grass without nets and with saddles for pillows, slept soundly within a circle of native fires.

Their joy of beautiful country, the discovery of many of Queensland's best grasses and remarkable landmarks such as the strange, **bald hills they named the 'Sugar-loaves'** was shadowed with grave concern.

Coming on another good stream, they returned to bring on their companions, but seven miles up their hopes were shattered again when the river veered west.

Here a horse died of a restless wandering disease and others were sickening.

Stumpy Michael named this sturdy stream the Dunham, after the pioneer priest of western Queensland.

Anxiety deepened when a mare broke its hobbles and was lost and when Michael's favourite horse, **Doughboy, fell in a rocky pass and broke its leg.**

Forced to shoot his faithful mount, he named a hill nearby to its memory.

Next day a mare they had been carefully nursing along died foaling and with other horses sickly and weak the situation began to look grim indeed.

Winding and turning for over one hundred miles over range and plain and river they had still come no more than fifty—in a straight line—from their starting place.

They were forced to abandon precious pack saddles and to cut down on rations.

The salt beef ran out and tinned foods were low, but there was kangaroo and wild game and fish in yet another river which led them south on rising hopes that were rudely shattered when it turned in a capricious hairpin bend to the north-west.

This stream they named the Bow, after the Irish river that marked the old boundary between Counties Galway and Clare.

They had realised now the truth of their dilemma.

Captain Murray's fears that the map maker's 'conjectured course' of the Ord had been badly out were justified and it was obvious that the big river must enter the gulf from the eastern side.

Now, confronted with another range whose sheer slopes rose rugged and forbidding in the hard light, the men realised that their worn boots could not stand up to the climb.

Kilfoyle, Jack-of-all-trades and master of makeshift, cut into leather bags and saddle flaps, marked out the size of each man's foot and attached soles to uppers with copper rivets hammered out for nails.

Meanwhile Stumpy Michael and Emanuel rode on through spear grass foothills and climbed ridge upon ridge to a range summit broken like the battlements of an ancient castle.

Far below stretched the golden Kimberley savannah lands, cut through by green ribbons of timbered gullies and creeks.

Seeking a short cut back Emanuel inveigled his mare down a steep pinch to a narrow ledge, only to find himself on the edge of a sheer precipice and unable to return the way he had come.

Stumpy Michael, making a two-mile circuit, surveyed the perpendicular from 300 feet below and declared that Emanuel must leave the mare for the night and get down as best he could.

Emanuel removed the saddle, soothed his frightened mount and made hazardous descent.

Next morning all hands, armed with Pentacost's geological tools, cold chisels and tomahawks, cut a narrow footway upward from the ledge and coaxed the trembling animal to safety.

Fortified with Kilfoyle's new boots, the party veered east and camped that night within two miles of the Ord which they came upon almost without warning early next morning—a twenty-chain width of water, reaching out of sight between luxurious trees.

As they rode on, the unearthly stillness of noon day settled over the great river.

Pelicans and cranes were still as though carved in stone and crocodiles lay log-like on the muddy banks.

Six miles up another stream entering from the east clearly answered Forrest's description of the junction of the Negri and the Ord.

About 130 miles from their starting point on the gulf, they had trailed over twice the distance in their anxious search and although they faced another 500 miles and more of hard travelling the route ahead was already mapped, the long uncertainty at an end.

Our satisfaction at this discovery can be better imagined than described.

Camped. Marked tree 'D24'.

Here was the pioneer land seeker's dream-come-true.

High-water level marked by grass and brushwood caught up in river trees thirty or forty feet above the bed indicated the mighty volumes of water that swept the channels during monsoonal rains, but there was no evidence of inundation on the plains above and the vegetation was nowhere that of a country subject to long, rainless periods.

Here the trees spread broad trunks and luxuriant foliage in marked contrast to western Queensland's stunted mulga scrub, and the meagre outlines of lignum and boree.

Only the remoteness of the district was against it, but the land seeker of the last century knew that where one man dared others had not been slow to follow.

Men found more time and heart for long and hazardous ventures then than in the age of speed.

Already the travellers knew that Thylungra stock, with all the chances of the continent between, would graze on Kimberley pastures and drink the waters of the Ord.

Riding along, they discussed ways and means of getting the stock across.

Water was undependable on the direct route from the central Queensland border and through the Territory.

They must take a roundabout route—up to the gulf and out west across the northern rivers.

They might make it in eighteen months with luck, but what was a year or two here or there?

‘Finding the country everything that could be desired, suitable for all kinds of stock,’ they followed the Ord sixty miles towards its head.

They would abandon a great deal of useless range and spinifex—already taken up ‘sight unseen’ on the map and concentrate on the open plains, though inevitably their holdings would include a good deal of rough and inferior country.

There was little time to linger, for flour and sugar were already very low and they were still 300 hard miles from Beagle Bay.

Pentacost gathered specimens under protest from the others who declared he would soon have them all staggering under loads of stones and all else abandoned.

He found his companions unappreciative of rock records of millenniums past while some, riding the sun-scorched landscape, were frankly sceptical when he displayed a fragment of sandstone grooved by a moving glacier.

The down-to-earth bushmen had little time for reflections upon a geological past when rocky outcrops were reefs of a forgotten sea, when the table tops of eroded mountains formed the plateau level of a lost landscape, devastated by seething floods grinding and tearing at rock and soil, racked by convulsions of nature that mingled rocky strata in violent confusion.

Interest quickened only when he drew attention to the auriferous quartz picked up from the dry beds of creeks that wound through the billowing Bay of Biscay hills—a range that in four years’ time would awaken to the roar and turmoil of a gold rush shanty town.

The weary horses had dwindled now to fourteen and the travellers were making most of their way on foot.

When their boots wore through again Kilfoyle did what he could by cutting into the remaining saddle flaps, but the rough going ground them quickly into gaping holes.

Cut and blistered feet were tied about at last with bags and pieces of clothing.

Only Pannikin and Pintpot, swinging along on horny pads, suffered no hardship.

Today, looking down from the mail plane on the furrowed unshaven face of Kimberley, it seems incredible that men walked through those stony spinifex ranges, over sandy river beds, through ant-hill plateaux, and bald clay-pans, and across the undulating pastures of Nicholson Plains.

About thirty-five miles above the junction of the Margaret and Fitzroy Rivers the party was excited to come upon its first indication of white man’s penetration in this lonely land—a large white gum marked ‘WF 22, PA 9, ’81’.

Curiously enough their subsequent enquiries both on the lower Fitzroy and later from Alexander Forrest in Perth failed to identify the initials.

There can be little doubt, however, that they belonged to William Forrester and his companion who had been sent by the King Sound Pastoral Company to inspect blocks they had taken up on the Lennard River.

Their first sign of Forrest's expedition was a tree marked 'F137', where Tommy Pierre, the faithful black companion of Forrest's many exploring trips, had been so close to death that the mountain named after him might well have been his headstone.

From here on the party camped a few days at a time to rest the horses and examine the country to the south, since all to the north was hidden by the forbidding slopes and sheer rock faces of the King Leopold Range.

Michael knew that Forrest had tried in vain to cross this barrier but where the Margaret, emerging from its gorge, lapped the canyon wall, he was tempted to see whether chance would reveal a pass on the other side.

Crocodiles nosing the surface among cobblers, turtles and banded rifle-fish were of the long-nosed fish-eating variety, and, assured by the native boys that they were harmless and timid,

Michael swam across and climbed the blackened 500 feet of precipice.

Beyond lay range upon range, down-tumbling and upward-sweeping among scattered boulders, wild gorges and sapphire mountain pools.

He followed the gorge for some miles, cutting his blistered feet on razor-sharp rock edges, but the range was unrelenting to any but the nomad tribespeople who came there to bury their dead in hidden caves, and to hunt rock python and porcupine.

In a deserted camp he picked up some part-finished and broken spearheads, fashioned from the flint and agate of the rocks around, like relics of the stone age found in the drifts and caves of Europe.

The camp had been left hurriedly, probably on his coming, and embers still glowed on a small cairn of stones.

Hoping to find a bird or goanna, ready cooked in skin or feathers, to appease his hunger, he moved the hot stones to uncover in horror the part-cooked body of a child.

He stumbled on, with darkness closing on the savage range, and slept in a cave among the droppings of bats and kangaroos.

Next morning he retraced his steps to the precipice and swam to rejoin his company.

Fever broke out within 280 miles of Beagle Bay, but already behind schedule, there was no choice but to trudge doggedly in near delirium, with splitting heads and tortured feet.

Only the two boys were little the worse for their journey and worked hard and faithfully to bring the white men through.

The Fitzroy, mighty river of the western plains, abounded in fish and game and the sight of its splendid reaches and pastoral country heartened them for 150 miles.

A grey sea of stunted pindan and minnerichi scrub broke at last into red ridges, which the blacks climbed, hoping to find an easy route for the sick men.

They returned excitedly with broad smiles and a gabble of good news.

‘Station that-a-way! House, yard, every sing. True-fella we bin find’m!’

Their surprise and joy was no greater than that of Will McLarty, manager of Minnie, an out-station of Yeeda, who made the little homestead of bush timber with its bark roof a palace of comfort and respite to the exhausted travellers.

While the Durack-Emanuel party had been organising in the east, sheep men from the south-west, also stimulated by Forrest’s report, had joined forces with Victorian investors, and the first pioneers had come with their sheep by lugger to settle in around the west Kimberley rivers.

George Julius Brockman had brought sheep from the Nicol Bay area to Beagle Bay and had established Yeeda Station in 1880, long before news of his intention had reached civilisation.

Soon other isolated stations were cropping up along the Fitzroy—Mundoona, Meda, Lulugai, with flocks of from two to four thousand sheep.

Here too the first-footers were of sturdy pioneer stock, but mostly descendants of English and Scots landed gentry brought up in the tradition of fences and careful paddocking, vastly different in background from the rugged cattle men soon to press in from the east, tough overlanders schooled in the rough-and-ready New South Wales style of the open range.

Will McLarty, whose people were early settlers of the south-western Pinjarra district, related the story of west Kimberley development.

Already, it seemed, a shadow of despondency, not yet touching the bright dreams of city investors, had fallen on the pioneers.

After the first wild flush of enthusiasm, it was evident that this was after all a hard land.

Early reports of its fertility and abundance had deceived many that pioneering settlement would be a simple matter here.

Terms of land tenure were more severe than were warranted for a remote and lonely land of long, dry winters and wet tropical summers.

A port was needed desperately, a jetty for shipping and local stores.

‘Don’t exaggerate the value of the country or underestimate the hardships,’ McLarty advised his guests.

‘They talk down south as if we live in a sort of Eden here—everything handed us on a silver platter, but it’s a tough battle every inch of the way, as pioneering has always been, and little romance in it that I can see.’

McLarty took over the party’s sadly reduced outfit and the eleven remaining horses and saw them off on their eighty-mile journey to the coast at Beagle Bay, where, according to plan, the schooner Mary Smith should have been awaiting their arrival.

There was, however, no sign of the ship and the party made camp in the bush above the tide-swept beach.

Three weeks of speculation and worry dragged by, during which time a pearling lugger put in for water.

The owner of the outfit, an Englishman with a crew of Aboriginal ‘skin divers’, men and women, invited the party on board, displaying a deck strewn with giant oyster shells—*Pinctada maxima*, the world’s finest mother-of-pearl.

In a box lined with green felt and with a double lock was what seemed to the travellers a fortune in pearls—hard-earned, the skipper said, for there were many hardships and hazards in the game. Cyclones had already destroyed luggers, all hands-on board.

Sometimes divers were smitten with paralysis, attacked by sharks, giant gropers, rays or devil fish.

Stumpy Michael, fascinated by this new aspect of northern industry, recorded that the pearler seemed a 'colourful but somewhat callous customer' who maintained that the black women were gamer and could stay down longer than the men.

Trouble-makers, he said, had now begun to talk of 'exploitation', and he was afraid they would soon have to import divers from overseas at great expense, no doubt causing the ruin of a budding industry.

The Mary Smith, a sailing vessel of 650 tons, turned up at last with a tale of accident and bad weather that had caused long delay.

In his diary Stumpy Michael made a brief concluding entry:

1st. Jan. 1883. Arrived Fremantle after a rough passage - 1400 miles from Beagle Bay, and half a year since our departure from Queensland.

Received with the greatest kindness by everybody, especially Mr Alexander Forrest, whose warm-hearted welcome we shall never forget.

The party still faced a 3,400-mile sea journey around the south coast and north back to Brisbane, another two to three weeks' travelling, but Kate Durack, at Archerfield, had already received news of their safe arrival over the telegraph that had linked Western Australia with the east five years before.

COUNTRY FINE BEYOND EXPECTATIONS NO CAUSE REGRET COST.

The final cost, owing to delays and mishaps, was actually about £2,000 over their original estimate of £4,000 but neither Duracks nor Emanuels ever considered it misspent.

The two boys, Pannikin and Pintpot, returned to their country on the first ship Darwin bound and were later to share the honours of leading Queensland cattle into Kimberley.

-ALEXANDER FORREST, F.R.G.S.

The Australian Explorer.

On May 18th the party crossed the Fitzroy, swimming the horses, and making a raft of four empty water cans for our clothes, arms, provisions, &c.

Next day we saw high ranges running E. by N., which I named the ORD RANGE, and the highest point I named Mount Goldsworthy, after the hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Ten days of toilsome marching in very rough country brought us into sandstone ranges, with very high cliffs.

These form the dividing ranges between the Glenelg, Prince Regent, and Fitzroy Rivers. , _

A fine stream flows through them, almost completely walled in on both sides, and empties itself into the Fitzroy.

This stream I named the Margaret Hiver, in honor of my sister-in-law, Mrs. John Forrest.

On June 1 we recrossed the Fitzroy, and next day left it, having followed the course of this magnificent river for 240 miles.

It is the longest river in Western Australia. its banks being splendidly grassed for at least a breadth of 20 miles.

I roughly calculated that there are here four million of excellent pastoral land, capable of carrying at least a million and a half of sheep, which is more than there are in Western Australia altogether.

The Country along its banks is Beamed with creeks and gullies, all of which we found running.

The Water supply of this region appears to be both abundant and constant.

The high dividing range whence the Fitzroy takes its source lay about ten miles to the N.N.W. of the furthest point we were able to reach.

We had followed it from lat. 18deg. 30min. to lat. 17deg, 42min ; and as the high tableland at its head was walled in by cliffs at least 2,000 feet high, we were unable to advance any further.

Leaving the Fitzroy, we continued our journey N.W. through a rocky country, finely grassed, with beautiful slopes, and frequent running streams.

Our progress. was slow, for the country was very difficult.

On the 17 th we found ourselves at the foot of a lofty perpendicular range, extending for an' unknown distance.

The scenery here was amazingly beautiful.

It is impossible to describe the loveliness of the gorges, covered with a luxuriant growth of tall trees and a tangle of exquisitely-colored creepers, with waterfalls and streams of crystal purity flowing down them.

I felt as if I had found my way into an earthly paradise.

Climbing a height, I saw Secure Bay : but all further progress was abruptly stopped by the high range falling suddenly into an arm of the sea, which forms, in fact, a noble inland sea of itself.

What was to be done?

Could it be possible to find a passage through this great mountain wall?

In vain I sought in all directions, and with incredible fatigue, to find such an outlet.

At length, to my great delight, I found a narrow, very difficult, and barely accessible passage.

So overjoyed was I at the 'discovery that I fired off my revolver to celebrate the event.

When the party, had got through the pass, we admitted to one another that the feat was too difficult that any future explorers coming this way .would hardly credit that we had accomplished it at all.

But we were well repaid for our trouble.

Around the inland sea there was the grandest scenery imaginable, and a superb waterfall fell over the steep face of the cliffs.

We followed the gorge through the ranges, and found ourselves at last utterly entangled and unable to proceed further.

We had spent a fortnight in making roads, and had had lost 10 of our horses. Resolving to test the matter to the last point, I walked ten miles over ranges which the horses could not traverse, and found that it was utterly impracticable to get through to the Glenelg.

In addition to this, troubles were coming thick upon the party.

My brother was sun-struck, and suffered a good deal.

Our horses were knocking up

The health of the party was giving way.

Altogether it was our wisest plan to get, as speedily as possible, back again over the range.

Whilst here we met a tribe of blacks crouched in the tall grass, and armed with long 'spears.

I fired' my revolver, at which they seemed greatly alarmed, but they did not offer to molest us.

The whole of this country is useless for Europeans, the high range fallen into the inland sea forming the utmost boundary of the practicable territory to the northward.

After much trouble in finding an available route to return on, we at length discovered a pass; and keeping about 20 miles south of outward track,

we reached a fine stretch of country, well grassed and watered.

On June 26 we struck the Fitzroy once more at station 110

Here the question was debated whether the party should return to Beagle Bay, or explore eastward to the boundary of, the colony.

The latter course was decided on, although our provisions were becoming so scanty, that on July 1 we were obliged, for the first time, to kill one of the horses, and cook the flesh.

We had now only 15 horses left, with provisions (on short allowance) for 50 days.

Following up the eastern branch of the Fitzroy, we came upon splendid grassy plains, with clear running streams at every mile, some of the finest territory in Western Australia.

This extends to the boundary of the Colony, which we crossed in lat. 16 deg. 50 min.

I calculate that the available pasture land in this portion of the colony is not less than a million acres.

It lies only 120 miles north from the DeGrey station.

We came here upon a large river running from the westward, and which we followed up for some miles.

As far as the eye could reach the grassy plains extended on each side.

I named it the Ord River.

Further progress was stopped by the sickness of the party, and the shortness of our provisions.

Pierre and Dower, the natives, were very weak and could hardly travel,

We were compelled, in order to eke out our supplies, to have recourse to horse flesh, until at length some of us began to like it.

From the boundary of the colony we bore north-east, crossing Sturt's Creek in lat. 16deg. 30min., and the Victoria at its junction with the Wickham-which river we reached, after a toilsome journey, on the 15th August.

The Wickham is a noble river, ten chains wide-, with long, deep reaches, and a very strong current.

We traced it down for some miles, until where the country opens out into far-extending grassy plains.

The banks are [thickly covered with acacias and palms.

On the 18th we reached the Victoria, passing through splendid country all the way.

We crossed it with great trouble, swimming our horses, 'and with our clothes packed on our backs.

Then the terrible calamity fell upon us of not being able to find any water ahead. Several of the party were very bad indeed.

I knew that we were due south of Port Darwin, but had no chart to show the direction of the telegraph line, to reach which was now our only chance of rescue from perishing in the desert.

The 21st August was my brother John's birthday ; but we had not in the camp a single drop of water with which to celebrate it.

We were in a dreadful case.

For some days I had been going on ahead, searching for water, and returning to camp at night with the sad tidings that I was unable to find any.

Our horses were reduced to nine, and we had been obliged to slaughter some of them for food.

What was to be done? Only a single chance of escape was left us-that I should reach the telegraph line and obtain water and provisions for the party in time to save them from perishing. We were then about 100 miles from the line, as I judged.

With Hicks as my companion, I started for the line, with our water-drums filled, and a small quantity of flour.

My directions to the party were that they were to remain at the camp, and to search for water, until we returned.

To the credit of the men, I must say that they bore their dreadful sufferings most manfully.

The weather was fearfully hot. The country we were crossing was level plains for miles, parched and waterless.

The heat dried up the water in the drums.

We began to suffer agonies of thirst, for forty hours not a drop of water had passed our lips.

I thought we must have perished, but we all continued to struggle on by day and night, for bare life.

Our tongues swelled in our mouths, and our senses began to reel.

We managed to shoot a hawk, and cutting his throat, sucked his blood, but it did not afford us any relief.

We could no longer speak to one another.

We tried to gain some relief from the torture by sucking a stone, but the salivary glands refused to work, and the stones dropped from our mouths as dry as when they were put in.

To heighten the horror of our situation, our horses knocked up, and we were obliged to lead them.

Still, we toiled, as I judged from my bearings that the line was not now far ahead, after a walk of about two miles we struck the line.

We both fell on our knees and thanked God for our escape from death.

Had we succumbed on this terrible journey, the whole party must have perished in the desert.

Following the line up for three miles, we came upon an iron tank full of water.

Men and horses rushed to it to drink.--.

I thought the horses would never have enough.

They drank each, I should judge fully 15 gallons.

As for ourselves, a full gallon each did not satisfy the eager craving for the precious fluid.

We returned to the tank again and again, as if, like the horses, we never could have enough.

We supped at night on a little damp meat, and a piece of an owl, which we had luckily shot and roasted.

Our worst sufferings were now ended; for, following up the telegraph line, we found abundance of water in tanks and pools, and managed to shoot a wild turkey now and then, and once a kangaroo.

But when we reached Roper Creek on the 4th September, and had pitched camp, I was preparing to make a fire; but found, to my horror, that the matches were useless, nor could I contrive to make a blaze with my ammunition, as the cartridges also failed.

We were obliged to banquet as best we could on a piece of raw kangaroo.

On resuming our journey the poor horses gave out, and would go no further,

We were therefore compelled to leave them and walk on.

After going some little distance, we were delighted to come on a mob of horses and some tents. It was Mr. Wood's party repairing the line. He welcomed us with the greatest kindness, and, with abundance of everything within our reach, we speedily forgot our trials and recovered our strength.

Here we received news from home, and sent telegraphic messages to Perth, announcing our safe arrival.

Next day we started on the return journey to our party, with a sufficient store of provisions.

Camping at night, I was lighting a fire, when I heard a strange shrill whistle in the long grass, and the rustle of some animal coming towards us. Jumping up we saw a large snake fully 10ft. long, which we at once dispatched with our revolvers, and then amused ourselves by skinning, roasting, and eating him for supper.

On the 5th we met several wagons from Daly Waters station, which supplied us with a stock of provisions, of which we make a cache for the return journey.

On the 11th, to my great surprise, we fell in with the party, who had started to follow up our tracks.

We had been absent 14 days, and had travelled 400 miles.

I need not say that the men were overjoyed at their relief and rescue.

Having well refreshed ourselves, we went back to the last camp, and the next day the whole resumed our journey, reaching Roper Creek at nightfall.

Here we saw the extraordinary sight of millions of bats flitting over our head. The stock of provisions was found on the 14th, and the brandy was greatly relished by the men, none of them having tasted any for six months.

On the 18th we reached Mr. Wood's camp, and the next day we were at the Katharine Telegraph station, where Mr. and Mrs. Murray showed us every kindness.

Here I received a message of congratulation from His Excellency the Governor.

On the 23rd we came upon Dr. Brown's sheep station on the Katherine River, the only one in the Northern Territory.

On the 28th we passed Pine Creek, (a small goldfields township, where the precious metal is found in large quantities, both in the alluvial drift and the quartz) and on October 1 we were at Yam Creek, where we were heartily received by Mr. Knight, the warden.

Of our warm reception at Palmerston and our return to Perth it is not needful to recount the details.

Thus ended an exploring journey which has been the means of discovering the watershed of the Fitzroy and other large rivers, and an available pastoral country of not less than 20,000,000 of acres in extent.

It is well grassed and abundantly watered, and large areas of it would be suitable for the cultivation of sugar, coffee, and rice.

A very extensive territory has been added to the explored portion of the Map of Western Australia.

Further exploration to the northward, beyond the mountainous district which stopped our progress, may be made with safety when the valley of the Fitzroy shall have been taken up and settled.

It was, taken altogether, an extremely laborious and hazardous expedition, taxing to the utmost the energies of the party.

Most of them have suffered severely in health.

My brother had an attack of sunstroke, which nearly prostrated him.

The poor natives were very much reduced.

There were times when I felt as if the last chance of escape had been taken away from us.

Yet we toiled on, walking nearly the whole distance from the Fitzroy living on the scantiest rations requisite to support life.

The whole party did their duty manfully and well. ?

The native tribes we met never once attempted to molest us. so, with thanks and gratitude for our preservation, I conclude these notes of a journey which have added a new pastoral kingdom to the dominion of Australia.

Description of the country between the DeGray River, Beagle Bay, and Kathrine Station

Forrest F1 to F23 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
Feb. 25	F. 1	At Condon, good anchorage in creek for small vessels. Good grassy country from DeGrey. Well of fresh water.
" 26	F. 2	At Pardoo, splendid spring of fresh water. Average country from DeGrey. Spinifex and grass; lightly timbered.
" 27	F. 3	From Pardoo to F. 3, poor miserable spinifex country, sand hills and scrub. No water at camp. Low ironstone hills.
Mar. 2	F. 6	From F. 3 to F. 6, sandy rises and spinifex. No water except at F. 6, after rain.
" 3	F. 7	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 4	F. 8	Clay holes. Water after rain. Country well grassed near the coast. Tea trees and a few gums.
" 5	F. 9	Native well 20 feet deep—very little water—surrounded by spinifex. Small patch of grass around well.
" 6	F. 10	Clay holes. Good supply of water. Splendid feed. Two miles S.S.E., native well. Abundance of water.
" 7	F. 11	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 8	F. 12	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 10	F. 14	Clay holes. Level plain of grass, covered with water after recent rains. Spinifex South of camp.
" 12	F. 16	Native well 8 feet deep. Good supply of fresh water. Splendid grass around well. Pile of stones 14 chains North on N.W. end of low ironstone range.
" 13	F. 17	Small creek 3ft. of water. Fair country. Numerous swamps near camp full of water and wild fowl, tea trees, &c.
" 15	F. 19	Native well 10ft., full of water (permanent). Grassy country. Thickly wooded with gums, acacia, and tea trees.
" 16	F. 20	No permanent water. Fair country, thickly timbered with gums and acacia.
" 17	F. 21	Near the shores of Lagrange Bay. Native well (brackish), at the N.E. end of salt marsh, about one mile from the sea. Fair average country.
" 18	F. 22	Deep ravine. Water by digging near the sea shore. Country thickly wooded and poorly grassed. Red cliffs.
" 19	F. 23	Deep ravine. Water hole. Poor country. Cape Villaret bears N. 45 E. magt. about 4 miles. Very thickly wooded.

Forrest F24 to F61 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
Mar. 20	F. 24	Native well 1 mile E.N.E., good supply. Also water by digging near camp. Very tall grass and thickly wooded.
" 21	F. 25	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 22, 23	F. 27	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 24	F. 28	Clay swamp 1ft. deep (brackish water). Grass 10 to 15ft. high and very rank. Tea and Cork wood, palms and acacia.
" 25	F. 29	Native well (permanent) near the edge of a large clear plain, covered with 2ft. of water. Very high grass, and country thickly wooded with gums and acacia.
" 26 to 30	F. 30 & 34	Native well. Good supply of fresh water. Surrounded by country thickly wooded and fairly grassed.
" 31	F. 35	A creek running south apparently not permanent, now running. Very thickly wooded country. Very high grass.
April 1, 2	F. 37	A creek running. Very thick country and fairly grassed. Gums and acacias. Water not permanent.
" 3	F. 38	A large water hole in a springy creek running and permanent. Country very thick but well grassed.
" 4	F. 39	A running stream (permanent), which I named the Fraser River. Good grass near its bank, also thickly wooded with gums and acacia. Palms along banks of river.
" 9	F. 44	On a small creek near a mangrove creek. Palms very numerous. Also tea trees and good grass.
" 10 to 21	F. 56 1879	Near the shores of Beagle Bay, at a large spring of fresh water named the Ord Springs. Grass very high near camp, and also very thickly wooded.
" 22	F. 57	On the banks of a creek at a fine pool of fresh water, not, however, permanent. Palms and tea trees and fair grassy country.
" 23	F. 58	A fine pool of water (permanent) about 50 chains long and 2 chains wide. Good grassy country and clear in patches.
" 24	F. 59 & F. 60	A large fresh water lake which I named Lake Louisa, 15ft. deep and containing abundance of game. Good grassy country around and lightly timbered with gums, acacia, and tea trees.
" 26	F. 61	Swamp 4ft. deep. Grassy country. Sandy soil. Gums and acacia.

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.		
April 27, 28	F. 63	Permanent spring of fresh water in a clump of palms, near the mangroves. Palms, tea trees, and guina.		
" 29, 30 & May 1	F. 65	A small creek running into King Sound, with several small water holes. Country very thick and fairly grassed.		
May 2	F. 66	A native well about 5 chains from clear mangrove flat and close to a large White Gum in some very high grass. Water (permanent).		
" 3	F. 67	A large stream of fresh water running into King Sound (permanent). The camp being 30-00 from the salt water, at its junction with another salt creek.		
" 4	F. 68	A fine pool of water in a creek. Grassy flat along its banks with a few ironstone ridges on each side. Boab and gum trees and a few acacia.		
" 5	F. 69	A large salt water flat, 4 to 6ft. deep. Our camp being under the foot of a large Boab tree about 3 chains from water edge. The lake being full of wild fowl.		
" 6	F. 70	A splendid pool of fresh water which runs into lake at F. 69, and being part of creek crossed at F. 39, and which I named Fraser River. Clear grassy plains along its banks, with abundance of wild fowl.		
" 7	F. 71	A brackish pool of water in a clear flat which runs into the Fitzroy. Good grassy country all the way from last camp. Fresh water by digging.		
" 8 & 9	F. 73	At the Fitzroy River a fine stream of water running strong, with clear open plains stretching many miles on each bank. A few gum trees scattered over the plains.		
" 10	F. 74	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 11	F. 75	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 12	F. 76	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 13	F. 77	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 14	F. 78	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 15	F. 79	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 16	F. 80	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 17, 18	F. 82	Ditto	ditto	ditto.
" 19, 20	F. 84	Ditto	ditto	ditto.

Forrest F85 to F104 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
May 21	F. 85	On the West side of a small creek, near some low ironstone hills, about 3 miles from the main river. Country well grassed from last camp.
" 22	F. 86	At the foot of the St. George ranges, on the East side of a fine running stream coming out of ranges. Very good feed near banks of creek.
" 23	F. 87	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 24, 25	F. 89	Near the banks of a large swamp, 2 feet deep, on the Fitzroy plains. Very clear and well grassed country.
" 26	F. 90	Near a deep swamp, 1 mile from the Fitzroy. Clear open grassy plains. Hardly a tree visible.
" 27	F. 91	At a deep pool of water, one mile N.N.W. from Mt. Campbell. Clear open grassy plains from F. 90.
" 28, 29	A.F. 93 May 29, 79	At the junction of the Fitzroy with the Margaret river, and about 10 chains from a gorge. Sandstone cliffs falling perpendicular into the river. Good grassy country and very clear. Large gums near the banks.
" 30	F. 94	At the foot of a high sandstone range near a creek of running water. Poor spinifex country and very rocky.
" 31	F. 95	At the foot of a high granite hill about 40-60 chains East of the Fitzroy River, near a small hole of water. Good grassy country near the banks of the river.
June 1	F. 96	On the West bank of Fitzroy River, on the edge of a fine grassy plain.
" 2	F. 97	On a creek running into Fitzroy. Grassy plain near creek. Rough granite country from F. 96, and numerous running streams.
" 3	F. 98	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 4 & 5	F. 100	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 6	F. 101	Under the foot of a high table range at a spring. Very rough granite country, fairly grassed and well watered.
" 7	F. 102	At a running spring amongst a number of grassy hills, very rough, and numerous running springs.
" 8	F. 103	On a good sized river running into the Fitzroy, at the foot of a quartz hill, named Mount Eliza; very rough country near its banks.

Forrest F104 to F126 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
June 9	F. 104	A running stream of fresh water with undulating grassy country, very rocky from F. 103. Also numbers of running streams.
" 10	F. 105	At the foot of high table range, on a splendid stream of fresh water running, good grassy country, but very rough in places.
" 11	F. 106	On a running stream one mile N.N.E. from Mt. Hart, undulating grassy country from F. 105, and numbers of running creeks.
" 12	F. 107	About 2 miles South from Mt. Matthew, on a running stream of water, undulating grassy country and abundance of water.
" 13	F. 108	On a running stream 2 miles E.S.E. from a remarkable high table hill named Mt. Humbert, 1,100 feet. Very good country from F. 107, and plenty of permanent water.
" 14, 15	F. 110	Under the foot of high table range, at a spring in a creek running into Secure Bay. Very high rough country from F. 108, but the flats well grassed.
" 16	F. 111	Near the shores of a mangrove creek. Brackish water and very poor country.
" 17	F. 112	At the most S.W. end of high table range near the sea. Splendid spring of water. Very poor country.
" 18	F. 113	One mile from F. 112 around point of range at a beautiful waterfall flowing into the sea.
" 19	F. 114	At another waterfall near an inland sea. Rough country and very little grass except amongst the rocks.
" 20	F. 115	At a running stream surrounded by high rough hills. The flats well grassed, and the numerous streams mountain torrents.
June 21	F. 116	A rough, rocky stream, known as Devil's Creek, a mountain torrent, and 600 feet below the table land.
" 29	F. 124	On a splendid pool of water. Fish plentiful, and a small grassy flat between the rough hills.
" 30	F. 125	On a good sized river. Undulating grassy country and numerous running streams.
July 1	F. 126	On a good sized stream, surrounded by high grassy hills, and abundance of water.

Forrest F127 to F145 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
July 2	F. 127	A small creek, with good grassy country around.
" 3	F. 128	A good sized creek. Clear open grassy country nearly all the way from F. 127.
" 4	F. 129	A small gully with plenty of water amongst low rough grassy hills.
" 5	F. 130	About 1 mile from the sandstone range on the banks of a good stream of water, and good grassy country from F. 129.
" 6	F. 131	At the head of a running stream (permanent), named Hicks Spring. Good grassy undulating country from last camp.
" 7	F. 132	On a large river running into the Fitzroy, with good grass near its banks.
" 8, 9, 10	F. 135	On the Fitzroy River. Clear open grassy plains from last camp.
" 11	F. 136	At a clay hole in a small creek. With extensive plains of good grass in every direction.
" 12	A.F. 137 12 July 79	On the East branch of the Fitzroy (Margaret River). Extensive grassy plains.
" 13	F. 138	At a small creek running into Margaret River.
" 14	F. 139	At the foot of high table range. Near a gorge at its foot is a fine spring of water. Undulating spinifex and grass country from F. 138.
" 15	F. 140	At a splendid stream of fresh water running and permanent. Grass and spinifex, and very rough from F. 138.
" 16	F. 141	On the Margaret River, near the foot of Mt. George. Undulating grassy country and the hills covered with grass.
" 17	F. 142	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 18	F. 143	Under the foot of the Dividing Range (Fitzroy waters). Clear grassy plains the last 3 miles of journey.
" 19	F. 144	Near a small creek about 1½ N. by E. from a high table range at its most Easterly point. Undulating grassy country (granite) all the way from F. 143.
" 20	F. 145	At the junction of two creeks about 2 miles from a remarkable hill, at the foot of which runs a running spring and extensive grassy plains (very clear) to the Southward.

Forrest F146 to F168 INFO

1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.	
July 21	F. 146	On a spring in a small creek. Undulating grassy country from last camp. Granite and very clear. Few gums and acacia.	
" 23	F. 148	On a creek, running water, about 50 chains E. by S. from a remarkable pyramid hill. Splendid grass.	
" 24	F. 149	At the junction of two creeks, in some very rough country. Very poor land and very little grass.	
" 25	F. 150	On the banks of a large river named Ord river, coming from the Westward, about 20 chains wide, and running strong. Good feed near its banks.	
" 26	F. 151	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 27	F. 152	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 28, 29	F. 154	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 30	F. 155	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 31 & Aug. 1	"	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 2	F. 158	On a running stream, near the foot of a high grassy hill, and runs into the Ord river. Undulating grassy country from last camp, and very rocky in places.	
" 3	F. 159	At a spring of water about 1 mile E. N.E. from a high hill. Undulating grassy country. Very rocky from F. 158.	
" 4, 5, 6	F. 162	At a fine spring of water, known as McKay's spring, between high grassy hills. Killed a horse here.	
" 7	F. 163	On a good sized river, high grass near its banks, and a few gums scattered over the plains.	
" 8	F. 164	Ditto ditto ditto.	
" 9	F. 165	At Stirling river, at the North end of a deep pool. Fish plentiful, and abundance of wild fowl.	
" 10	F. 166	At a fine running spring. Tall tea trees, and palms, and rough broken ranges. Very poor country all day, and many deep gorges and rocky hills, and several running streams.	
" 11	F. 167	At the foot of a high dividing range, on the banks of a running stream (permanent). Palms. Very poor rocky country near camp.	
" 12	F. 168	At a running stream, named Humbert river, between table topped hills. Grassy flat. Country thinly wooded.	

Forrest F169 to F201 INFO

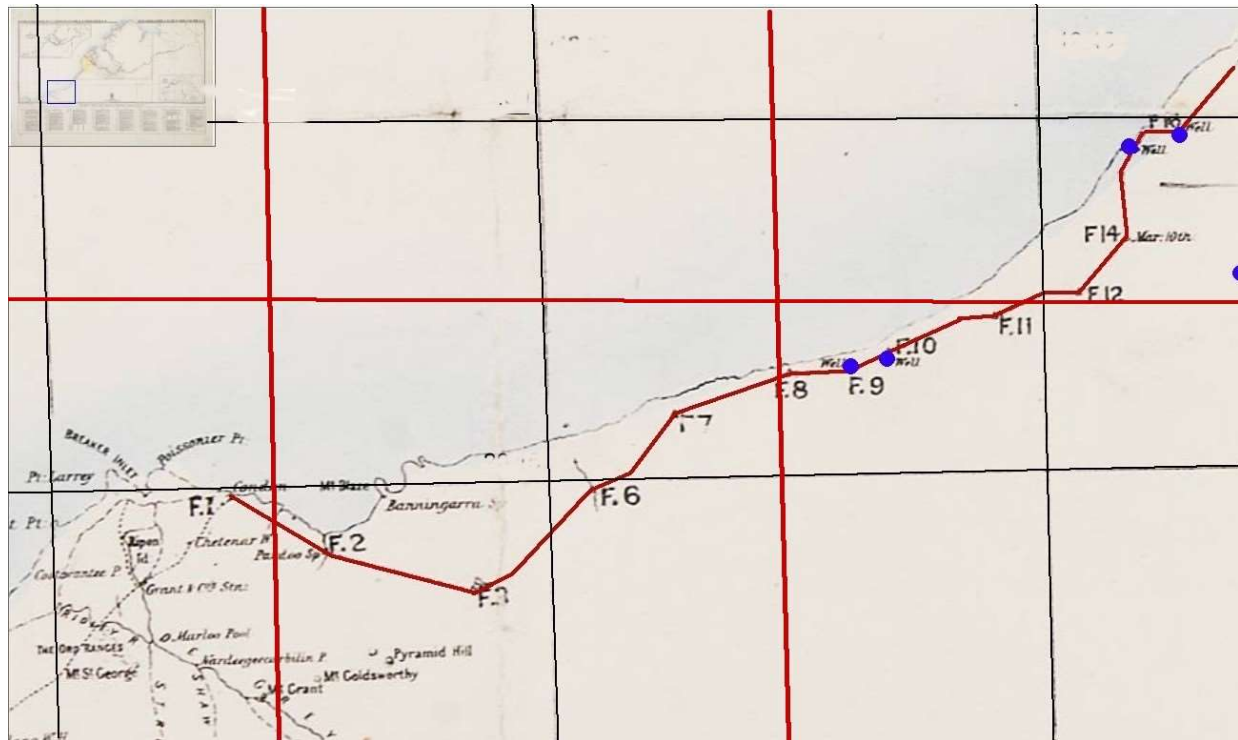
1879.	CAMP No.	DESCRIPTION.
Aug. 13	F. 169	At a running stream, named Humbert river, between table topped hills. Grassy flat. Country thinly wooded.
" 14	F. 170	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 15	F. 172	On the Wickham River 1½ miles E.N.E. from its junction with the Humbert River. Good grassy country.
" 17	F. 173	Ditto ditto ditto.
" 18	F. 174	On the Victoria River 2½ miles South from its junction with the Wickham River.
" 19	F. 175	On a small creek (running water). Clear open grassy plains; few gums and Acacia.
" 20	F. 176	On a fine running stream of fresh water (permanent). Undulating grassy country from camp F. 175, and very rocky in places. Lightly timbered with gums and acacia.
" 21	F. 177	At a spring in a creek, surrounded by broom bush. Clear open undulating grassy country from last camp, with a few gums and acacias scattered over the plains.
" 23	F. 180	On the banks of a creek, running water (permanent). Clear open grassy country on each side of creek.
" 25, 26	...	At a waterhole, same creek as F. 180. Clear open grassy country, lightly timbered.
" 27	F. 183	Clay hole (in a dry creek), full of water. Clear plains of grass, gums, and acacia, &c.
" 28 to Sep. 11	F. 197	A deep pool of water in a dry creek, known as Depot Camp. Clear country, gums and acacia.
" 12	F. 199	Clay hole in a dry creek. Clear country, gums and acacia.
" 13	F. 200	No water. Stringy bark and acacia. Thickly wooded and well grassed.
" 14	F. 201	Pigeon water hole on the Overland Telegraph Line. Stringy bark, gums and acacia, and fairly grassed country.

Alex. Forrest

Commander of Expedition.

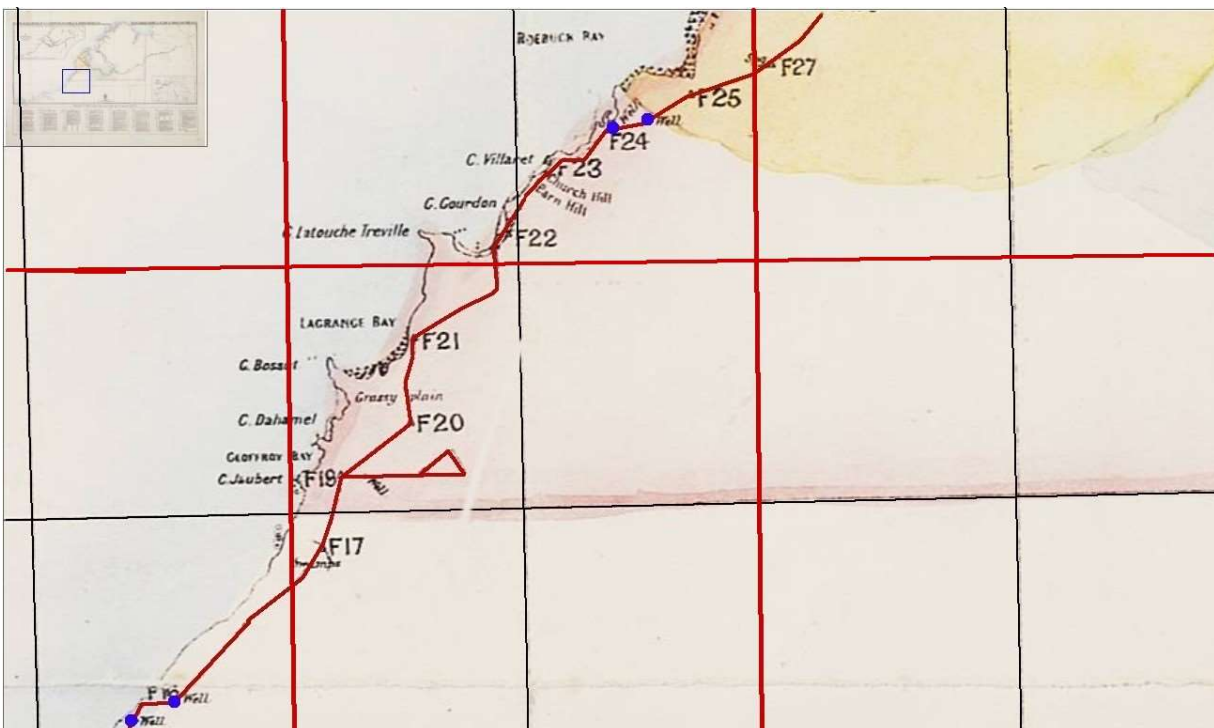
Forrest Maps – From Condon

F1 to F14



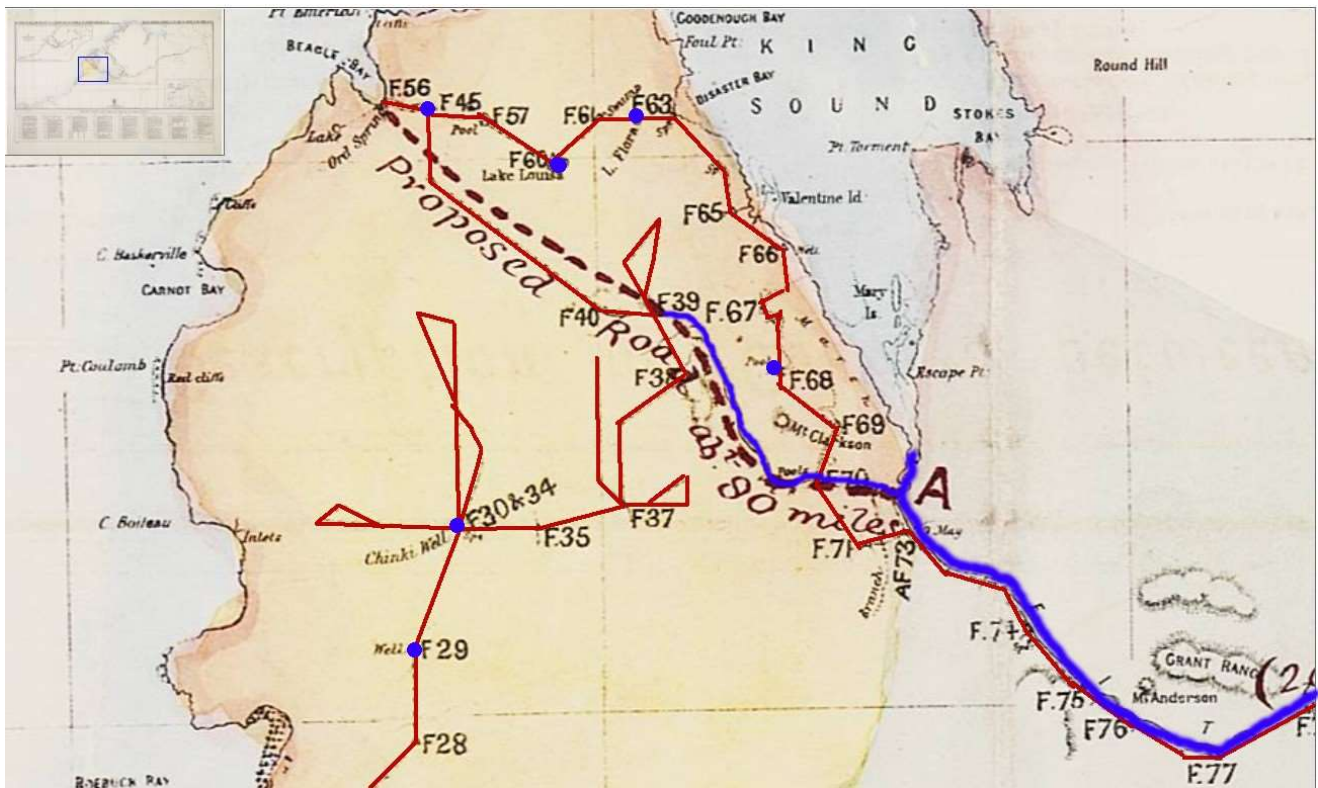
Forrest Maps – From

F15 to F27



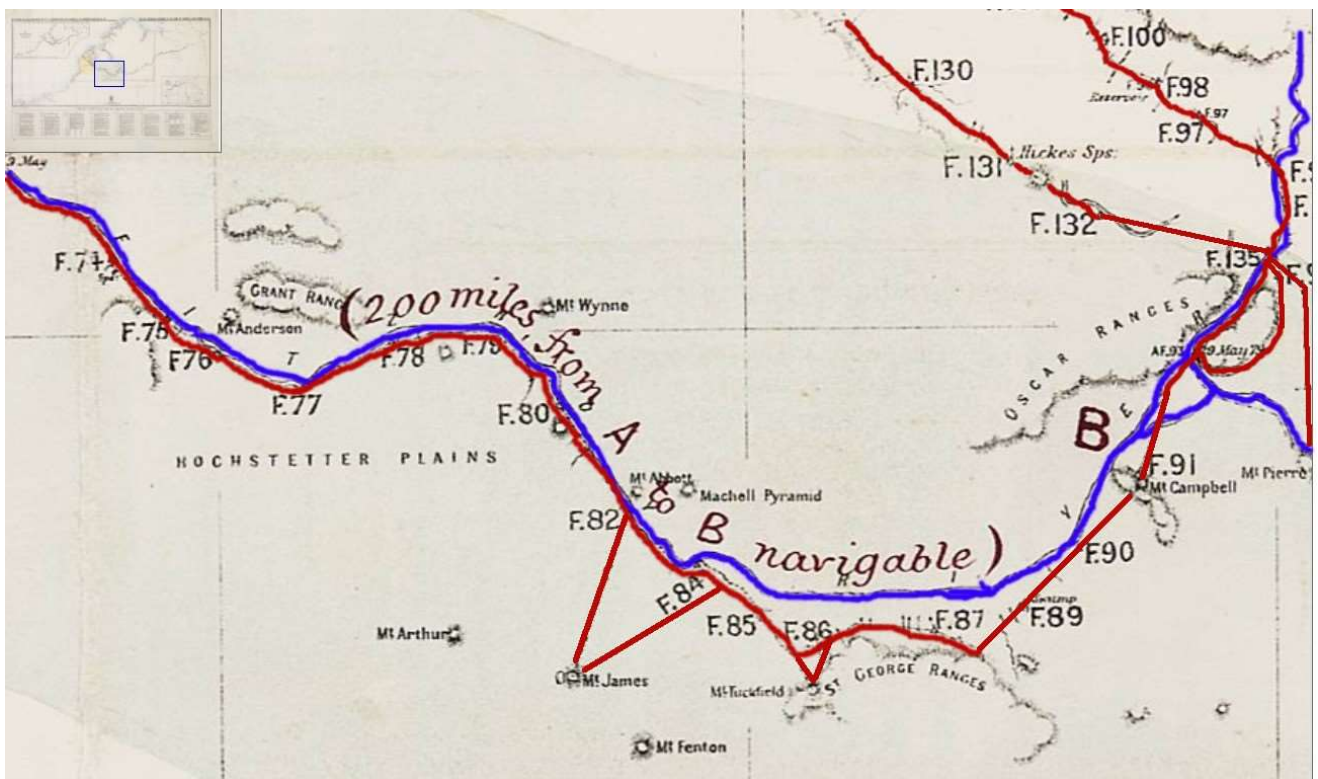
Forrest Maps – From Beagle Bay to Grant Range

F56 to F77



Forrest Maps – From Grant Range to Oscar Ranges – Mt Pierre

F74 to F135

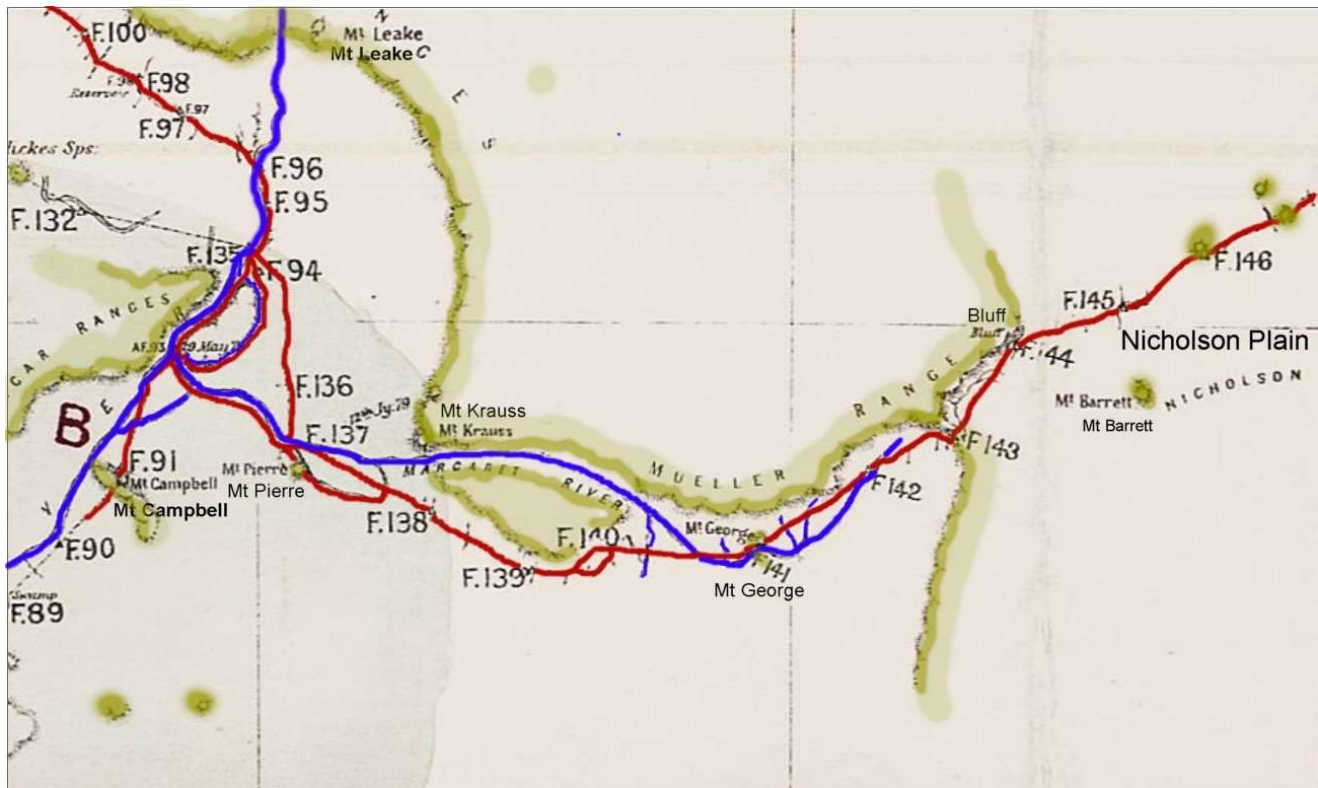


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A map of the Lenoir River area, showing various locations and features. The map includes labels for 'Open Water', 'Shoal Bay', 'Secure Bay', 'Mt Hopeless', 'Mt June', 'Mt Humbert', 'Mt Matthew', 'Mt Hart', 'Mt Eliza', and 'Mt Eliza ??'. It also shows 'F.100' through 'F.129' and 'F.101' through 'F.106'. Other labels include 'Eagle Pt.', 'Saddle Hill', 'Round Hill', 'Stones Bay', 'Swamp', and 'LENOIR RIVER'.

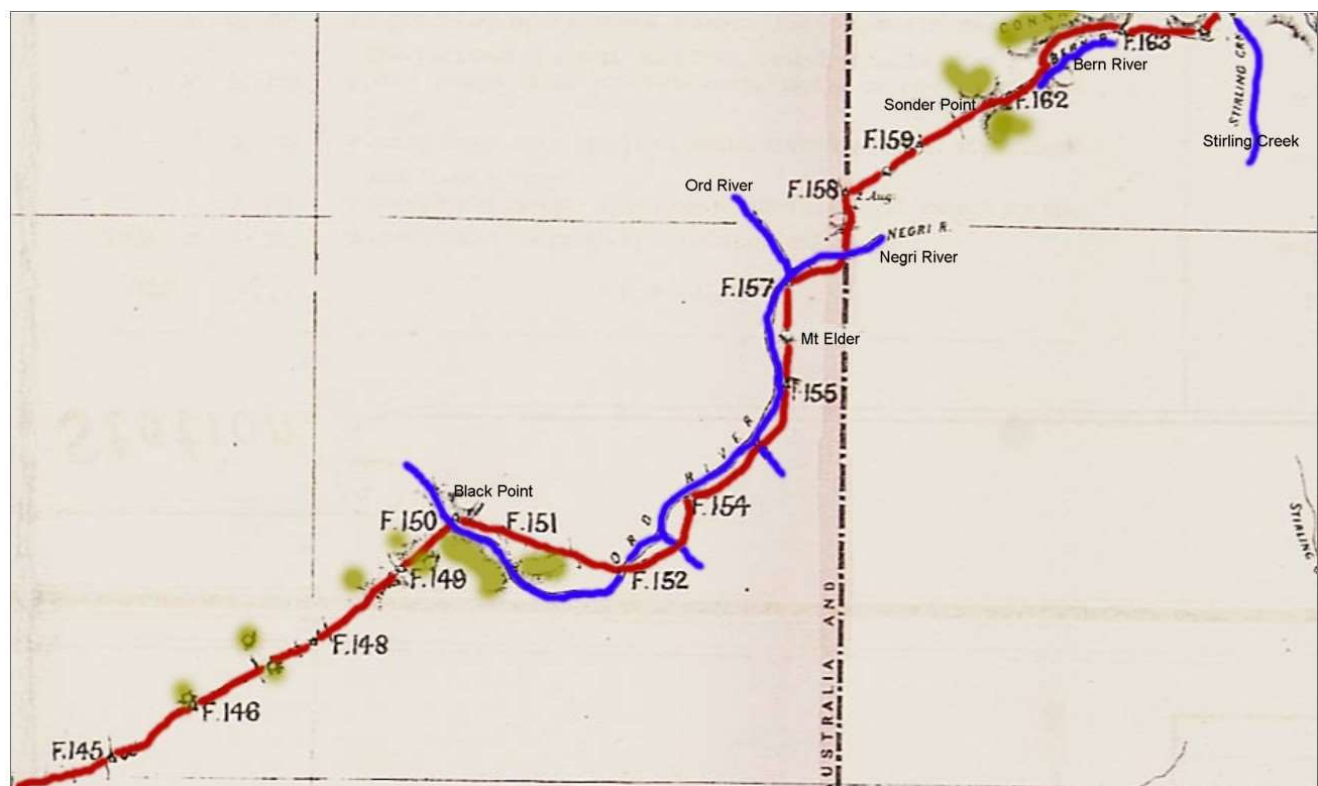
Forrest Maps – From Oscar Ranges / Mt Pierre along Margaret River to Nicholson Plain

F135 to F146



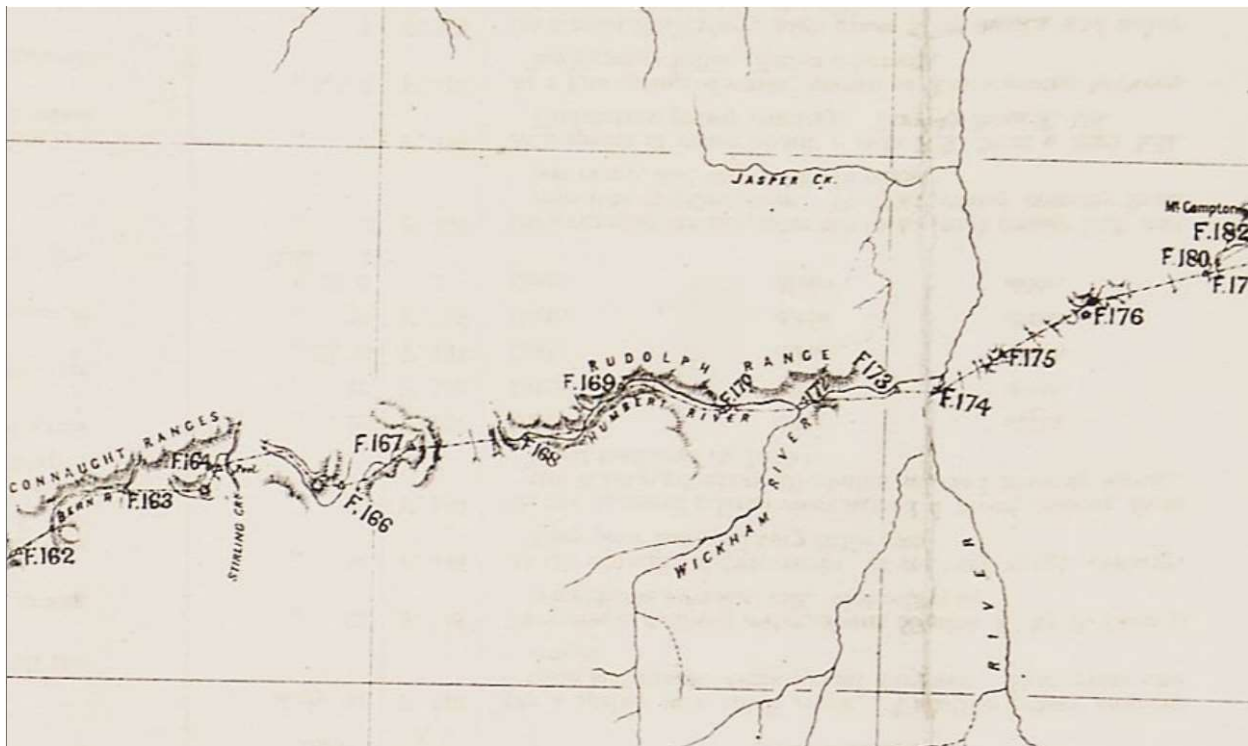
Forrest Maps – From Nicholson Plain to Black Point along the Ord River to Negri Junction

F146 to F162 – Note Ord and Negri Junction tree is Blazed F157 by Forrest



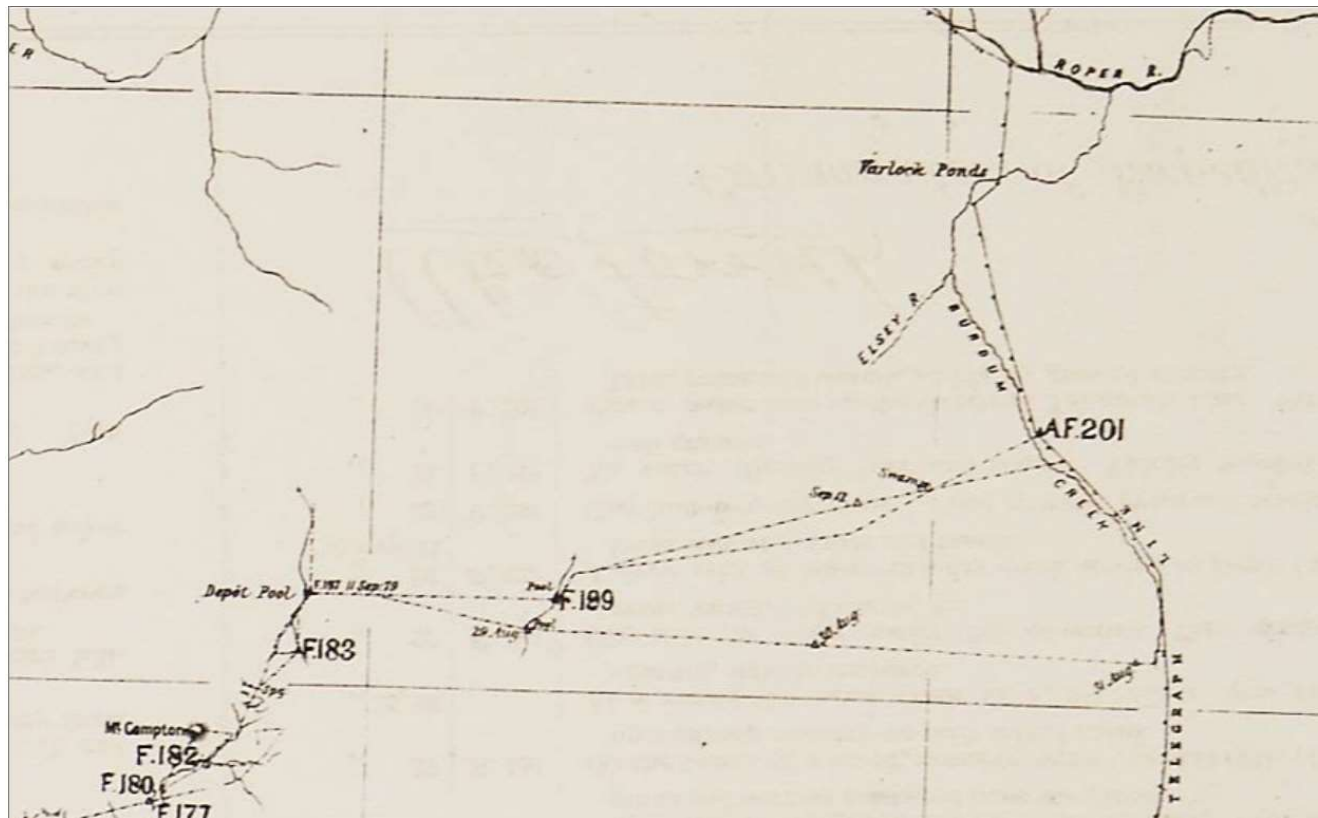
Forrest Maps – From Ord River to Negri Junction to Mount Compton

F162 to F182



Forrest Maps – From Mount Compton to Overland Telegraph Line

F182 to F201



ZZ08 - An analysis of the social profile of the Gilfoyle's of Rosewood Station

Geraldine Byrne Edith Cowan University 1995

Chapter 2

The Overlanding - Expeditions 1882-1885

The Hibernian and the Hebrew

Mary Durack's description of the 1882 expedition provides a clear account of the aims and the achievements of the exploring party. Their main purpose was to examine the lower reaches of the Ord, a major river whose existence had been unknown to white Australians until three years earlier; and to identify the most promising pastoral country which might be expected along the lower reaches of such a major waterway.

Kings in Grass Castles provides a colourful portrait of the country traversed by the party and the impact on them of the new environment, but is silent about the day-to-day detail of the journey or occasional personality clashes between its members. In these respects, John Pentacost's testimony deserves to be rescued from its earlier neglect.

Pentacost kept a diary of the expedition, writing it mostly in long hand and parts in shorthand.

This source has not been used before and differs in a number of important respects from what is recorded in Kings in Grass Castles.

On July 6, 1882, friends and family farewelled the travellers on the chartered steamship Volmer.

Kate Durack's apprehensions for her husband's safety increased to near frenzy when two days after the departure fierce storms lashed the Queensland coast.

Several wrecks were reported during the next few days but no word of the Volmer until a wire came from Rockhampton, 350 miles north of Brisbane:

VOLMER AGROUND ALL ASHORE SAFE AND WELL RETURNING COACH BRISBANE IMMEDIATELY DURACK

Gathered again at Archerfield the travellers told their tale of seemingly miraculous escape from the fury of the hurricane.

Half the precious horses had been battered to death in the hold, most of the provisions washed overboard or ruined by salt water.

The remaining horses had been swum ashore and left at John Costello's Rockhampton property, Cawarral, since it had seemed impractical to return them to Brisbane in their shocked condition to begin the voyage anew.

This misfortune increased the cost of the expedition by well over £1,000 but the organisers considered themselves fortunate in being able to charter another steamship almost immediately.

To put the record straight, it is necessary to refer to details transcribed from Pentacost's diary.

The party actually sailed from Sydney in Volmer on Thursday 5 July 1882.

Pentacost noted that he 'got up in time to see us going out of the Harbour...she appears to be a steady boat but very slow said to be going at 7 knots an hour but I don't believe she has made more than five or six'.

It is at this point that Pentacost first refers to Kilfoyle being on board. 'Tom [Horan] and Kilfoyle and Michael [Durack] tend to the horses.

They seem to get on very comfortably.' It appeared that the party were not happy about the condition of the boat, and three days after setting sail, Pentacost reveals that he was woken by Michael ['Stumpy Michael' Durack] at 7.00 am advising that the captain had decided that the ship should return to Sydney.

Apparently, the boilers were in a terrible condition,

Pentacost states 'that the captain had made the decision and the boat had turned back at midnight'. At 8.30 am the following morning, they were about 140 miles from Sydney, and they arrived back on Sunday 8 July.

It is interesting to note from the diary that the chief engineer had left the boat in Sydney before they sailed because the machinery was in such bad order.

According to Pentacost, a shipping company 'Stephens & Co' was at fault: 'Stephens should not have chartered ships of this class'.

The passengers and stock were transferred to the Vortigern, but not without trauma, as Pentacost notes 'we had a great deal of trouble with Stephens & Co. In the office of that firm they seem to be all masters and no men'. He complains bitterly about the treatment given to the horses before being transferred to the Vortigern and records that :

I gave Stephens a letter or rather left one at his office which I wrote while there as I could not see him. In this letter I told him that the horses would be starved as they were staying in between docks with their heads over a hatchway from which men could not get at them to provide them with the necessary hay and water and if Stephens did allow this kind of 'thing I intended to call upon the Secretary of the Animals Protection Society to see if a prosecution could not be instituted.

Pentacost, J., Diary of Expedition from Sydney to Ord River 1882, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

Pentacost records that 'Stephens got in a great rage and threatened to publish the letter which is just what I should like. He complained both to Sid and Kilfoyle about having received such a letter where. he was doing all he could to send us off again as soon as possible'. Pentacost finally finishes that day's entry with 'there cannot surely be a more selfish and worse managed firm in Sydney'.

A week had passed and finally the Vortigern sailed from Sydney on 16 July. '

We passed through the heads about 5. o'clock and speedily began to feel the swell'. From the diaries, it appears that they had very bad weather for the entire three-day voyage between Sydney and Brisbane 'so bad that the passengers disappeared into their cabins'.

Pentacost also found fault with the food:

We had a pretty good dinner on Sunday but the tea in the evening was not enjoyable as there was no soft bread. Nothing but beans which I don't like at all and others have the same objections to it.

I complained to the captain of the absence of soft bread.

He said it was not his fault and the steward said it was not his as he had sent for bread and none was delivered.... if we do not get a supply at Brisbane or have some baked, we shall have a miserable time of it.

Pentacost notes:

Ship pitching and rolling. Sid and myself got up to breakfast but went to our bedrolls again afterwards as these are the most comfortable places. Michael was sick all night and, in his berth, today. Tom has not made his appearance either.

I must try and get a little sleep as last night I did not sleep comfortably, within five minutes of my being in my bunk that I think I had gone to sleep,

Ji Pentacost, J., Diary.

I was pitched out upon the floor as I was sleeping in the upper bunk."

According to the diary, the ship anchored in Moreton Bay only overnight and for a day, waiting for 'the arrival of three fresh horses [and supplies] to come from Brisbane.

This date ties in with a article written by 'Stumpy Michael' Durack for the Daily Mail • and Mary Durack's date for the sailing from Brisbane on 19 July 1882.

The weather between Brisbane and Townsville did not improve as Pentacost notes: Sid Emanuel was in the lower bunk in the cabin and the following night Pentacost reports that he 'did not sleep all night.....bottles on board smashed our berth. Rats running about and over Sid's face'

Sunday 23 July was spent in Townsville which Pentacost described:

We arrived at Townsville early this morning and the steamer lay about three miles from the town.Went ashore in the small steamer..... about 8'oclock we went back to the Queens Head and met the Captain and others and returned on board at approximately 1 o'clock.

Townsville was very clean and fresh looking

The Vortigern called in at Thursday Island and finally reached Port Darwin. A notice in the Northern Territory Times states that the Vortigern with 113 tons of cargo arrived on 1 August with Emanuel, Durack, Guilfoyle [Kilfoyle] Pentacost and Josey as saloon passengers and Horan in steerage.

311 The Northern Territory Times and Gazette, 5 August, 1882.

Pentacost states in his diary 'as to our impressions of Port Darwin was that it is not an unpleasant place to live in, but rather too warm in summer'. He describes the town itself as being 'built on elevated ground giving a good view of the sea'. 'Stumpy Michael' Durack wrote 'a great place for talking, but very little done'."

Although in Darwin only five days, Pentacost commented that 'there are not very many European families: the bulk of the population being Chinese who seem to be a thriving orderly community.' The 1882 statistics of population reveals that there were only 862 Europeans in the Northern Territory to 4374 Chinese.

He observes how the Government resident watches over the Chinese interests and that they receive no injustices from the white man:

They hold an open market in the middle of the principal street in which they reside and we see plenty of sugar cane, melons, cabbage, meat and other things laid out for sale. It was all cleared off at an early hour.

While in Port Darwin, the expedition decided to take on two native boys.

Mary Durack states 'they engaged two aborigines of the local Larakia tribe - reputedly reliable fellows and good trackers revelling in the white man names of Pannikin and Pintpot'

Pentacost's account differs and gives more details:

we obtain two small black boys; one is an orphan named Tommy Cherry.

The other is known as David.

They can both speak a good deal of English and are well up in vocabulary of this, but it is not to be wondered at considering that one of them used to assist a bullock driver. In order to secure these boys, it was necessary to give about 15 shillings to the father of one boy and then take both of them with the two men [Emanuel and Kilfoyle] before the doctor who acts as Aborigines Protector.

A bond had to be signed that the boys should be taken back or sent back to Port Darwin within or at the end of 12 months.

The bonds were signed by Kilfoyle and Sid Emanuel so I suppose one boy will be retained by each, though I believe that Durack intends to have the one Kilfoyle signed over and the other one too, if he can get him.

The party sought the services of Captain Murray of the 120-ton schooner Levuka to take them to the Cambridge Gulf.

The Northern Territory Times and Gazette covered the expedition leaving Darwin.

they are not only exploring for themselves but represent Sydney capitalists who have taken up land on the line of Alexander Forrest's exploration in 1879.

The party will go through a line of unexplored country from the Cambridge Gulf to King George's Sound, and they intend crossing Forrest's track at a point named Ord River.....From what we hear the main object of the party is to define and mark out good sheep and cattle country, but will, if appearances indicate the existence of minerals

The Levuka left Port Darwin on 5 August,1882 with the party of six and the two aboriginal boys, provisions for three months and twenty-three horses.

The sea voyage was not without incident.

Mary Durack records

All through the Timor Sea adverse winds lashed blue walls of water against the Levuka's, frail hulk.

The horses, whinnying in terror, were thrown from side to side in the narrow hold and the native boys, huddled together, too sick and frightened to eat, seemed likely to die before they could touch land. When Stumpy Michael spoke to them encouragingly, they rolled hopeless eyes.

'Finish, Boss! Finish.'

On the seventh day out two of the horses were so severely injured that Stumpy Michael was forced to shoot them.

While hauling the carcasses up, the pole on which he was balancing rolled in a sudden pitching of the ship and he was hurled ten feet into the hold, badly spraining his shoulder and injuring his back.

After eight miserable days, when the ship swayed towards Cambridge Gulf, he was just able to limp about again with his arm in a sling.

Pentacost, writing in shorthand, records that it took eight days to reach the Gulf

owing to the lightness of the winds which only made their appearance early in the morning, and even then sometimes not in our favour.'

Pentacost records that 'some of the party seem most obstinate and pig headed and it was evidently a mistake to go on an expedition with such men'.

He then describes how the horses came to be shot by 'Stumpy Michael'.

Before leaving Darwin, one of the iron water tanks was put down in the hold of the schooner with the horses. The tank blocked off part of the entrance, which made it difficult for the horses to move and affected the ventilation. Because of the buildup of manure, the stench was high.

Pentacost records:

Some of the horses were continually bleeding at the nostril from the effects the manure gave off and the fuss every time the men had to go down to water them..... I suggested that they should remove the tank first, using the water it contained which would otherwise probably become bad. But Kilfoyle with usual obstinacy refused to do it. 'It would be alright' he said and nothing could move him.⁴¹

Eventually, Pentacost describes, all the water turned foul: '

Kilfoyle proceeded to amend matters by mixing half the tank of good water with half the tank of stinking water, thus spoiling the good with very little improvements.' One horse was soon found dead, 'probably gripe'.

Then a few days later, 'again a horse was found to have dropped dead'.•

Pentacost takes the credit for taking up the tank and 'Sid spoke strongly on the same subject so at last it was done and everyone on board the schooner remarked what a great improvement was at once manilas! in the atmosphere of the

Mary Durack

reproduces a letter written by 'Stumpy Michael' to his wife Kate where he mentions 'bad weather all the time so we could not sail' but this could also be interpreted as being calm, as recorded

Pentacost's diary. '

Stumpy Michael' goes on to say 'we had two of our very best horses died on the voyage' and finishes by saying 'I had a fall into the hold myself while hoisting one of the poor creatures overboard and have come ashore here with my arm in a sling'." An article written by 'Stumpy Michael' which appeared first in the Australian in 1883 and later reprinted in Brisbane's Daily Mail dated 9

June 1906, states:

I myself met with a nasty accident on 13 August. We were hauling up a dead horse at night time, the pole upon which I was partly standing rolled from under me, and I fell a distance of 10 ft; breaking a small bone below the spine; for a few days afterwards I was incapacitated?

Pentacost, who was not in command, but obviously thought that he should have been consulted on all matters, records:

that he should have gone on an expedition with men whose ideas are limited to bush affairs but because they know how to ride horses and drive cattle... they are best on everything wherein horses are made useful.

If it please God that I ever return from this expedition, I shall have received a lesson that will make me take great care never again to go on such an affair except with gentlemen of money chosen who are willing to render obedience.

He spoke to Sid [Emanuel] and Michael Durack and he informed them that if he wasn't consulted on all matters he would not go on, but would consider returning to Darwin on the schooner:

Sid professed his willingness to follow my directions and Michael Durack said he would take care that things should be different on shore and that he would consult with me in respect to everything. If they choose to go their own way, I shall leave them to follow it and do the best they can for themselves"

The Levuka arrived in the Cambridge Gulf on Sunday 13 August, but Pentacost records that they 'were only able to put in just opposite Lacrosse Island where we lay over a day and part of another'. Once again, there seemed to have been friction between him and Kilfoyle. '

Some of the party went ashore [Lacrosse Island] to seek if water and food could be got for the horses.

They went in spite of my opposition as I considered it a most foolish procedure even if water and food were found'

Pentacost does describe sailing down the Cambridge Gulf:

a grander harbour there does not exist in Australia, though not so pretty as that of Sydney,

it is six times the size and is very safe with plenty of deep water.... Captain for the schooner [Murray] had no difficulty in bringing her down to her present position that is at the mouth of the Ord which I think is about 45 miles from the mouth of the Gulf,

By 17 August, they had got the horses and the provisions ashore.'

Stumpy' Michael records in his letter to his wife

'We will have to give the animals a week's spell here before we start.

They are very poor; in fact, it is a marvel they did not all die on the little schooner.

Now they have plenty of grass and water'."

After resting for the week, the expedition started out following a stream which eventually led them to the junction of the Ord and the Negri where Forrest had previously camped and marked a tree.

It appears that Stumpy Michael and Tom Kilfoyle left the rest of the party to survey the country and then return to camp.

Pentacost records:

Left camp at 8, travelling for three and a half hours SSW, then remained under some tress near a dry creek or river bed for a half of hour. Durack and Kilfoyle being both absent. When Durack returned, he said they had lost the river and we should have to go back on our tracks to some water and their camp while he looked for the river.

Asked if we could not go on the same open valley if there were obstacles. None, but they want to find the river. g

Throughout his diary, Pentacost criticises both Kilfoyle and Durack.

Sometimes it appeared as if Kilfoyle and Durack went off for days, leaving the rest of the party at the camp often besides a water hole where they fished.

On one such occasion they caught 'plenty of fish gropers - spotted and striped fish, types such as we see everywhere in this country and a sort of long fish with long snout a sort of garnish fish - very delicious - good eating also a kind of black brim

Pentacost gives an accurate description of the various types of country that they travelled through:

'Country passed over today better as to grass, it being mostly blue grass but with numerous patches of spinifex and almost everywhere with small stones. Much limestone - volcanic rocks and camped on low hill near Waterhole surrounded by other hills.'

'Stumpy' Michael', writing to his wife, records 'if one were to paint this country in its true colours, I doubt it would be believed. It would be said that the artist exaggerated greatly, for never have I seen such richness and variety of hue as in these ranges and in the vivid flowers of this northern spring.'"

57 Pentacost, J., Diary.

!! ibk:/.,

91 ibid.,

e::i ibid.,

Page 111

Pentacost also refers to the 'fine bottle trees.' He comments 'it is evident that the natives do not injure these trees in any way and they must be the source of a valuable supply of vegetable and pleasant food, perhaps when other things are scarce' "

Pentacost refers to collecting different seed. In one instant he collected the seeds of the corktree and described the tree as a 'rich coloured very pretty flower in clusters'.

Some of the places where they camped were pleasant, especially those beside rivers with 'large dark green trees, many palms and smelly small plants-' " Another entry in the diary reads 'Saw small blue flowers so like the Lobelia growing in midst of one plain.....Sorry I didn't get the seeds as it was to quote a phenomenon'."

The expedition had several encounters with Aboriginal tribes, mostly with Aborigines following them.

On 3 October, Pentacost records one of the encounters:

At the camp,. **Josey went to river to wash some clothes** and was suddenly started by the appearance of 3 blackfellows, one of them wore feathers and paint, others with spears. They ran upon him with uplifted spears and he in running away fell but cannot say why they did not then spear him unless his fall disturbed them. They were trying to surround him. He reached the camp for his rifle and Sid, Tom [Horan] and I accompanied him to the river where we found the blacks in ambush among the reeds.

We fired, Sid shot one fellow and I another. One was found dead, the other crawled some way but his dog hung about

1h Pentacost, J., Dia,y

ti! bki.,

(1l ibid.,

111 ibid.,

Page 25

Following this encounter, the blacks surrounded the camp that night but did not attack.

Pentacost records 'firing a shot in the direction we heard them talking - other shots were fired'. It then appears that the blacks disappeared but Pentacost makes the remark 'it is my opinion blacks would never attack at night

- they have not the pluck'. He and 'Stumpy Michael' kept watch 'I could hardly keep my eyes open for drowsiness'"

A couple of weeks later they again saw five or six blacks on the top of a hill.

Pentacost states 'when they noticed that we saw them - they stood up and one woolly headed fine looking fellow made a speech and often pointed to the West. Though he had a bundle of spears, he used no gestures of defiance and I think merrily bidding us begone to the West whence he supposes we came."

'Stumpy Michael' also records coming across Aborigines:

We found a large fishing party of blacks of all ages and both sexes. They ran away some distance on seeing us, but after a while they gathered together in a mob on the plain, and sat down watching us. They made no demonstration in particular, friendly or otherwise, beyond flourishing their spears; the men, numbering about half were well made, strong looking fellows:'

Throughout the expedition, the horses suffered in the hostile rocky hilly country with, at times, no feed and brackish or no water.

Pentacost records 'at 4.45pm we camped at a water hole - water very scarce during the day - none to drink -became parched - heat over 142 degrees.

The horses were very thirsty having been driven rapidly by Tom, Sid and Self'. At one stage Durack's mare, Vanity, became so ill she had to be left in charge of two black boys to bring along and Durack said he would return after reaching camp.

Pentacost records 'after having proceeded a mile or so we could hear the black boys yelling - they

iZ Pentacost, J., Diary.

m ibid,

&1Daily Mail, 9 JLine, 1906.

Page .3'J

were frightened - I had stopped with the mare and made one of the black boys take off his cap into which I poured water from my water bag - the mare drank it greedily... endeavouring to help her on, but it was no use'"

By October 1882, provisions were beginning to run low. 'Only one tin of meat now remains - our sportsmen are poor marksmen'. Kilfoyle obviously redeemed himself as **Pentacost recorded** that Kilfoyle shot a kangaroo which lasted two days and they also used tl to make soup . Pentacost described the soup as 'capital'. At this time, he says that the weather was getting warmer every day 'no flowers, no grass - only scrubby trees.' 00

White cockatoos were shot, but **Pentacost records** that they were 'not a nice feed'. He also records that at this time 'they had not come across any of Forrest's marked trees - though certainly during the last few days we have been further south than his track'. By this time Sid Emanuel was suffering from dysentery and the Aboriginal boys had sore feet from spinifex points. '**Stumpy Michael'** records that Kilfoyle saved the day by 'being engaged in making shoes for entire party; cutting up the leather saddle bags for the purposes. We

had suffered much previously for the want of shoes.'" Ten miles lower down the Fitzroy they found Forrest's first marked tree 'F.137'.

Durack records 'its discovery cheered us greatly'." Eventually arriving at the lower Fitzroy, the expedition met up with one of the vanguards of the West Australian sheep graziers moving in from King Sound, W.G. Mclarty of the Kimberley Pastoral Company. Mr Mclarty was the manager of Minnie station's

68 Pentacost, J., Diary.,

" ibid.,

» Daily Mail, 9 June, 1906.

TI ibid., 9 June, 1906.

72 ibid., 9 June, 1906.

The explorers stayed with him a week resting, inspecting his stock, sheep and horses. **'Stumpy Michael' makes the comment** 'All in excellent condition'. Mclarty accompanied them to Beagle Bay which was over 100 miles away. Leaving them at Beagle Bay he returned to his property with all their horses, which by that time had reduced to eleven. The party waited for three weeks for a boat to take them south to Fremantle. Finally the 'Mary Smith' arrived on 1 December 1882. Stumpy Michael records the passage:

A most disagreeable and rough passage to Fremantle - 1400 miles. Head winds nearly all the way with occasional storms."

Fremantle

The expedition party reached Fremantle on Monday, 1 January 1883. Kilfoyle on this date commenced keeping a diary and continued to do so on and off for the next twenty-six years.

The second day's entry reads 'at the Perth races all day' " The race meeting is recorded in the West Australian as the W.A. Turf Club's Annual Meeting. Five years later it was to be known as it is today - the Perth Cup.

Tuesday last was the opening day of the W.A. Turf Club's annual meeting, and the attendance was somewhat better than on any previous occasion within my remembrances. The weather was all that could be desired

He spent the following day in Fremantle and then he mentions that he went to Guildford on the 5th for horse sales. Kilfoyle records in his diary 'bought some.

"Daily Mail, 9 June, 1906.

14 Kilfoyle, Thomas, Diary, Battye Library, Perth.

"ilThe West Australian, 5 January, 1883.

Good prices'm The sale was of Newmarracarra horses owned by Maitland Brown. Newmarracarra Stud, situated just south of Geraldton, was famous for its horses. The property had just been sold by Maitland Brown to McKenzie Grant and Alexander Anderson. Brown had brought the horses down to Guildford to sell. This particular sale is well documented in Th& West Australian newspaper and in Peter Cowan's book on Maitland Brown.:

A special late train was organised for the return trip to Pertr. It was something of a gala occasion: Maitland Brown provided a luncheon at which his health was proposed, there were a few speeches, and the sale began at one-thirty.....fifty seven named horses raised almost two thousand guineas, said to be a

satisfactory price, yet, considering the quality of the horses and that such a selection had never before been available "

The arrival of the expedition in Perth was reported in The West Australian on 5 January 1883, under the heading Trip of Mr. Durack and Party across Kimberley:

It is a matter of sincere congratulations by the colony that Mr. Durack and his companions undertook their late trip through the Kimberleys.Upon the report of this gentleman much depended. Had he been dissatisfied and reported adversely, the value of the Kimberley leases would have fallen very low.

Four days later, another report appeared:

The news which we were able to give our readers on Friday regarding the result of Mr. Durack's exploring expedition was of a very encouraging nature.....it is satisfactory to find that Eastern capital as well as Eastern enterprise is being brought to aid in the development of the country it is to be regretted that the party was unable to trace the Ord river from Cambridge Gulf to the spot where Mr. Forrest left it. This was what it had been expected they would do, and great interest was felt in the result. As it is, we have

* Kilfoyle, Thomas, Diary..

77 Cowan, Peter, Maitland Brown -A view of Nineteenth Century Western Australia, Fremantle

Arts Centre Press 1988., page 311.

II The West Australian, 5 January, 1883.

not very much fresh information and the expedition has been chiefly valuable in that the observations of its members have, notwithstanding the dryness of the season, which did not enable them to see the country to advantage been confirmatory of the account which our own explorer had given."

At the end of his article in the Daily Mail, 'Stumpy Michael' Durack states:

I can safely predict that in a short time there will be very little vacant country worth taking up in the Kimberley district. Emmanuel, Kilfoyle and myself, have, of course taken up large portions of the country through which we travelled, both for ourselves and for others. I hope, however, that the Legislature of West Australia, will turn their attention to this party of the colony, and amend certain laws which bear rather onerously and unfairly on the pioneer squatters. The rents are too high in proportion to the rents in settled districts - being just double - no-pre-emptive rights, and a lease limited to only 14 years. They are real drawbacks.00

After only a week in Perth, the expedition party left Fremantle on 6 January 1883 in the 267 ton S.S. Rob Roy for Albany. Kilfoyle records that there was cold weather and they arrived at Albany on the 9th. They then joined the S.S. Karawarra and on 10 January sailed for Adelaide. At this point, Kilfoyle does not mention any other member of the expedition. He spent the day in Adelaide and then caught the S.S. Franklin for Melbourne. He writes in his diary 'on sea all day, head winds, sea ruff[rough].'

The S.S.Franklin reached Melbourne late in the evening of 18 January. On the 19th, Kilfoyle went to see Emanuel in Melbourne. By comparison, Mary Durack records that the party met with Emanuel and her grandfather in Sydney:

Mr. Solomon Emanuel and Grandfather were both in Sydney to welcome the exploring party on its return from Western Australia and big decisions were made with surprising speed."

" The West Australian, 9 January, 1883.

1:1)Daily Mail, 9 June, 1906.

Durack, Mary, Kings., page 215.

Not wasting any time in Melbourne, Kilfoyle left by train for Wodonga on the Victorian-New South Wales border. This railway had been in operation from 1873. From across the border at Albury, Kilfoyle caught the new train which had been in operation from the year before, for Goulburn. On the morning of 22 January, he records arriving in Goulburn and that night visited Emanuel.

Preparations

From 22 January till 2 March, Kilfoyle was in the Goulburn area, staying with relations at Murnmel, and travelling at different times to Queanbeyan and Taralea for race meetings. Kilfoyle met up on several occasions with Emanuel, and with Michael Durack on 1 February. On 27 February he states that he has 'bought a wagon from a local and on 1 March, bought 10 head of horses, took them out to Grena and spent the following day breaking them in.'

On 3 March, he records starting for Queensland with horses and wagon, but on the 5th was at Perry's blacksmith's shop shoeing horses all day.

The following day he started from Bunerra flats to Tully's place and then on Friday 9 March, he stated 'on our way to Coopers Creek. It's very, very dry'. Passing Forbes on 17 March, he notes 'posted letters there'. From the diary, it would appear that this is not the first time that Kilfoyle has made this trip, it all sounds very familiar. On 19 March he reached the head of the Bogangate River and describes the weather as 'warm and dry'. He records passing Guilmores [Gilmore's] old station and remarks as he passes the station 'for outback to Never Never'.

He reached Nyngan station, where he states 'had to fetch [fetch] horses back to dam. Finally on 23 April reached Bourke for Easter. Before reaching Bourke,