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XXVI.—Exploring Expedition from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria, under the Command of Mr. Robert O'Hara Burke.

Communicated by the Colonial Office.

Containing Journals of Howitt, King, Wills, Burke, Wright, and Brahe.*

Mr. A. W. Howitt's Despatch.

Poria Creek, Oct. 10, 1861.

Sir,—I have the honour to report my arrival here with the Contingent Exploring Party, on my return journey, having on September 15, in lat. 27° 44', and long. 140° 40', found John King, the only survivor of Mr. Burke's party, living with the Cooper's Creek natives. Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills had died some time previous to my arrival, from hunger and exhaustion, and Gray died before reaching Cooper's Creek, on their return journey from the Gulf. King was in a very weak, exhausted state when found, but I am happy to say has recovered wonderfully since, and Mr. Wheeler has just reported him to me as being out of his hands. The full particulars will be found in my diary, which, with King's narrative, is enclosed. I may state regarding my diary, that I have only transcribed that portion subsequent to our reaching this place on our outward journey, as up to that time we had followed the Expedition track, and nothing of interest had occurred. It may suffice for me to state that from leaving Menindie we had travelled without meeting with any particular hindrances, finding splendid feed almost the whole way, and sufficient water for our use, with the exception of three nights, when our horses were without. The rain had been very partial, and in places we only found sufficient for our immediate use. Torowoto and Carriapundy swamps and the mud-plains were perfectly dry, and no water that could long be relied on, without subsequent rain, from Nuntherunga back to this place, a distance of about 180 miles. I had intended leaving the Expedition track at Carriapundy, but was deterred from doing so by the very dry appearance of the country; and, therefore, followed the track to this creek, which is permanent. I am happy to be able to state that the party are and have been in

* Despatches were received in Melbourne late on Saturday, 2nd November, from Mr. Howitt, the leader of the Victorian Contingent Exploration Party, containing the disastrous intelligence that, after successfully crossing the Australian continent, Messrs. Burke and Wills had died of starvation in the neighbourhood of Cooper's Creek, and Gray a short time before Cooper's Creek was reached; King being the only member of the party who survived, and who was rescued by the Contingent party.
AUSTRALIA.

Map to accompany the Diary of MESSRS. BURKE & WILLS,
across Australia to the Gulf of Carpentaria:
also, MF Howitt's Journal to Cooper Creek,
constructed chiefly from the Observations & Field-book of W. I. Wills, Esq.
1861.

English Miles

Route of Burke & Wills coloured

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H. Howitt

H.
perfect health, and that the horses are in excellent working order. The camels are, on the whole, in as good condition as when they left Menindie, and may be pronounced cured of the scab, which I cannot help attributing in a great measure to the bad management of the sepoys. So far I have met with no loss or accident of any kind, and the natives, wherever I have seen them, have been friendly. I expect to be down at Menindie in three weeks, and may probably spend two or three days at Torowoto to endeavour to find permanent water, as I know of none there that can be relied on. I forward these despatches by Mr. Brahé and Weston Phillips, with four of our best horses. I consider that they will have no particular difficulties in going down, excepting as regards water, which would not be lessened by a larger party, and I cannot well spare more men, from the number of camels and pack-horses to look after. Should there be horses at Menindie fit for the journey down, I have instructed Mr. Brahé to proceed at once to town, taking with him the documents and field-books belonging to Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills, and relating to the journey to and from the Gulf. King I shall send down on my arrival at the Darling.

I beg to urge on the committee the necessity of sending me immediate instructions to Menindie respecting the further disposal of the party and equipment.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

A. W. HOWITT,
Leader of the Contingent Exploring Party.

To the Hon. JOHN MACADAM, M.D.,
Hon. Secretary to the Exploration Committee, Melbourne.

JOHN KING'S Narrative.

Mr. Burke, Mr. Wills, and I, reached the depot at Cooper's Creek on April 21st, about half-past seven in the evening, with two camels—all that remained of the six Mr. Burke took with him. All the provisions we then had, consisted of a pound and a half of dried meat. We found the party had gone the same day, and looking about for any mark they might have left, found the tree with DIG, April 21. Mr. Wills said the party had left for the Darling. We dug, and found the plant of stores. Mr. Burke took the papers out of the bottle, and then asked each of us whether we were able to proceed up the creek in pursuit of the party? We said not; and he then said that he thought it his duty to ask us, but that he himself was unable to do so: but that he had decided upon trying to make Mount Hopeless, as he had been assured by the committee in Melbourne that there was a cattle-station within 150 miles of Cooper's Creek. Mr. Wills was
not inclined to follow this plan, wishing to go down our old track, but at last gave in to Mr. Burke's wishes; I also wished to go down by our old track. We remained four or five days to recruit, and make preparations to go down the creek by stages of four to five miles a day, and Mr. Burke placed a paper in the plant, stating what were our plans. Travelling down the creek, we got some fish from the natives, and, some distance down, one of the camels (Landa) got bogged, and although we remained there that day and part of the next trying to dig him out, we found our strength insufficient to do so. The evening of the second day we shot him as he lay, and having cut off as much meat as we could, we lived on it while we stayed to dry the remainder. Throwing all the least necessary things away, we made one load for the remaining camel (Rajah), and each of us carried a swag of about 25 lbs. We were then tracing down the branches of the creek running south, but found that they ran out into earthy plains. We had understood that the creek along Gregory's track was continuous; and finding that all these creeks ran out into plains, Mr. Burke returned, our camel being completely knocked up. We then intended to give the camel a spell for a few days, and to make a new attempt to push on forty or fifty miles to the south, in the hope of striking the creek. During the time that the camel was being rested, Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills went in search of the natives, to endeavour to find out how the nardoo grew. Having found their camp, they obtained as much nardoo-cake and fish as they could eat, but could not explain that they wished to be shown how to find the seed themselves. They returned on the third day, bringing some fish and nardoo-cake with them. On the following day the camel Rajah seemed very ill: I told Mr. Burke I thought he could not linger out more than four days; and as on the same evening the poor brute was on the point of dying, Mr. Burke ordered him to be shot. I did so, and we cut him up with two broken knives and a lancet. We cured the meat and planted it; and Mr. Burke then made another attempt to find the nardoo, taking me with him. We went down the creek, expecting to find the natives at the camp where they had been last seen, but found that they had left; and, not knowing whether they had gone up or down the creek, we slept in their gunyahs that night, and on the following morning returned to Mr. Wills. The next day Mr. Burke and I started up the creek, but could see nothing of them, and were three days away when we returned, and remained three days in our camp with Mr. Wills. We then made a plant of all the articles we could not carry with us, leaving 5 lbs. of rice and a quantity of meat, and then followed up the creek, where there were some good native huts. We remained at that place a few days, and, finding our provisions were
beginning to run short, Mr. Burke said that we ought to do something, that if we did not find the nardoo we should starve, and that he intended to save a little dried meat and rice to carry us to Mount Hopeless. The three of us then came to the conclusion that it would be better to make a second attempt to reach Mount Hopeless, as we were then as strong as we were likely to be, our daily allowance being then reduced. Mr. Burke asked each of us whether we were willing to make another attempt to reach the South Australian settlements, and we decided on going. We took with us what remained of the provisions we had planted—two-and-a-half pounds of oatmeal, a small quantity of flour, and the dried meat: this, with powder and shot, and other small articles, made up our swags to 30 lbs. each, and Mr. Burke carried one billy of water, and I another. We had not gone far before we came on a flat, where I saw a plant growing which I took to be clover, and, on looking closer, saw the seed, and called out that I had found the nardoo. They were very glad when I found it. We travelled three days, and struck a watercourse coming south from Cooper's Creek. We traced this, as it branched out and re-formed on the plains, until we at last lost it in flat country. Sandhills were in front of us, for which we made, and travelled all day, but found no water. We were all greatly fatigued, as our rations now consisted of only one small Johnny cake and three sticks of dried meat daily. We camped that evening about four o'clock, intending to push next day until two o'clock, P.M., and then should we not find water, to return. We travelled, and found no water, and the three of us sat down and rested for an hour, and then turned back. We all felt satisfied that, had there been a few days' rain, we could have got through. We were then, according to Mr. Wills's calculation, forty-five miles from the creek. We travelled on the day we turned back very late, and the following evening reached the nearest water at the creek. We gathered some nardoo, and boiled the seeds, as we were unable to pound them. The following day we reached the main creek; and knowing where there was a fine water-hole and native gunyahs, we went there, intending to save what remained of our flour and dried meat, for the purpose of making another attempt to reach Mount Hopeless. On the following day Mr. Wills and I went out to gather nardoo, of which we obtained a supply sufficient for three days; and finding a pounding-stone at the gunyahs, Mr. Wills and I pounded the seed, which was such slow work that we were compelled to use half flour and half nardoo. Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills then went down the creek for the remainder of the dried meat which we had planted, and we had now all our things with us, gathering nardoo, and living the best way we could. Mr. Burke requested Mr. Wills to go up the creek as far as the depot,
and to place a note in the plant there, stating that we were then living on the creek, the former note having stated that we were on our road to South Australia. He was also to bury there the field-books of the journey to the Gulf. Before starting he got 3 lbs. of flour and 3 lbs. of pounded nardoo, and about a pound of meat, as he expected to be absent about eight days. During his absence I gathered nardoo and pounded it, as Mr. Burke wished to lay in a supply in case of rain.

A few days after Mr. Wills left, some natives came down to the creek to fish at some water-holes near our camp. They were civil to us at first, and offered us some fish; on the second day they came again to fish, and Mr. Burke took down two bags, which they filled for him; on the third they gave us one bag of fish, and afterwards all came to our camp. We used to keep our ammunition and other articles in one gunyah, and all three of us lived together in another. One of the natives took an oilcloth out of this gunyah, and Mr. Burke, seeing him run away with it, followed him with his revolver and fired over his head, and upon this the native dropped the oilcloth. While he was away, the other blacks invited me to a water-hole to eat fish; but I declined to do so, as Mr. Burke was away, and a number of natives were about who would have taken all our things. When I refused, one took his boomerang and laid it over my shoulder, and then told me by signs that if I called out for Mr. Burke, as I was doing, that he would strike me. Upon this I got them all in front of the gunyah and fired a revolver over their heads, but they did not seem at all afraid, until I got out the gun, when they all ran away. Mr. Burke, hearing the report, came back, and we saw no more of them until late that night, when they came with some cooked fish and called out "white fellow." Mr. Burke then went out with his revolver, and found a whole tribe coming down, all painted, and with fish in small nets carried by two men. Mr. Burke went to meet them, and they wished to surround him; but he knocked as many of the nets of fish out of their hands as he could, and shouted out to me to fire. I did so, and they ran off. We collected five small nets of cooked fish. The reason he would not accept the fish from them was that he was afraid of being too friendly, lest they should be always at our camp. We then lived on fish until Mr. Wills returned. He told us that he had met the natives soon after leaving us, and that they were very kind to him and had given him plenty to eat both on going up and returning. He seemed to consider that he should have very little difficulty in living with them; and, as our camp was close to theirs, he returned to them the same day and found them very hospitable and friendly, keeping him with them two days. They then made signs to him to be off. He came to us and narrated what had happened, but
went back to them the following day, when they gave him his breakfast, but made signs to him to go away. He pretended not to understand them, and would not go, upon which they made signs that they were going up the creek, and that he had better go down. They packed up and left the camp, giving Mr. Wills a little nardoo to take to us.

During his absence, while Mr. Burke was cooking some fish, during a strong wind, the flames caught the gunyah, and burned so rapidly that we were unable, not only to put it out, but to save any of our things, excepting one revolver and a gun. Mr. Wills being returned, it was decided to go up the creek and live with the natives, if possible, as Mr. Wills thought we should have but little difficulty in obtaining provisions from them if we camped on the opposite side of the creek to them. He said he knew where they were gone, so we packed up and started. Coming to the gunyahs where we expected to have found them, we were disappointed; and seeing a nardoo field close by, halted, intending to make it our camp. For some time we were employed gathering nardoo, and laying up a supply. Mr. Wills and I used to collect and carry home a bag each day, and Mr. Burke generally pounded sufficient for our dinner during our absence; but Mr. Wills found himself getting very weak, and was shortly unable to go out and gather nardoo as before, nor even strong enough to pound it, so that in a few days he became almost helpless. I still continued gathering; and Mr. Burke now also began to feel very weak, and said he could be of very little use in pounding. I had now to gather and pound for all three of us. I continued to do this for a few days; but finding my strength rapidly failing, my legs being very weak and painful, I was unable to go out for several days, and we were compelled to consume six days' stock, which we had laid by. Mr. Burke now proposed that I should gather as much as possible in three days, and that with this supply we should go in search of the natives—a plan which had been urged upon us by Mr. Wills as the only chance of saving him and ourselves as well, as he clearly saw that I was no longer able to collect sufficient for our wants. Having collected the seed, as proposed, and having pounded sufficient to last Mr. Wills for eight days, and two days for ourselves, we placed water and firewood within his reach, and started. Before leaving him, however, Mr. Burke asked him whether he still wished it, as under no other circumstances would he leave him; and Mr. Wills again said that he looked on it as our only chance. He then gave Mr. Burke a letter and his watch for his father, and we buried the remainder of his field-books near the gunyah. Mr. Wills said that, in case of my surviving Mr. Burke, he hoped that I would carry out his last wishes in giving the watch and letter to his father.
In travelling the first day Mr. Burke seemed very weak, and complained of great pain in his legs and back. On the second day he seemed to be better, and said that he thought he was getting stronger, but, on starting, did not go two miles before he said he could go no farther. I persisted in his trying to go on, and managed to get him along several times, until I saw that he was almost knocked up; when he said he could not carry his swag, and threw all he had away. I also reduced mine, taking nothing but a gun and some powder and shot, and a small pouch and some matches. On starting again, we did not go far before Mr. Burke said he should halt for the night; but as the place was close to a large sheet of water, and exposed to the wind, I prevailed on him to go a little farther, to the next reach of water, where we camped. We searched about, and found a few small patches of nardoo, which I collected and pounded, and, with a crow which I shot, made a good evening's meal. From the time we halted Mr. Burke seemed to be getting worse, although he ate his supper. He said he felt convinced he could not last many hours, and gave me his watch, which he said belonged to the committee, and a pocket-book to give to Sir William Stawell, and in which he wrote some notes. He then said to me, "I hope you will remain with me here till I am quite dead—it is a comfort to know that some one is by; but, when I am dying, it is my wish that you should place the pistol in my right hand, and that you leave me unburied as I lie." That night he spoke very little, and the following morning I found him speechless, or nearly so; and about eight o'clock he expired. I remained a few hours there; but as I saw there was no use in remaining longer, I went up the creek in search of the natives. I felt very lonely, and at night usually slept in deserted wurleys, belonging to the natives. Two days after leaving the spot where Mr. Burke died, I found some gunyahs, where the natives had deposited a bag of nardoo, sufficient to last me a fortnight, and three bundles containing various articles. I also shot a crow that evening, but was in very great dread that the natives would come and deprive me of the nardoo.

I remained there two days to recover my strength, and then returned to Mr. Wills. I took back three crows; but found him lying dead in his gunyah, and the natives had been there and had taken away some of his clothes. I buried the corpse with sand, and remained there some days. But finding that my stock of nardoo was running short, and being unable to gather it, I tracked the natives who had been to the camp, by their footprints in the sand; and, when some distance down the creek, shooting crows and hawks on the road, the natives, hearing the report of the gun, came to meet me, and took me with them to their camp, giving me nardoo and fish. They took the birds I had shot and cooked
them for me, and afterwards showed me a gunyah, where I was to
sleep with three of the single men. The following morning they
commenced talking to me, and putting one finger on the ground,
and covering it with sand, at the same time pointing up the creek,
saying "White fellow," which I understood to mean that one white
man was dead. From this, I thought they were the tribe who had
taken Mr. Wills's clothes. They then asked me where the third
man was, and I also made the sign of putting the fingers on the
ground, and covering them with sand, at the same time pointing
up the creek. They appeared to feel great compassion for me
when they understood that I was alone on the creek, and gave me
plenty to eat. After being four days with them, I saw that they
were becoming tired of me, and they made signs that they were
going up the creek, and that I had better go downwards; but I
pretended not to understand them. The same day they shifted
camp, and I followed them; and, on reaching their camp, I shot
some crows, which pleased them so much that they made me a
breakwind in the centre of their camp, and came and sat round
me until such time as the crows were cooked, when they assisted
me to eat them. The same day, one of the women, to whom I
had given part of a crow, came and gave me a ball of nardoo,
saying that she would give me more only she had such a sore arm
that she was unable to pound. She showed me a sore on her arm,
and the thought struck me that I would boil some water in the
billy and wash her arm with a sponge. During the operation the
whole tribe sat round, and were muttering one to another. Her
husband sat down by her side, and she was crying all the time.
After I had washed it, I touched it with some nitrate of silver,
when she began to yell and ran off, crying "Mokow! mokow!"
(Fire! fire!) From this time she and her husband used to give
me a small quantity of nardoo both night and morning, and when-
ever the tribe was about going on a fishing excursion, he used to
give me notice to go with them. They also used to assist me in
making a wurley, or breakwind, whenever they shifted camp. I
generally shot a crow, or a hawk, and gave it to them in return
for these little services. Every four or five days the tribe would
surround me and ask whether I intended going up or down the
creek; at last I made them understand that if they went up I
should go up the creek, and if they went down I should also go
down, and from this time they seemed to look upon me as one of
themselves, and supplied me with fish and nardoo regularly.
They were very anxious, however, to know where Mr. Burke lay,
and one day when we were fishing in the water-holes close by, I
took them to the spot. On seeing his remains the whole party
wept bitterly, and covered them with bushes. After this they
were much kinder to me than before, and I always told them
that the white men would be here before two moons, and in the evenings, when they came with nardoo and fish, they used to talk about the "white fellows" coming, at the same time pointing to the moon. I also told them they would receive many presents, and they constantly asked me for tomahawks, called by them "bomay ho." From this time to when the relief party arrived—a period of about a month—they treated me with uniform kindness, and looked upon me as one of themselves. The day on which I was released, one of the tribe who had been fishing came and told me that the white fellows were coming; and the whole of the tribe, who were then in camp, sallied out in every direction to meet the party, while the man who had brought the news took me over the creek, where I shortly saw the party coming down.

__Brahé's Letter.__

The following is the letter deposited by Mr. Brahé in the cache at Cooper's Creek on the 21st of April, when he left that for Menindie:—

Depôt, Cooper's Creek, April 21st, 1861.

The depôt party of V. E. E. leaves this camp to-day, to return to the Darling. I intend to go south-east from Camp 60, to get into our old track near Bulloo. Two of my companions and myself are quite well; the third—Patton—has been unable to walk for the last eighteen days, as his leg has been severely hurt when thrown by one of the horses. No person has been up here from the Darling.

We have six camels and twelve horses in good working condition.

__William Brahé.__

__Burke's Last Letter.__

The following is the despatch of Mr. Burke, left at the Depôt at Cooper's Creek:—

Depôt No. 2, Cooper's Creek. Camp No. 65.
22nd April, 1861.

The return party from Carpentaria, consisting of myself, Mr. Wills, and King (Gray dead), arrived here last night, and found that the depôt party had only started on the same day. We proceed to-morrow slowly down the creek towards Adelaide, by Mount Hopeless, and shall endeavour to follow Gregory's track, but we are very weak. The two camels are done up, and we shall not be able to travel farther than four or five miles a day. Gray died on the road from exhaustion and fatigue. We have all suffered much from hunger. The provisions left here will, I think, restore our strength. We have discovered a practicable route to
Carpentaria, the chief portion of which lies on the 140th meridian of east longitude. There is some good country between this and the stony desert. From there to the tropic the country is dry and stony. Between the tropic and Carpentaria a considerable portion is rangy, but it is well watered and richly grassed.

We reached the shores of Carpentaria on the 11th February, 1861. Greatly disappointed at finding the party here gone.

R. O'HARA BURKE, Leader.

P.S. The camels cannot travel, and we cannot walk, or we should follow the other party. We shall move very slowly down the creek.

Wills's Last Letter.

The following is Mr. Wills's letter, which he buried in the cāche at Cooper's Creek, after finding it impossible to get through to South Australia:—

Depôt Camp, 30th May.

We have been unable to leave the creek. Both camels are dead, and our provisions are done. Mr. Burke and King are down the lower part of the creek. I am about to return to them, when we shall probably come up this way. We are trying to live the best way we can, like the blacks, but find it hard work. Our clothes are going to pieces fast. Send provisions and clothes as soon as possible.

W. J. WILLS.

The depôt party having left, contrary to instructions, has put us in this fix. I have deposited some of my journals here, for fear of accidents.

(Signed) W. J. W.

Howitt's Diary.

September 1. Camp 20, Poria Creek; lat. 28° 44', long. 142° 42'.—The country, after leaving Camp 19 (Koorlegur), was generally sandy ridges, running variously from north-east round to north-west. Between these sandy tracts we passed a good deal of clayey flat ground—in places hard and smooth, in others spongy and rotten, and cracked deeply by the heat; polygonum and cane-grass growing in great quantities. The feed everywhere poor and scanty, and very dry. I believe that very little rain has fallen here this season. After about ten miles, the sand-ridges became more marked, and of a red colour, and the flats wide, and draining to the north-east. Scattered box-trees began to appear, and birds were more numerous. At five miles more, struck Poria Creek, a
deep channel coming from a northerly direction, and containing abundance of water: its general width appears to be about 60 feet, and the banks are lined with small box-trees; water-plants and a species of water-moss grow in the bed, and, from fish and crayfish being found in it, I have no doubt that it is permanent—in fact, the only water I can consider such of all these we have seen on this side the Daubeny Ranges. At a distance of about half a mile, the course of the creek is followed by high red sand-ridges, running parallel to its course. There is no timber anywhere but on the creek, and only small bushes and one or two kinds of pittosporum and mulgar on the sand-ridges. The country is very inferior in every respect, but water as we proceed. Signal-fires in two places as we were travelling; both very large, and no doubt intended to announce our arrival. On some of the flats I observed quantities of the plant growing from the seeds of which the natives make their bread. It appears to choose a loose blistered clayey soil, subject to be flooded, such as is generally found in polygonum ground. The leaves resemble clover, but with a silvery down, which is also found on the seed when fresh; these grow on short stems springing from the roots, and are flat and rather oval: in places where the plant has died down, these seeds quite cover the ground; they are gathered by the native women, and, after being cleaned from the sand, are pounded between two stones and baked as cakes.

Sept. 2. Camp 20.—Spelled here to-day before starting across for Cooper's Creek. Mending pack-bags, dressing camels, baking four days' bread, &c. Day warm; wind from south-east, which seems to be the prevalent quarter. Flies begin to be troublesome.

Sept. 3. Camp 21, lat. 28° 22', long. 142° 31'.—Started at eight o'clock, and left the expedition track at Poria Creek. Struck a course for Cooper's Creek north-west by compass. For seven miles travelled over sand-ridges running north-east and south-west, with wide clayey valleys between, in which were occasional small pools of muddy water. The feed everywhere very dry, but tolerably plentiful on the sandhills. Bushes and small mulgar-trees were growing in places. We here crossed a dry box-swamp, where crows, wood-swallows, kites, and small birds were numerous; and I observed here several trees with a rough bark resembling cork, and with bunches of long, pointed, dark green leaves growing at the ends of the small branches. The sandhills here became low and flat, and the valley wider. Shortly afterwards crossed the track of a large camel going north-east, apparently about eight months ago. The country undulating and well grassed, and, as far as I could make out, the watershed both to the north-east and south-west. At twelve o'clock, after crossing a dry swamp full of watercourses, and passing a low sandhill, came on a creek running
south-west, thickly timbered with large box-trees, the bed wide and the banks steep, and in several places large pools of clear water. Marshmallows and other vegetation now perfectly dried up were on the banks. Native camps were numerous; but none that I saw were very recent. Mussel-shells and the claws of crayfish were lying near them. I have every reason to believe that some of these pools are permanent. Crossing this we passed several branch creeks running through a clayey plain, and all lined with trees; large pools of water in several. I named this creek after the Hon. David Wilkie, M.D., M.L.C. On leaving the clay-flats at the creek we again crossed sandhills and undulating country for several miles, mostly well grassed but much burned up. Saltbush and cottonbush plentiful in the hollows, and scattered timber beginning to appear. At half-past two came on a watercourse running north, and containing large but shallow pools of water. The feed round about excellent, and enough timber to be called a thin gum-forest. The gums here a new species not before seen by us, several feet of the butt having a rough semipersistent bark, above which it is smooth and greenish, with a red tint; leaves thick and glossy, very much resembling one growing near Omeo. Ducks here very tame. Camped, having made eighteen miles, and country not looking so well ahead. The general fall seems to be to the westward. Samla, the largest of our camels, lay down just before reaching the camp; he is the only one of the lot that has not improved in condition, and he keeps himself poor by constantly watching the other camels, and driving them away from the females. He only carries 2 cwt.

Sept. 4. Camp 22, Stokes' Ranges; lat. 28° 20', long. 142° 19'.—Left camp at half-past seven. Travelled for three miles through open gum-forest, growing on clayey land. Water-channels frequent, with occasional small pools of water. Saltbush and grass, but very dry. Then crossed an open plain with claypans, the drainage of which, running westward, forms numerous small box creeks, which form and spread out again on the plain. No water here, only liquid mud. At about five miles passed a small box-creek with pools of water, and came on an open sandy plain destitute of vegetation, excepting the remains of salsolaceous plants grown last season. At ten o'clock crossed a large dry gum-creek, full of gravel and boulders, coming in an easterly direction from the range. As it lay in our course, we followed it up for some distance, but found no water, although crows, rose cockatoos, and crested pigeons were on it. The country here became stony, but with more dry grass, and gradually rose to the range; from this point the travelling was very severe upon the horses, and consequently very slow, as the ground is everywhere covered with fragments of sharp flint-stones. The ranges are of no great
height, and slope gently upwards; but are cut by numerous deep
gorges, filled with blocks of stone and scrub, and mostly containing
a dry gum-creek. These lying across our track made it difficult
to get on. The mulgar-scrub was very thick in places, a great
deal of it dead, and numbers of shrubs new to me. Camped at
3:30 at the edge of a deep scrubby gorge, with plenty of dry grass,
but no water. Went down the gorge after camping to look for
water, but found none: nor could I see any chance, from the loose
gavelly bed and large boulders. Scrub very thick; among other,
the native orange, of large size, and covered with unripe fruit.
Distance, twenty miles.

**Sept. 5.** Camp 23, north side of Stokes' Ranges; lat. 28° 10',
long. 142° 8'.—Had some difficulty in crossing the gully this
morning, the sides being steep and covered with large blocks of
stone; thick mulgar-scrub up both sides. From here, travelled
over similar stony ridges to those described yesterday for several
hours, crossing two wide deep gorges, each with a dry creek and
large gums, and flanked by precipitous stony ranges. On reaching
the summit of the range, found it to be a stony tableland,
almost devoid of vegetation. Some remarkable flat-topped peaks
to the north about 12 miles. At noon, suddenly came to the
edge of a bluff overlooking the Cooper's Creek country—appar-
ently a boundless extent of plains, with dark lines of scrub or
timber on the horizon. To descend from this bluff to a wide
basin of open country below, probably 700 to 800 feet, occupied
an hour, and I could only consider it a happy chance that some of
the packhorses or camels met with no accident among the large
blocks of loose stone. I could not have believed that the camels
could have carried their loads up or down such places as we have
crossed to-day. On reaching the basin, found it stony to a degree
difficult to describe. The ground was literally paved with angular
and rounded fragments of sandstone and flint, coated with a
shining oxide of iron. Vegetation very scanty, and water nowhere
visible, although I saw birds which I have seldom seen far from
springs. Travelling for several miles over this country, sur-
rounded by a chain of abrupt square hills, we slowly picked our
road as best we could. Several of the horses were very footsore,
and most of them fagged with the severe day's work and want of
water. The day, too, was unusually warm. At 3:30 found it
necessary to camp, the camels and horses being very tired. No
water, scarcely any feed.

After camp went to a square steep hill, with Mr. Brahé, to
reconnoitre the country. From it had an extensive view towards
Cooper's Creek, and was pleased to see that the stony country
does not probably extend more than 4 miles from us. Beyond
that open plains, and on the horizon what seem to be sandhills
and timber. A large body of smoke to the west. I found the summit of the hill to be covered with large masses of a white crystalline stone, grouped in irregular columns, and ringing with a metallic sound when struck. It is the same stone as that universally strewn over the country, and of which and a coarse sandstone and conglomerate the ranges are mostly formed. Managed to give the horses two quarts of water each, in the hope that they would feed. They were so thirsty that two tried to take the quart-pots off the fire.

*Sept. 6.* Camp 24; lat. 28°, long. 142° 2'.—Left camp shortly after six. The horses had not fed during the night, partly from thirst, partly being afraid of the stones. Followed down a gully leading into very stony plains, which we crossed for several hours, being obliged to lead the horses very slowly. No timber and scarcely any vegetation; the most desolate, stony wilderness imaginable. About ten o’clock came near the sandhills, and the country improved as regarded travelling, but not for feed or water. On a dry watercourse came on a party of natives, of whom some ran away; the others, consisting of an old grey-haired man, an old hag of a woman, a younger man, and two or three lubras and children, waited until I rode up. They were in a very excited state, waving branches, and jabbering incessantly. The younger man shook all over with fright. Sandy could not understand them, and I could only catch “Gow” (Go on). At last, by the offer of a knife, I prevailed on the old man to come with us to show us the nearest water; but after half a mile his courage gave way, and he climbed up a box-tree to be out of reach. Mr. Bráhe rode up to him, when he climbed into the top branches, jabbering without stopping for a moment. Finding that he would not come down, and kept pointing to the north-west (our course), we left him. All the natives were naked, and the old man was the only one who had any covering for his head—a net.

We here entered undulating sandy country, slightly scrubbed and well grassed, and at the same time came on Brahe’s down-track. Our horses at once struck into a better pace, going at least 3½ miles an hour. The camels also pushed on well. The loose horses kept wide of the track, looking out for water in the polygonum-ground, and at ten minutes past twelve one old stager found an ample supply in a channel on the right hand. The horses at once made a rush, and it was almost impossible to prevent them drinking as much as they wished. Three had for the last hour shown unmistakeable signs of giving in, and all were very much pinched with thirst. Camped by the water, in first-rate feed. Rain came on steadily from the north-east shortly after, and has continued. The horses have just been a third time to water.
Sept. 7. Camp 24.—It rained very heavily during the night; with strong gusts of wind from north-east, and this morning the flats and claypans are swimming with water, and the ground very soft. Resting to-day, as the horses require it. Drying things, shoeing horses, and digging tank to try and hold water later in the season.

Sept. 8. Camp 25, Cooper's Creek; lat. 27° 51', long. 141° 55'.—(Half-a-mile above Camp 60 of Victorian Expedition.)—Travelled north 60° w., through a succession of sandhills, with flats of rotten polygonum-ground between. The vegetation very green and in full flower, and box-trees growing in most of the flats. Towards noon, after crossing some high red sandhills, came into the earthy plains through which the various channels of Cooper's Creek run to the westward. The ground very rotten, and cracked by numerous deep fissures; dry channels in every direction. About 6 miles brought us to a patch of sandhills, where the bare loose summits were crested with a pink flowering mesembryanthemum; the pink flower, with the orange-coloured sand, and the light-green vegetation, produced a very singular effect. We here suddenly came upon a native camp of four wurleys. Only one black fellow was at home, and the three leading men of our procession came suddenly upon him as he was lying on the ground playing with his dog. He gave a succession of yells, and then ran off as if electrified. Here we crossed the first branch of Cooper's Creek, a wide shallow bed, full of green weeds and grass, and lined with box. From this we crossed about 3 miles of loose earthy plains devoid of vegetation, and camped on the north side of a large branch, near a shallow sheet of water. No feed on the plains, but grass and green weeds in the channel. Large box-trees on the bank. Distance travelled, 24 miles.

Sept. 9. Camp 26; lat. 27° 49', long. 141° 38'.—While loading up this morning five black fellows made their appearance on the opposite side of the creek, and, as usual, commenced shouting and waving their arms. We cooed in return, and one waded across, but waited on the bank until I broke a branch and beckoned him to come up. The others then followed him; they were all fine, well-built young men, with open, intelligent faces, and very different from the natives usually met with. They wore nets wrapped round their waists, and one, apparently the head man, had his front teeth knocked out. Sandy said he could only understand "narrangy word" they said; but I believe that he could not understand them at all, as he was quite unable to make them comprehend that I wished to know if they had seen any stray camels about the creek. Before we had finished loading, they returned to the opposite bank, and sat down watching us. On our starting they waded across to our camp—probably to pick up
anything left behind, which would be very little. To-day we travelled over earthy plains for 13 miles; they were cracked in every direction, and covered with a network of channels. In times of flood the whole of them must be under water, and I can scarcely imagine anything more luxuriant than the appearance of these plains after a wet season. At present everything is dry and withered, but everywhere the stalks of marsh-mallows and other flowering plants are as high as a horse's back, and very close together. Tufts of grass line each side, and cover the beds of the watercourses. Here and there clumps and lines of timber mark the course of the larger creeks, and sandhills rise like islands from the plains. To the south of west, at about 9 miles, we had a range, probably stony, and following its base a strongly marked line of timber, which I believe to be the main creek. No floods appear to have come down for two seasons, and water-holes which were tolerably well filled five months ago are now dry, or nearly so. At 13 miles crossed a branch, where Burke's marked tree, LXXI, stands, and camped at a claypan under a sandhill, about a mile to the west. Strong breeze from the north-east and north all day, and steady rain at night. Near here I observed, for the first time, a new tree, with a rough scaly bark and thick foliage, the leaves small and oval, and set in pairs on a stem. The tree grows to 15 or 20 feet, and bears numbers of flat brown foliage, each containing from five to six hard light-brown beans, known by us as the bean-tree.

Sept. 10. Camp 27; lat. 27° 39', long. 141° 30'.—The rain ceased shortly before sunrise, and the travelling was in consequence very heavy, the earthy plains being not only soft, as before, but sticky. Shortly after leaving camp, saw several natives on a sandhill making signs. I went up to them with Mr. Welch, and after a great deal of trouble persuaded one to come to me. He was a fine-looking fellow, painted white, skeleton fashion, and carried a very long boomerang stuck in his girdle behind. I could make nothing of him, excepting that he gave me a small ball of what seemed to be chewed grass, as a token of friendship, and in return I gave him a piece of cold doughboy I had with me for lunch, which he seemed to relish very much. We travelled till noon over a succession of earthy plains, broken by numerous box-channels, one of which contained a large reach of water, but the feed everywhere was miserably dry and scarce. The country looks wretched. After passing this channel seven natives made their appearance, one of whom Mr. Brahé recognised as one of the party who tried to surprise the depot last season. They presented him with a small quantity of some dried plant, from a bundle which one of them carried; it had a strong, pungent taste and smell, and I am at a loss to conjecture its use, unless as a,
kind of tobacco. Our black boy was frightened, and told me he thought they meant to "look out, kill him"—as I understood—by witchcraft, or enchantment, or poison. They followed us at a distance to our camp, where they sat down a little way off, making signs that they were hungry, and wanted tomahawks. After an hour's waiting they decamped. Killed two deaf adders and a snake of a sulphur colour on the track. Halted near a small pool of water, where there was a little green feed, which has become a rarity; the country looks miserable ahead. Travelling very heavy on the horses, as the mud balls in great lumps. Stony ridges to the south of the creek, at about 4 miles, and a good deal of timber visible on all sides. Weather still threatening rain; flies very troublesome.

Sept. 11. Camp 28; lat. 27° 35', long. 141° 19'.—Our horses strayed for feed during the night, and made it late before we started. Travelled through a box-forest full of channels, when we came to a dry creek coming from the north-east, with a rocky bed. From here, for some distance, stony ground to the right hand, and deep channels running parallel to each other in a westerly direction. I observed flood-marks considerably higher than our heads on horseback, and the water must be much confined by the stony rises on each side of the creek, although they are probably 2 miles apart. Mint was growing on the edges of the channels, and tea-tree of large size. We then came on a long reach of water about 60 yards wide; the country miserable; not a vestige of feed to be seen anywhere, except the withered and blackened remains of plants on the plains, and occasional patches of green couch-grass in the creek-bed. After this we traversed a box-forest, and came on a deep channel from the north-east, where Mr. Burke's first depot was situated. The feed was slightly better, owing to the sandy nature of the ground. About noon, passed large reaches of brackish water, and numerous pools of brine in the channels of the creek, but saw no feed anywhere. At length found one place where patches of couch-grass, with green plants and tufts of coarse grass, were growing among the stones, and halted, as the clay-plains before us were perfectly bare. It is long since I have seen such a barren, miserable place as this part of Cooper's Creek. Native camps were numerous, but all deserted. During the day flights of cockatoo-parrots passed us, migrating to the eastward. Where we are camped the creek is wide, with a stony bed; the south bank is formed of limestone, and large quantities of opalised wood are lying about. A short distance above the rocky banks come close down to the creek.

Sept. 12. Camp 29; lat. 27° 35', long. 141° 6'.—Travelled over clayey plains, with scattered timber and a good deal of
withered herbage. A rugged range, apparently sandstone, with flat-topped hills and peaks to the north, running north-east and south-west, at about 9 miles' distance. At 4 miles passed a wide deep reach of water, several miles in length, between steep banks, and probably brackish, from its colour. Numbers of pelicans, spoonbills, cormorants, and other waterfowl on it. On each side bare cracked plains, extending to the stony rises. At 3 miles more, the stony country on our right-hand closed in numerous deep channels, forming the creek, some of which were rocky, some sandy. Here, as elsewhere, were green grass and plants growing on the sand. Rather thickly timbered. At noon, came to where the creek forces a passage between rocky ridges; the channels are deep and tortuous, and in places encumbered with large blocks of stone. I here saw red gums for the first time on the creek. This continued for 4 miles, with narrow ridges of hard clay, covered with dense polygonum, separating the watercourses, when we came on more open country, with detached sandhills and better feed, though very dry. Large reaches of water; rocky banks of sandstone in places; bars of rock cross the creek. Camped near some sandhills, at a large waterhole. After camping, tried fishing, and good success, only that I lost two hooks, which I can ill spare. Caught five silver perch, weighing from 1½ lb. to 3 lbs., and several others were caught by the party by firelight. The fish excellent, and of a fine flavour. Distance, 17 miles.

Sept. 13. Camp 30; lat. 27° 38', long. 141°.—Made a short stage to-day, for the sake of feed for the horses, which is a thing to be considered from the dry appearance of the country. Reached the depot, Fort Wills, in 3 miles, through country rather better than we have seen for some days. More rain has fallen here lately than elsewhere, and the grass is just springing, but too short to be of much use. I believe this to be the first rain for many months. The water all down the creek, as far as we have come, has fallen at the rate of about 3 feet in the last four months. Found the depot as Mr. Brahé left it, the plant untouched, and nothing removed of the useless things lying about but a piece of leather. But from the very evident fact that things are buried, I cannot understand why the natives have not found them. From here, followed down the creek for several miles, and camped at some sandhills near a pool of water. Saw here the track of a large camel going up the creek. The small crested pigeon, spoken of by Sturt, numerous. Cool wind from south-east.

Sept. 14. Camp 31; lat. 27° 42', long. 140° 4'.—We had a late start this morning, as three of the horses went away, and one ill: indeed, I doubted at first whether he would be able to travel. Followed the course of the creek down for about 9 miles, crossing several branches which go out south, and form a reach of water
before re-entering the main creek. Here the rocky ridges on both sides close in, and the water has forced a narrow deep channel through a perfect wall of rock, forming below the finest reach of water we have yet seen—about 500 yards wide and several miles long, and very deep. The rugged hills on the north side, and the fine gums on its banks, produce a fine effect. The rock through which the channel has been worn is of a hard, flinty nature, inclined to be columnar, but forming huge masses of boulders. Deep round hollows have been worn in these by the floods, and at the water's edge, in one place where I tried the depth, the rock is perpendicular below the surface. Waterfowl, fish, and turtle are plentiful. The immediate neighbourhood, and as far as one can see on each side, is destitute of vegetation and very stony. We had some trouble in getting the horses and camels over the masses of rough stone which block up both sides of the creek. Leaving this, we struck across a large bend, over sandy country, with large red-sand hummocks, and better grassed than any we had yet seen on the creek. More rain must have fallen here, as pools of water were visible in many places. About 3 o'clock struck the creek again, with a wide sandy bed, heavily timbered with box and gum, and scrubby. This creek, I think, had been running slightly, from the watermarks, and a good deal of green grass was growing on the banks. Camped on a large waterhole, about a quarter of a mile below Mr. Burke's first camp after leaving the depot. We could see where the camels had been tied up, but found no marked tree. To-day I noticed in two or three places old camel-droppings and tracks, where Mr. Brahe informed me he was certain their camels had never been, as they were watched every day near the depot, and tied up at night. Mr. Burke's camels were led on the way down. It looked very much as if stray camels had been about during the last four months. The tracks seemed to me to be going up the creek, but the ground was too stony to be able to make sure.

Sept. 15. Camp 32; lat. 27° 44', long. 140° 40'.—On leaving this morning I went ahead with Sandy, to try and pick up Mr. Burke's track. At the lower end of a large waterhole found where one or two horses had been feeding for some months; the tracks ran in all directions to and from the water, and were as recent as a week. At the same place I found the handle of a clasp-knife. From here struck out south for a short distance from the creek, and found a distinct camel's track and droppings on a native path; the footprint was about four months old, and going east. I then set the black boy to follow the creek, and struck across some sandy country in a bend on the north side. No tracks here; and, coming on a native path leading my way, I followed it as the most likely place to see any signs. In about 4
miles this led me to the lower end of a very large reach of water, and on the opposite side were numbers of native wurleys. I crossed at a neck of sand, and at a little distance again came on the track of a camel going up the creek; at the same time I found a native, who began to gesticulate in a very excited manner, and to point down the creek, bawling out "Gow, gow!" as loud as he could. When I went towards him he ran away, and finding it impossible to get him to come to me, I turned back to follow the camel-track and to look after my party, as I had not seen anything of them for some miles. The track was visible in sandy places, and was evidently the same I had seen for the last two days. I also found horse-tracks in places, but very old. Crossing the creek, I cut our track, and rode after the party. In doing so, I came upon 3 lbs. of tobacco, which had lain where I saw it for some time. This, together with the knife-handle, the fresh horse-tracks, and the camel-track going eastward, puzzled me extremely, and led me into a hundred conjectures. At the lower end of the large reach of water before mentioned I met Sandy and Frank looking for me, with the intelligence that King, the only survivor of Mr. Burke's party, had been found. A little farther on I found the party halted, and immediately went across to the blacks' wurleys, where I found King sitting in a hut which the natives had made for him. He presented a melancholy appearance—wasted to a shadow, and hardly to be distinguished as a civilised being but by the remnants of clothes upon him. He seemed exceedingly weak, and I found it occasionally difficult to follow what he said. The natives were all gathered round, seated on the ground, looking with a most gratified and delighted expression. Camped where the party had halted on a high bank close to the water. I shall probably be here ten days, to recruit King before returning.

**Sept. 16.** Camp 32.—King already looks vastly improved, even since yesterday, and not like the same man. Have commenced shoeing horses and preparing for our return. Wind from south-west, with signs of rain. The natives seem to be getting ready for it.

**Sept. 18.** Camp 32.—Left camp this morning with Messrs. Brahé, Welch, Wheeler, and King, to perform a melancholy duty which has weighed upon my mind ever since we have camped here, and which I have only put off until King should be well enough to accompany us. We proceeded down the creek for 7 miles, crossing a branch running to the southward, and followed a native track leading to that part of the creek where Mr. Burke, Mr. Wills, and King camped after their unsuccessful attempt to reach Mount Hopeless and the northern settlements of South Australia, and where poor Wills died. We found the two gunyahs

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pretty much as King had described them, situated on a sandbank between two waterholes, and about a mile from the flat where they procured the nardoo-seed, on which they managed to exist so long. Poor Will's remains we found lying in the wurley in which he died, and where King, after his return from seeking for the natives, had buried him with sand and rushes. We carefully collected the remains and interred them where they lay; and, not having a Prayer-book, I read chapter xv. of 1 Corinthians, that we might at least feel a melancholy satisfaction in having shown the last respect to his remains. We heaped sand over the grave, and laid branches upon it, that the natives might understand by their own tokens not to disturb the last repose of a fellow-being. I cut the following inscription on a tree close by, to mark the spot:—

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{W. J. WILLS,} \\
\text{XLV Yds.} \\
\text{W.N.W.} \\
\text{A.H.}
\end{array}
\]

The field-books, a note-book belonging to Mr. Burke, various small articles lying about, of no great value in themselves, but now invested with an interest from the circumstances connected with them, and some of the nardoo-seed on which they had subsisted, with the small wooden trough in which it had been cleansed, I have now in my possession. We returned home with saddened feelings, but I must confess that I felt a sense of relief that this painful ordeal had been gone through. King was very tired when we returned, and I must most unwillingly defer my visit to the spot where Mr. Burke's remains are lying until he is better able to bear the fatigue.

\textit{Sept. 19.—Shoeing horses.} A very slow and troublesome job, as many have never been shod before, and our forge is of the most primitive description. This afternoon got the pigeons in order of flying. Their tails being rubbed down by travelling so far in a cage, I got the tails from several crested pigeons, and inserted feathers in the stumps of our carriers, fastening the splices with waxed thread; the plan answered far better than I had expected, and the birds can now fly about the aviary we have made of a tent with the greatest ease.

\textit{Sept. 20.—Started the pigeons at daybreak, each with a message fastened to its legs.} On throwing them up, they commenced wheeling round the camp, but separated, one being chased by one of the large kites which are always hovering about the creek. After flying round in various directions with great speed they gradually drew across the creek, when we lost sight of three; the
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

fourth, after making a large circle, pitched in a tree about a mile off. After breakfast he was found under a bush, with a kite watching him; and the feathers of one of the other pigeons were found not far off, it having been killed. Of the two others nothing has been seen, and I hope that they got clear away, but I am much afraid that the experiment has proved a failure; however, I should have thought more of it if the pigeons had made a more decided start. Last night the wind changed from north-east to south-west, and brought up a slight shower. This morning south-west, with heavy clouds, threatening rain. King improving slowly, but very weak. Turned out the white pigeon again this afternoon; he flew into a gum standing in the camp, and has taken up his quarters there—not a proper proceeding for a carrier-pigeon, according to my ideas.

Sept. 21.—Finding it would not be prudent for King to go out for two or three days, I could no longer defer making a search for the spot where Mr. Burke died; and with such directions as King could give, I went up the creek this morning with Messrs. Brahe, Welsh, Wheeler, and Aitkin. We searched the creek upwards for 8 miles, and at length, strange to say, found the remains of Mr. Burke lying among the tall plants under a clump of box-trees, within 200 yards of our last camp, and not 30 paces from our track. It was still more extraordinary that three or four of the party and the two black boys had been close to the spot without noticing it. The bones were entire, with the exception of the hands and feet; and the body had been removed from the spot where it first lay, and where the natives had placed branches over it, to about 5 paces' distance. I found the revolver which Mr. Burke held in his hand when he expired partly covered with leaves and earth, and corroded with rust. It was loaded and capped. We dug a grave close to the spot, and interred the remains wrapped in the union-jack—the most fitting covering in which the bones of a brave but unfortunate man could take their last rest. On a box-tree, at the head of the grave, the following inscription is cut:

| R. O'H. B. | 21 | 9 '61. |
| A. H.     |    |    |

Sept. 22.—The pigeon still keeps its quarters at the camp, and comes down to feed now and then. I have removed the message, and shall leave it to its fate. It has been trying hard to rain for two or three days, but does not seem able; great clouds drift over, looking ready to burst, but only squeeze out two or three drops, and then pass over. I expect fully that it will clear up without
rain; another dry season will make Cooper's Creek look fearfully miserable. When the hot weather comes on, the water-holes will many of them be dry, unless filled by rain or a flood. I have written down King's narrative as much as possible in his own words. Shall annex it to this diary. Finished shoeing the horses.

**Sept. 23.**—Went down the creek to-day, in search of the natives. One of the party accompanied me, and we took two days' rations, in case it should be necessary to prolong our search. Two days after we camped here the natives left, and have not been seen since; and I could not think of leaving without showing them that we could appreciate and reward the kindness they had shown to Burke's party, and particularly to King. For 3 miles we travelled over alluvial flats along the creek, timbered with box and large gums, and dotted with bean-trees, orange-trees of large size, but at present without fruit, various kinds of acacias, and other bushes. To the right hand level flats and sand-ridges, apparently tolerably grassed. We then came on a large reach of water, where four or five natives had just been fishing; their nets were lying on the sand to dry, and the fire yet burning. Not seeing any one about, and getting no answer to a cooey, we went on. At 3 miles more we passed the first feeder of Strzelecki's Creek, going to the southward, and at a large reach of water below found the natives camped. They made a great commotion when we rode up, but seemed very friendly. I unpacked my blanket, and took out specimens of the things I intended giving them—a tomahawk, a knife, beads, a looking-glass, comb, and flour and sugar. The tomahawk was the great object of attraction; after that the knife; but I think that the looking-glass surprised them most. On seeing their faces some seemed dazzled, others opened their eyes like saucers, and made a rattling noise with their tongues, expressive of surprise. We had quite a friendly palaver, and my watch amused them immensely. When I gave them some of the sugar to taste, it was absurd to see the sleight-of-hand with which they pretended to eat it; I suppose from a fear of being poisoned, which I suppose is general, as our black boys are continually in dread lest the "wild black fellow" should poison them by some means. I made them understand that they were to bring the whole tribe up next morning to our camp to receive their presents, and we parted the best of friends. The names of the principal men are Tehukulow, Mungallees (three in number), Toquunter, Pitchery (three in number, one a funny little man, with his head in a net, and a kite's feather in it—another a tall man, with his beard tied in a point), Pruriekow, and Borokow.

**Sept. 24.**—This morning, about ten o'clock, our black friends appeared in a long procession, men, women, and children, or, as they here also call them, piccaninnies; and at a mile distance they
commenced bawling at the top of their voices as usual. When collected all together on a little flat, just below our camp, they must have numbered between 30 and 40, and the uproar was deafening. With the aid of King, I at last got them all seated before me, and distributed the presents—tomahawks, knives, necklaces, looking-glasses, combs, among them. I think no people were ever so happy before, and it was very interesting to see how they pointed out one or another who they thought might be overlooked. The piccaninnies were brought forward by their parents, to have red ribbon tied round their dirty little heads. One old woman, Carrawaw, who had been particularly kind to King, was loaded with things. I then divided 50 lbs. of sugar between them, each one taking his share in a union-jack pocket-handkerchief, which they were very proud of. The sugar soon found its way into their mouths; the flour—50 lbs. of which I gave them—they at once called "white fellow nardoo," and they explained that they understood that these things were given to them for having fed King. Some old clothes were then put on some of the men and women, and the affair ended in several of our party and several of the black fellows having an impromptu "corroboree," to the intense delight of the natives, and, I must say, very much to our own amusement. They left, making signs expressive of friendship, carrying their presents with them. The men all wore a net girdle; and of the women, some wore one of leaves, others of feathers. I feel confident that we have left the best impression behind us; that the "white fellows," as they have already learned to call us, will be looked on henceforth as friends; and that, in case of emergency, any one will receive the kindest treatment at their hands.

Sept. 25, at Camp 21.—This morning I turned my face homewards. The object of our mission being fulfilled, I had to do so, but I return with a great regret at not being able to go on. We take back five months' rations from this date, at the scale we have been using, and which has proved sufficient. The party are in the best of health, the horses in fine order, and the camels none the worse for their journey, and decidedly in better health than when they left the Darling. On the edge of a country so well worth exploring, in a tolerably good season, and with the means I now have at my disposal, I feel how much might be done. We camped to-day at our last camp but one coming down the creek, making an easy stage for King. Got in by noon, as the horses were very fresh after their spell. The camels gave us a good deal of trouble this afternoon, and from a cause which may, and probably will, constantly occur. One of the male camels had taken to driving the females about, and fighting with the other male, Sama, who up to this time had been master. To-day the other camel was furious, and, in spite of being short-hobbled, and having his head tied
down to his knee, chased the whole of the camels from the camp, ten minutes after they were let loose; and although Brahé went immediately after them, and was for three hours on their tracks, he was unable to overtake them. Coming back for a horse, he took Sandy with him, and cut across to where he had left the tracks, running north, over some very rough stony country. It was dark before they returned, having found the camels some miles away. From this and similar occurrences I find it very unwise to take male and female camels on a journey together. One is never safe for a day from their straying, and from continual fights between the male camels for mastery. The result is, that the camels are continually harassed, and watch each other instead of feeding. With either all male or all female camels there would be less, or certainly not more trouble, than with horses; and with this drawback, I firmly believe in the suitability of camels for exploring.

**Sept. 26.**—Made 10 miles, and camped where the creek forces a passage through the rocks.

**Sept. 27.**—Obliged to stay where we are, as one of the mares foaled during the night. Knocked the foal on the head. Blowing hot wind.

**Sept. 28.**—Camped at the fish-pond, having made only 15 miles. King very tired; cannot ride on a camel, as he thought, and had to give him a horse, to try if it would be easier for him. Dug up the things planted by Mr. Burke and Mr. Wills, and found the field-books and papers all safe. All hands fishing this evening, and a large number of fish caught, varying from a quarter of a pound to three pounds and a quarter. Blowing a strong hot wind from north and north-east; will dry up the surface-water very fast.

**Sept. 29.**—The doctor does not consider that King should travel to-day, so shall remain here. Could not have a much better place on the creek—plenty of feed and abundance of fish. A dozen caught this morning, weighed nearly 20 lbs. Two of the party caught 72 lbs. weight from three o’clock to sundown. They are most excellent eating. I do not know any fish of as fine a flavour. Strong gale from north and north-east, and very hot. If this goes on without rain, we shall have some pushing to do before reaching Kolialto;* and, without rain has fallen, I do not think we can depend with certainty on any water from Poria to Nandherunga Creek—about 180 miles.

**Sept. 30.**—Camped at our 28th camp. Surface-water nearly all gone, and no feed. Found a small pool at the mouth of a gully, but all the other water in the creek was as salt as brine. Hot wind again.

**October 1.**—Halted above our 27th camp, at a number of water-

* Also written Koorliatto, Koorlegur, Koorbigur.
holes, where there was pretty good feed. Passed our black friends on the road, who invited us to stop and eat fish and nardoo, and have a corroboree. Strong hot wind from north-west round to north-east—the fifth day now; and it seems to have blown away every sign of clouds. The sky looks hard and blue, with a grey haze on the horizon, and the vegetation is withering fast. Where we camped happened to be not more than a couple of hundred yards from a large native camp, situated in a branch channel, and completely hidden by dense timber and scrub. When we arrived, all the men excepting three old fellows were away, and only the lubras and piccaninnies were at home, in a terrible fright at so many white fellows squatting down close to them. They began to pack up their things for a flight; but an amicable understanding being brought about, and some of the men returning, we were soon the best of friends. I distributed the few remaining presents, and they gave in return some chewed pitchery and nardoo-balls. One old greybeard had been as far as Wanominta Creek, and could repeat the names of the various waters between here and that place, via Ballow; but I found him impenetrable on any other road. There were about twenty men, all well made and well fed; and several were old patriarchs, and some of them apparently old rascals too. They were far more inclined to be troublesome and importunate than our friends lower down, particularly one tall young fellow, rubbed all over with red earth, who pestered me for a tomahawk. One of them had had his arm broken above the wrist, and roughly bandaged up with rags and grass-cord; the doctor set it properly, and it was remarkable to see the perfect composure with which the black fellow bore the operation. In assisting, I had to use my clasp-knife to cut bark-splints, and, laying it down beside me, it of course vanished, and I saw no more of it; but, strange to say, in the same place shortly afterwards one of the knives was found which I had given the black fellows, which, I suppose, they had exchanged for mine, on the principle of the old saying, that “exchange is no robbery.” After a while the natives began to draw in too close to our camp, talking a good deal about our “portos,” or bundles, so that we had to draw a line as a boundary—a hint they took at once, and all squatted down beyond it. At dusk I fired off two rockets, to their unbounded surprise; but they were not so alarmed as I expected, probably from feeling that we were kindly disposed towards them. I believe that the sight of us smoking, and seeing the smoke coming out of our mouths, alarmed them much more, as some made signs to put the pipe away, and others got up and walked off, looking behind them. At dark they retired to their camp.

Oct. 2.—This morning the natives came up and commenced a brisk trade in nets, grass-string girdles, boomerangs, and other
things, for old clothes, rags, and such like valuable property. For part of an old blanket I obtained two boomerangs; a large staff used in digging roots; one of the long-pointed sticks used in fishing; a stone tomahawk, cemented into a box-wood handle; and the head of a larger one, about the size and shape of an American axe, which the proprietor, a tall old warrior, with one very sinister eye, scraped up from the sand by his hut. The smaller tomahawk he dropped twice between his camp and ours, and pretended he had never had it, until I made him understand that I was not going to be done, when he burst out laughing, and sent his lubra back for it. The whole mob sat down by our camp, and observed us packing up with great interest, but were terribly frightened at the horses, more so than at the camels. They accompanied us for half a mile on our road, and then waited looking after us for a while. Camped at some sandhills near our 26th camp; the only water near being a pool of liquid mud, from which we obtained a small supply of water by draining the surface. In going up, this was a fine channel. Day rather hot, but the wind from the south, and a great improvement on the last five of hot winds.

Oct. 3.—This morning the clouds began to bank up from the south, drawing northward, with every sign of a thunder-storm. During the time we were travelling, before reaching our camp, the clouds continued to gather in masses, threatening rain, but dispersed as they passed over towards an arch of blue sky to the north. The country much greener since we came down, owing to the two nights’ rain we had. Camped at the remains of what was a large sheet of water in one of the branches of the creek. It has now a very unpleasant taste of soda, and produces thirst, rather than quenches it. Sent Phillips away after dinner on one of the spare horses, to run our track as far as possible before night among the sandhills, to see if there was any water in the polygonum-flats. The clouds still gathering, and thunder and heavy rain to the north-west and south-east. We lit a fire at dark on the edge of the plain, but had great difficulty in keeping it up, as the natives had burned all the dead wood near the water; by means of this, and rockets fired occasionally, Phillips returned about nine o’clock, having been 10 miles on the track. He reported the water to be almost dried up, and had only seen two small pools of mud. The night very dark, with thunder and lightning, but no rain.

Oct. 4.—Started late this morning, as I wished all the horses to drink well before leaving the creek; and also as I had to send the camels 2 miles to fill the water-bags, this pool being scarcely drinkable. I went on ahead of the party to search for water, but did not leave the track for the 10 miles Phillips had been over. The sandhills are looking splendid, the two nights’ rain having covered them with grass and herbage; and even the earthy flats between
the ridges show some signs of vegetation. About three o'clock I came on four native children sleeping under the shade of a box-tree, and covered with nets. One waking suddenly, started up in a terrible fright at such an unusual sight, and ran off screaming into the polygonum, where I saw its mother peeping at me through a bush. When I called out to her to come, she did so, but kept at a very respectful distance. I asked her for water, and, to reassure her, gave her an old handkerchief. She got her children gathered round her, two on her back, and one carrying a fourth, all of them screaming loudly; and, having pointed out a little pool of mud, moved off to a sandhill, where she commenced bawling to some of the natives, who seemed to be about half-a-mile off. I went off to hunt over the flat for water, and shortly heard shouts of "Gew, gew," behind me, from three natives, who came running up in an excited state, each with a boomerang or a waddy. We soon, however, came to a friendly understanding by means of the few words I knew; and the promise of a knife decided them to show me the water. One of them, a jolly-looking young fellow, minus his front teeth, took the lead; the other two, both of them dressed in red paint and a head-net, keeping a little on one side. We kept up a sort of conversation, and in half an hour came to their camp, a large hut on a sandhill, with a small pool of water near, among the clay-pan. I was very much amused at the ceremonious way in which my guide led the way, pointing out the best road, and very earnestly making me notice the bushes in my way, as if I were in danger of falling over them. They gave me as usual a ball of chewed pitchery, and seemed very much surprised that neither I nor my horses cared about drinking. I found it quite impossible to make them understand that the water-hole was too small. My guide, having received his knife, was now very anxious to have my shirt, which, of course, I objected to; and, as I could learn nothing more, I gave them a few matches, and rode on my way. My four black friends, however, either out of politeness, or in the hopes of getting my shirt, followed me, and kept so close behind the tail of my horse, each with a waddy in his hand, that I thought it best to send them back to their camp, whither they went, after some jabbering among themselves. About 3 miles farther on I found eight small channels of water in a polygonum-flat, containing sufficient water for ourselves and our horses for two days. Camped here, when the party came up, in splendid feed.

Oct. 5.—Camped to-day at the tank, which, with the channel by it, is brimful of water. The country looks beautiful, the sandhills are covered with flowers and bushes in full bloom, and swarm with birds of all kinds. It has every appearance of being spring here. Passed several fine channels of water by the track. Natives in various places scattered through these sandhills. It is very
difficult to estimate the number of the blacks here, but I believe they cannot be far short of 400, belonging to Cooper’s Creek.

Oct. 6, Stokes’ Ranges, Surprise Creek.—Left the tank this morning, carrying as much water as possible on the camels, and two horseloads, sufficient for ourselves for four days, and one drink for the horses; calculating on making Koliatti or Poria Creek in four days. If I find water on the track, I intend striking for Wilkie’s Creek. The sandhills covered with grass and flowers, and even the bare clayed plains and the miserable stony country between them and the ranges had struggled into something resembling vegetation. The ranges, where we entered them, by Brahe’s Gap, are not so high as where we crossed them more to the westward, but ran in low ridges along wide stony valleys, formed by the numerous gorges we found so difficult to cross. Mulga and acacia scrub everywhere, but not much feed; only saltbush and very short herbage grown since the rains. We were agreeably surprised by a fine water-hole in the first creek we came to, which proved to be the lowest of several of nearly the same size higher up the creek. I believe it to be about 10 yards wide and 80 long, and some 3 or 4 feet deep. Distance 18 miles.

Oct. 7, Stokes’ Ranges, Keppel Creek; lat. 28° 17', long. 142° 30'.—We were late in leaving camp this morning, as nineteen of the horses had followed the track back for several miles. The country travelled through for 15 miles was much of the same character—wide stony flats surrounded by low ridges, and intersected by gum-creeks coming from the gorges in a northerly direction. We passed through a succession of gaps, in each of which we found a creek with pools of clear rain-water; and, from the very loose gravelly nature of the ground, I am inclined to believe that these creeks are still running slowly underground since the rain. At 15 miles came on the south slopes of the range, with a wide view towards Koliatti and Poria. Camped on a small watercourse near its junction with Keppel Creek. Two tolerable pools of water. Another make-believe thunderstorm to-night, with violent gusts of wind, but no rain, excepting at two places to the north-west, where it appeared to be raining, about a mile wide. Everything looks spring-like here.

Oct. 8, Junction Camp, No. 21.—Crossed Keppel Creek, and crossed over stony slopes for 6 miles, when we crossed the creek on to barren sandy plains. At 3 miles entered the sandhills, and found the country terribly burned up, and no signs of water. Rain cannot have fallen here for some time. Made our old camp in 22 miles from Keppel Creek, and found water still in the small creek, but the feed very dry and scanty.

Oct. 9, Poria Creek.—When the party started this morning I went to the westward of the track, and found that at a short
distance the sandhills terminated in the gum-forest and polygonum-swamps before mentioned. From a high sandhill I could see across these for many miles towards the range, in a westerly direction; and I believe that they also extend to or across Wilkie Creek to the south. I found no water, but I am convinced that there are other channels similar to the one we camped on last night, which will contain water for months after rain. At Wilkie Creek I again left the track, and followed the creek upwards, crossing several deep channels running in and out from it, and full of water. At a short distance I came on a large sheet of water, certainly more than a mile long, and about 80 feet wide, and, with the couch-grass growing on its banks and large box-timber, having a striking resemblance to some of the smaller branches of Cooper's Creek. It is a far finer watercourse than I at first supposed. Made Poria Creek about two o'clock. The country very dry and parched; we seem, in one day's journey, to have travelled from spring to spring.

**Wills's Diary from Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.**

Fieldbook No. 1.—Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.

[The omissions in the diary are supplied by the information contained in the maps, with the exception of the last two days on the shore of the Gulf.]

**Sunday, December 16, 1860.**—The two horses having been shod, and our reports finished, we started at 6:40 A.M. for Eyre's Creek; the party consisting of Mr. Burke, myself, King, and Charley, having with us six camels, one horse, and three months' provisions. We followed down the creek to the point where the sandstone ranges cross the creek, and were accompanied to that place by Brahé, who would return to take charge of the dépôt. Down to this point the banks of the creek are very rugged and stony, but there is a tolerable supply of grass and salt-bush in the vicinity. A large tribe of blacks came pestering us to go to their camp and have a dance, which we declined. They were very troublesome, and nothing but the threat to shoot them will keep them away; they are, however, easily frightened, and, although fine-looking men, decidedly not of a warlike disposition. They show the greatest inclination to take whatever they can, but will run no unnecessary risk in so doing. They seldom carry any weapons, except a shield and a large kind of boomerang, which I believe they use for killing rats, &c.; sometimes, but very seldom, they have a large spear; reed-spears seem to be quite unknown to them. They are undoubtedly a finer and better looking race of men than the blacks on the Murray and Darling, and more peaceful; but in other respects I believe they did not compare favourably with them, for,
from the little we have seen of them, they appear to be mean-
spirited and contemptible in every respect.

Monday, Dec. 17.—We continued to follow down the creek. 
Found its course very crooked, and the channel frequently dry for 
a considerable distance, and then forming magnificent water-holes, 
abounding in waterfowl of all kinds. The country on each side is 
more open than on the upper part of the creek. The soil on the 
plains is of a light earthy nature, supporting abundance of salt-bush 
and grass. Most of the plains are lightly timbered, and the 
ground is finer, and not cracked up, like at the head of the creek. 
Left Camp No. 67 at ten minutes to six A.M., having breakfasted 
before leaving. We followed the creek along from point to point, 
at first in a direction W.N.W. for about 12 miles, then about north-
west. At about noon we passed the last water, a short distance 
behind which the creek runs out on a polygonum (Polygonum 
Cumingthamii) flat; but the timber was so large and dense, that it 
deceived us into the belief that there was a continuation of the 
channel; on crossing the polygonum-ground to where we expected 
to find the creek, we became aware of our mistake. Not thinking 
it advisable to chance the existence of water a-head, we camped 
at the end of a large but shallow sheet of water in the sandy 
bed of the creek. The hole was about 150 links broad. In 
most places the temperature of the water was almost incredibly 
high, which induced me to try it in several places. The mean 
of two on the shady side of the creek gave 97·4°. As may 
be imagined, this water tasted disagreeably warm, but we soon 
cooled some in water-bags, and, thinking that it would be interest-
ing to know what we might call cool, I placed the thermometer 
in a pannikin containing some that appeared delightfully cool 
—almost cold, in fact. Its temperature was, to our astonish-
ment, 78°. At half-past six, when a strong wind was blowing 
from south, and the temperature of the air had fallen to 80°, the 
lowest temperature of water in the hose, that had been exposed to 
the full effect of evaporation for several hours, was 72°. This 
water for drinking appeared positively cold, too low a temperature 
to be pleasant under the circumstances. A remarkable southerly 
squall came on between five and six P.M., with every appearance 
of rain. The sky, however, soon cleared, but the wind continued 
to blow in a squally and irregular manner, from the same quarter 
at evening.

Wednesday, Dec. 19.—Started at a quarter past eight A.M., 
leaving what seemed to be the end of Cooper's Creek. We took 
a course a little to the north of west, intending to try and obtain 
water in some of the creeks that Sturt mentioned that he had 
crossed, and at the same time to see whether they were connected
with Cooper's Creek, as appeared most probable from the direction in which we found the latter running, and from the manner in which it had been breaking up into small channels flowing across the plains in a north and N.N.W. direction. We left on our right the flooded flats on which this branch of the creek runs out, and soon came to a series of sand-ridges, the direction of which was between north ½-west and N.N.W. The country is well grassed, and supports plenty of salt-bush. Many of the valleys are liable to be inundated by the overflow of the main creek. They have watercourses and polygonum-flats, bordered with box-trees, but we met with no holes fit to hold a supply of water. At about 10 miles we crossed a large earthy flat, lightly timbered with box and gum. The ground was very bad for travelling on, being much cracked up, and intersected by innumerable channels, which continually carried off the water of a large creek. Some of the valleys beyond this were very pretty; the ground being sound and covered with fresh plants, which made them look beautifully green. At 15 miles we halted, where two large plains joined. Our attention had been attracted by some red-breasted cockatoos, pigeons, a crow, and several other birds, whose presence made us feel sure that there was water not far off; but our hopes were soon destroyed by finding a claypan just drying up. It contained just sufficient liquid to make the clay boggy. At ten minutes to seven P.M. we moved on, steering straight for Eyre's Creek, north-west by north, intending to make a good night's journey, and avoid the heat of the day; but at a mile and a half we came to a creek, which looked so well that we followed it for a short distance, and, finding two or three water-holes of good milky water, we camped for the night. This enabled me to secure an observation of the eclipse of Jupiter's 1st satellite, as well as some latitude observations. The night was so calm that I used the water as a horizon, but I find it much more satisfactory to take the mercury, for several reasons.

Thursday, Dec. 21 (20).—We did not leave this camp until half-past eight, having delayed to refill the water-bags with the milky water, which all of us found to be a great treat again. It is certainly more pleasant to drink than the clear water, and at the same time more satisfying. Our course from here, north-west by north, took us through some pretty country, lightly timbered and well grassed. We could see the line of creek-timber winding through the valley on our left. At a distance of 5 miles there was a bush-fire on its banks, and beyond it the creek made a considerable bend to the south-west. At 2 miles farther we came in sight of a large lagoon bearing north by west, and at 3 miles more we camped on what would seem the same creek as last night, near where it enters the lagoon. The latter is of great extent, and contains a large quantity of water, which swarms with wild fowl of
every description. It is very shallow, but is surrounded by the
most pleasing woodland scenery, and everything in the vicinity
looks fresh and green. The creek near its junction with the lagoon
contains some good water-holes, 5 to 6 feet deep. They are found
in a sandy alluvium, which is very boggy when wet. There was a
large camp of not less than forty or fifty blacks near where we
stopped. They brought us presents of fish, for which we gave
them some beads and matches. These fish we found to be a most
valuable addition to our rations. They were of the same kind as
we had found elsewhere, but finer, being 9 to 10 inches long, and
2 to 3 inches deep, and in such good condition that they might
have been fried in their own fat. It is a remarkable fact, that
these were the first blacks who have offered us any fish since we
reached Cooper's Creek.

Friday, Dec. 21.—We left Camp 70 at half-past five a.m., and
tried to induce one or two of the blacks to go with us, but it was
of no use. Keeping our former course we were pulled up at 3
miles by a fine lagoon, and then by the creek that flows into it:
the latter being full of water, we were obliged to trace it a mile up
before we could cross. I observed on its banks two wild plants of
the gourd or melon tribe; one much resembling a stunted cucumber,
the other, both in leaf and appearance of fruit, was very similar to
a small model of a water-melon (probably Muchia micrantha).
The latter plant I also found at Camp 68. On tasting the pulp of
the newly-found fruit, which was about the size of a large pea, I
found it to be so acrid that it was with difficulty that I removed the
taste from my mouth. At 8 or 9 miles from where we crossed the
creek we passed another large lagoon, leaving it 2 miles on our
left, and shortly afterwards we saw one nearly as far on our right.
This last we should have availed ourselves of, but that we expected
to find water in a creek which we could see, by the timber lining
its banks, flowed from the lagoon on our left, and crossed our
course a few miles a-head. We reached it at a distance of 4 or 5
miles farther, and found a splendid water-hole, at which we
camped. The creek at this point flows in a northerly direction,
through a large lightly-timbered flat, on which it partially runs out.
The ground is, however, sound and well clothed with grass and
salsolaceous plants. Up to this point the country through which
we have passed has been of the finest description for pastoral
purposes. The grass and salt-bush are everywhere abundant, and
water is plentiful, with every appearance of permanence. We met
with porcupine-grass (Triodia pungens, Br.) and only two sand-
ridges before reaching Camp 71.
Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 2; lat. 27° to 25½° s. Camp 72 to 78.

Saturday, Dec. 22.—At five minutes to five A.M. we left one of the most delightful camps we have had in the journey, and proceeded on the same course as before, north-west by north, across some high ridges of loose sand, many of which were partially clothed with porcupine-grass. We found the ground much worse to travel over than any we have yet met with, as the ridges were exceedingly abrupt and steep on their eastern side, and although sloping gradually towards the west, were so honeycombed in some places by the burrows of rats, that the camels were continually in danger of falling. At a distance of about 6 miles we descended from these ridges to undulating country of open box-forest, where everything was green and fresh. There is an abundance of grass and salt-bushes, and lots of birds of all descriptions. Several flocks of pigeons passed over our heads, making for a point a little to our right, where there is no doubt plenty of water, but we did not go off our course to look for it. Beyond the box-forest, which kept away to the right, we again entered the sand-ridges, and at a distance of 6 miles passed close to a dry salt-lagoon, the ridges in the vicinity of which are less regular in their form and direction, and contain nodules of limestone. The ground in the flats and claypans near has that encrusted surface which cracks under the pressure of the foot, and is a sure indication of the presence of saline deposits. At a distance of 8 miles from the lagoon we camped at the foot of a sand-ridge, jutting out on the stony desert. I was rather disappointed, but not altogether surprised, to find the latter nothing more nor less than the stony rises that we had before met with, only on a larger scale, and not quite as undulating. During the afternoon several crows came to feed on the plain. They came from an E.N.E. direction, no doubt from a portion of the creek that flows through the forest which we left on our right. In the morning, as we were loading, a duck passed over, but it was too dark to see which way it went.

Sunday, Dec. 23.—At five A.M. we struck out across the desert in a W.N.W. direction. At 4 miles and a half we crossed a sand-ridge, and then returned to our N.W. by N. course. We found the ground not nearly so bad for travelling on as that between Bulloo and Cooper's Creek—in fact, I do not know whether it arose from our exaggerated anticipation of horrors or not, but we thought it far from bad travelling ground; and as to pasture, it is only the actually stony ground that is bare, and many a sheep-run is worse grazing than that. At 15 miles we crossed another sand-ridge, for several miles around which there is plenty of grass
and fine salt-bush. After crossing this ridge we descended to an earthy plain where the ground was rather heavy, being in some places like pieces of slaked lime and intersected by small water-courses. Flocks of pigeons rose from amongst the salt-bushes and polygonum, but all the creeks were dry, although marked by lines of box-timber. Several gunyahs of the blacks were situated near a water-hole that had apparently contained water very lately, and heaps of grass were lying about the plains, from which they had beaten the seeds. We pushed on, hoping to find the creeks assuming an improved appearance, but they did not, and at one o'clock we halted, intending to travel through part of the night; about sunset three flocks of pigeons passed over us, all going in the same direction, due north by compass, and passing over a ridge of sand in that direction. Not to have taken notice of such an occurrence would have been little short of a sin, so we determined to go 8 or 10 miles in that direction. Starting at seven o'clock P.M., we, at 6 miles, crossed the ridge over which the birds had flown, and came on a flat, subject to inundation; the ground was at first hard and even, like the bottom of a claypan, but at a mile or so we came on cracked earthy ground, intersected by numberless small channels running in all directions. At 9 miles we reached the bed of a creek running from east to west; it was only bordered by polygonum-bushes; but as there was no timber visible on the plains, we thought it safer to halt until daylight, for fear we should miss the water. At daylight, when we had saddled, a small quantity of timber could be seen, at the point of a sand-ridge, about 1½ to 2 miles to the west of us, and on going there we found a fine creek, with a splendid sheet of water, more than a mile long and averaging nearly three chains broad; it is, however, only 2 or 3 feet deep in most parts.

Monday, Dec. 24.—We took a day of rest on Gray’s Creek to celebrate Christmas. This was doubly pleasant, as we had never in our most sanguine moments anticipated finding such a delightful oasis in the desert. Our camp was really an agreeable place, for we had all the advantages of food and water attending a position on a large creek or river, and were at the same time free from the annoyance of the numberless ants, flies, and mosquitoes that are invariably met with amongst timber or heavy scrub.

Tuesday, Dec. 25.—We left Gray’s Creek at half-past four A.M., and proceeded to cross the earthy rotten plains in the direction of Eyre’s Creek. At a distance of about 9 miles we reached some lines of trees and bushes, which were visible from the top of the sand-ridge at Gray’s Creek. We found them growing on the banks of several small creeks, which trend to the north and N.N.W. At a mile and a half farther we crossed a small creek, N.N.E., and joining the ones above-mentioned. This creek contained abundance
of water, in small detached holes, from 50 to 100 links long, well shaded by steep banks and overhanging bushes. The water had a suspiciously transparent colour and a slight trace of brackishness, but the latter was scarcely perceptible. Near where the creek joined them is a sandhill and a dense mass of fine timber. The smoke of a fire indicated the presence of blacks, who soon made their appearance, and followed us for some distance, beckoning us away to the north-east. We, however, continued our course to the north-west by north; but, at a distance of a mile and a half, found that the creeks did not come round as we expected, and that the fall of the water was in a direction nearly opposite to our course, or about west to east. We struck off north ½-west for a high sand-ridge, from which we anticipated seeing whether it were worth while for us to follow the course of the creeks we had crossed. We were surprised to find all the watercourses on the plains trending rather to the south of east; and at a distance of 3 miles, after changing our course, and when we approached the sandhills towards which we had been steering, we were agreeably pulled up by a magnificent creek, coming from the N.N.W. and running in the direction of the fire we had seen. We had now no choice but to change our course again, for we could not have crossed even if we had desired to do so. On following up the south bank of the creek, we found it soon keeping a more northerly course than it had where we first struck it. This fact, together with its magnitude and general appearance, lessened the probability of its being Eyre's Creek, as seemed at first very likely from their relative positions and directions. The day being very hot, and the camels tired from travelling over the earthy plains, which, by-the-by, are not nearly so bad as those at the head of Cooper's Creek, we camped at one o'clock P.M., having traced the creek up about 5 miles, not counting the bends. For the whole of this distance we found not a break or interruption of water, which appears to be very deep: the banks are from 20 to 30 feet above the water, and very steep; they are clothed near the water's edge with mint and other weeds, and on the top of each side there is a belt of box-trees and various shrubs. The lower part of the creek is bounded towards the north by a high red sand-ridge, and on the south side is an extensive plain, intersected by numerous watercourses, which drain off the water in flood time. The greater portion of the plain is at present very bare, but the stalks of dry grass show that after rain or floods there will be a good crop on the harder and well-drained portion: I believe the loose earthy portion supports no vegetation at any time. The inclination of the ground from the edge of the creek-bank towards the plain is in many places very considerable. This I should take to indicate that the flooding is or has been at one time both frequent and regular.
Wednesday, Dec. 26.—We started at 5 A.M., following up the creek from point to point of the bends; its general course was at first north by west, but at about 6 miles the sand-ridge on the west closed in on it, and at this point it takes a turn to the N.N.E. for half-a-mile, and then comes around suddenly north-west. Up to this point it had been rather improving in appearance than otherwise, but in the bend to the north-west the channel is very broad: its bed, being limestone-rock and indurated clay, is, for a space of 5 or 6 chains, quite dry; then commences another water-hole, the creek keeping a little more towards north. We crossed the creek here and struck across the plain on a due north course, for we could see the line of timber coming up to the sand-ridges in that direction. For a distance of 7 or 8 miles we did not touch the creek, and the eastern sand-ridge receded to a distance in some places of nearly 3 miles from our line, leaving an immense extent of grassy plain between it and the creek. The distinctly-marked feature on the lower part of this creek is, that whenever the main creek is on one side of a plain, there is always a fine billabong on the opposite side, each of them almost invariably sticking close to the respective sand-ridges. Before coming to the next bend of the creek, a view from the top of a sandhill showed me that the creek receives a large tributary from the north-west, at about 2 miles above where we had crossed it. A fine line of timber running up to the north-west joined an extensive tract of box-forest, and the branch we were following was lost to view in a similar forest towards the north. The sand-ridge was so abrupt when we came to the creek, that it was necessary to descend into its bed through one of the small ravines adjoining it. We found it partially run out; the bed being sand, and strewn with nodules of lime, some of which were 1½ to 2 feet long. They had apparently been formed in the sand-downs by infiltration.

Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 3; lat. s. 25°12' to 23°30'. Station 78 to 85.

Tuesday, December 30.—Finding that the creek was trending considerably towards the east, without much likelihood of altering its course, we struck off from it, taking a ten days' supply of water, as there were ranges visible to the north which had the appearance of being stony. A north-east by north course was first taken for about 7 miles, in order to avoid them. The whole of this distance was over alluvial earthy plains, the soil of which was firm, but the vegetation scanty.
Cooper’s Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 4. Camp 85 to 90; lat. 23\(\frac{3}{4}\)\(^{\circ}\) to 22\(\frac{1}{4}\)\(^{\circ}\).—Fine country, Tropics.

Saturday, Jan. 5, 1861.—On leaving Camp 84, we found slight but distinct indications of rain in the groves, and a few blades of grass and small weeds in the little depressions on the plain. These indications were, however, so slight, that but for the fact of our having found surface-water in two holes near our camp, we should hardly have noticed them. At a distance of about 2 miles, in a N.N.E. direction, we came to a creek with a long, broad, shallow water-hole. The well-worn paths, the recent track of natives, and the heaps of shells, on the contents of which the latter had feasted, showed at once that this creek must be connected with some creek of considerable importance. The camels and horses being greatly in need of rest, we only moved up about half a mile, and camped for the day.

Sunday, Jan. 6.—Started at twenty minutes to six o’clock, intending to make an easy day’s stage along the creek. As we proceeded up in a northerly direction we found the water-hole to diminish in size very much, and at about 2\(\frac{3}{4}\) miles the creek ran out in a lot of small watercourses. At the upper end of the creek we found in its bed what appeared to be an arrangement for catching fish. It consisted of a small oval mud-paddock, about 12 feet by 8 feet, the sides of which were about 9 inches above the bottom of the hole, and the top of the fence, covered with long grass, so arranged that the ends of the blades overhung scantily by several inches the sides of the hole. As there was no sign of timber to the north, we steered off to north-west by north for a fine line that came up from the south-west, and seemed to run parallel with the creek we were about to leave. At a distance of about 3 miles we reached the bank of a fine creek containing a sheet of water two chains broad, and at least 15 feet deep in the middle. The banks are shelving, sandy, and lightly clothed with box-trees and various shrubs. On starting to cross the plains towards this creek, we were surprised at the bright green appearance of strips of land, which look in the distance like swamps. On approaching some of them we found that there had been a considerable fall of rain in some places, which had raised a fine crop of grass and portulaca* whenever the soil was of a sandy and light nature; but the amount of moisture had been insufficient to affect the clayey ground which constitutes the main portion of the plain. The sight of two native companions feeding here added greatly to the encouraging prospects; they are the only specimens of that bird that I remember to have seen on that side of the Darling.

Jan. 7.—We started at half-past four a.m. without water, thinking

* Portulaca oleracea.—L.
that we might safely rely on this creek for one day's journey. We, however, found the line of timber soon begin to look small; at 3 miles the channel contained only a few pools of surface-water. We continued across the plains on a due north course, frequently crossing small watercourses, which had been filled by the rain, but were fast drying up. Here and there as we proceeded dense lines of timber on our right showed that the creek came from the east of north. At a distance of 13 miles we turned to the N.N.E., towards a fine line of timber. We found a creek of considerable dimensions that had only two or three small water-holes; but as there was more than sufficient for us, and very little feed for the beasts anywhere else, we camped. I should have liked this camp to have been in a more prominent and easily recognised position, as it happens to be almost exactly on the tropic of Capricorn. The tremendous gale of wind that we had in the evening and night prevented me from taking a latitude observation, whereas I had some good ones at the last camp, and at Camp 86. My reckoning cannot be far out. I found on taking out my instruments one of the spare thermometers was broken, and the glass of my aneroid barometer cracked; the latter, I believe, not otherwise injured. This was done by the camel having taken it into his head to roll while the pack was on his back.

**Tuesday, Jan. 8.—** Started at a quarter past 5 A.M. with a load of water, determined to be independent of all creeks and watercourses. At a mile and a half found surface-water in a small creek, and at a mile farther water in two or three places on the open plains. The country we crossed for the first 10 miles consists of fine open plains of firm argillaceous soil, too stiff and hard to be affected by the small quantity of rain that has fallen as yet. They are subject to inundations from the overflow of a number of small creeks which intersect them in a direction E.N.E. to W.S.W. Nearly all the creeks are lined with box-trees and shrubs, in a tolerably healthy state; of the remains of dead trees there is only a fair proportion to the living ones. After traversing a plain of greater extent than the rest, we at 10 miles reached the creek, proportionately large and important-looking. The channel, however, at the point where we struck it, was deep, level, and dry, but I believe there is water in it not far off; for there were some red-breasted cockatoos in the trees, and native parrots on each side. On the north side there is a part bearing off to the N.N.W. The mirage on the plain to the south of the creek was stronger than I have before seen it. There appear to be sheets of water within a few yards of one, and it looks sufficiently smooth and glassy to be used for an artificial horizon. To the westward of the plains some fine sandhills were visible, nearly in the direction in which the creek flowed. To the north of the creek the country undergoes a great change.
At first there is a little earthy land subject to inundation. The soil then becomes more sandy, and the stony pans occur in which water collects after rain; the whole country is slightly undulating, lightly timbered, and splendidly grassed. A number of small disconnected creeks are scattered about, many of which contained water, protected from the sun by luxuriant growth of fine grasses and small bushes. We passed one or two little rises of sand and pebbles, on which were growing some trees quite new to me; but for the seed-pods, I should have taken them for a species of casuarina, although the leaf-stalks have not the jointed peculiarities of those plants. The trunks and branches are like the she-oak, the leaves like those of a pine; they droop like a willow; and the seed is small, flat, in a large flat pod about 6 inches by three-quarters of an inch. As we proceeded the country improved at every step. Flocks of pigeons rose and flew off to the eastward, and fresh plants met our view on every rise; everything green and luxuriant. The horse licked his lips, and tried all he could to break his nose-string to get at the feed. We camped at the foot of a sandy rise, where there was a large stony pan with plenty of water, and where the feed was equal in quantity, and superior as to variety, to any that I have seen in Australia, excepting, perhaps, on some soils of volcanic origin.

Wednesday, Jan. 9.—Started at five minutes past five without water, trusting to get a supply from the rain that fell during the thunderstorm. Traversed 6 miles of undulating plains covered with vegetation richer than ever. Several ducks rose from the little creeks as we passed, and flocks of pigeons were flying in all directions. The richness of the vegetation is evidently not sudden, arising from chance thunderstorms, for the trees and bushes on the open plain are everywhere healthy and fresh-looking; very few dead ones are to be seen; besides which the quantity of dead and rotten grass which at present almost overgrows in some places the young blades, shows that this is not the first crop of the kind. The grasses are numerous, and many of them unknown to me, but they only constitute a moderate portion of the herbage; several kinds of spurious vetches and portulac, as well as salsolaceae, add to the luxuriance of the vegetation. At 7 miles we found ourselves in an open forest-country, where the feed was good, but not equal to what we had passed, neither had it been visited by yesterday's rain. We soon emerged again on open plains, but, the soil being of a more clayish nature, they were not nearly so much advanced in vegetation as the others. We found surface-waters in several places, and at one spot disturbed a fine bustard which was feeding in the long grass. We did not see him until he flew up. I should have mentioned that one flew over our camp last evening in a northerly direction: this speaks well for the country and climate. At noon we came to a large creek, the
course of which was from E.N.E. to W.S.W. The sight of white
gum-trees in the distance had raised hopes which were not at all
damped on a close inspection of the channel. At the point where
we struck it there was certainly no great quantity of water; the
bed was broad and sandy, but its whole appearance was that of an
important watercourse; and the large gums which line its banks,
together with the improved appearance of the soil, and the abun-
dance of feed in the vicinity, satisfied us as to the permanency of
the waters and the value of the discovery. Although it was so
evory in the day, and we were anxious to make a good march, yet
we camped here, as it seemed to be almost a sin to leave such
good quarters. The bed of the creek is loose sand, through which
the water freely permeates: it is, however, sufficiently coarse not
to be boggy; and animals can approach the water without any
difficulty.

Thursday, Jan. 10.—At 5·20 A.M. we left our camp with
a full supply of water, determined to risk no reverses, and to
make a good march. I should mention that last evening we had
been nearly deafened by the noise of the cicadæ, and but for
our large fires should have been kept awake all night by the
mosquitoes. A walk of 2 miles across a well-grassed plain
brought us to a belt of timber, and we soon afterwards found our-
selves pulled up by a large creek, in which the water was broad
and deep. We had to follow up the bank of the creek in a north-
east direction for nearly a mile before we could cross, when, to our
joy, we found that it was flowing, not a muddy stream from the
effects of recent floods, but a small rivulet of clear water as pure
as crystal. The bed of the river at this place is deep and rather
narrow: the water flows over sand and pebbles, winding its way
between clumps of melaleuca and gum-saplings. After leaving
the river we kept our old course, due north, crossing, in a distance
of one mile, three creeks with gum-trees on their banks. The soil
of the flats through which they flow is a red loam of fair quality
and well grassed. Beyond the third creek is a large plain, parts
of which are very stony; and this is bounded towards the east by
a low stony rise, partly composed of decayed and honeycombed
quartz-rock in situ, and partly of water-worn pebbles and other
alluvial deposits. At about 2 miles across this plain we reached
the first of a series of small creeks with deep water-holes. These
creeks and holes have the characteristics peculiar to watercourses
which are found in flats formed from the alluvial deposits of schis-
tose rocks. The banks are on a level with the surrounding
ground, and are irregularly marked by small trees, or only by
tufts of long grass which overhang the channel and frequently hide
it from one's view, even when within a few yards. At about 5
miles from where we crossed the river we came to the main creek
in these flats—Patten’s Creek; it flows along at the foot of a stony range, and we had to trace it up nearly a mile in a N.N.E. direction before we could cross it. As it happened, we might almost as well have followed its course up the flat, for at a little more than 2 miles we came to it again; we re-crossed it at a stony place just below a very large water-hole, and then continued our course over extensive plains, not so well grassed as what we had passed before, and very stony in some places. At 8 miles from Patten’s Creek we came to another, running from south-west to south-east. There was plenty of water in it, but it was evidently the result of recent local rains; on the banks was an abundance of good feed, but very little timber.

Friday, Jan. 11.—Started at five A.M., and in the excitement of exploring fine well-watered country forgot all about the eclipse of the sun, until the reduced temperature and peculiarly gloomy appearance of the sky drew our attention to the matter; it was then too late to remedy the deficiency, so we made a good day’s journey, the moderation of the midday-heat, which was only about 86°, greatly assisting us. The country traversed has the most verdant and cheerful aspect, abundance of feed and water everywhere. All the creeks seen to-day have a course more or less to the east by south. The land improves in appearance at every mile. A quantity of rain has fallen here and to the south, and some of the flats are suitable for cultivation if the regularity of the seasons will admit.

Cooper’s Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 5, Camp 92 to 98; lat. 22° 21’ to 21° 3°. Standish Ranges.

Saturday, Jan. 12.—We started at five A.M., and, keeping as nearly as possible a due north course, traversed for about 8 miles a splendid flat, through which flow several fine well-watered creeks, lined with white gum-trees. We then entered a series of slaty, low sandstone ranges, amongst which were some well-grassed flats and plenty of water in the main gullies. The more stony portions are, however, covered with porcupine-grass, and here and there with mallee. Large ant-hills are very numerous: they vary in height from 2½ to 4 feet. There was a continuous rise perceptible all the way in crossing the ranges, and from the highest portion, which we reached at a distance of about 7 miles, we had a pretty good view of the country towards the north. As far as we could see in the distance, and bearing due north, was a large range, having somewhat the outline of a granite mountain. The east end of this range just comes up to the magnetic north; the left of this, and bearing N.N.W., is a single conical peak, the top of which only is visible. Farther to the west there were some broken ranges,
apparently sandstone; to the east of north the tops of very distant and apparently higher ranges were seen, the outline of which was so indistinct that I can form no idea as to their character. The intermediate country below us appeared alternations of fine valleys and stony ranges, such as we had just been crossing. From here a descent of 2 miles brought us to a creek having a northern course, but, on tracing it down for about a mile, we found it turn to the south-east, and join another from the north. We crossed over to the latter on a north-by-west course, and camped on the west bank. It has a broad sandy channel; the water-holes are large, but not deep; the banks are bordered with fine white gums, and are in some places very scrubby. There is abundance of rich green feed everywhere in the vicinity. We found numerous indications of blacks having been here, but saw nothing of them. It seems remark-
able that where their tracks are so plentiful, we should [have seen] none since we left King's Creek. I observed that the natives here climb trees like those on the Murray, &c., in search of some animal corresponding in habits to the opossum, which they get out of the hollow branches in a similar manner. I have not yet been able to ascertain what the animal is.

Sunday, Jan. 13.—We did not leave camp this morning until half-past seven, having delayed for the purpose of getting the camels' shoes on, a matter in which we were eminently unsuc-
cessful. We took our breakfast before starting, for almost the first time since leaving the depôt. Having crossed the creek, our course was due north as before, until at about 6 miles we came in sight of the range ahead, when we took a north half-east direction for the purpose of clearing the eastern front of it. We found the ground more sandy than what we had before crossed, and a great deal of it even more richly grassed. Camp 93 is situated at the junction of three sandy creeks, in which there is abundance of water. The sand is loose, and the water permeates freely, so that the latter may be obtained delightfully cool and clear by sinking anywhere in the beds of the creeks.

Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 6; lat. 21° 19' to 20° 19'. Station 98 to 105, upper part of Cloncurry.

Saturday, January 19, 1861.—Started from Camp 98 at 5:30 A.M., and passing to the north-west of Mount Forbes, across a fine and well-grassed plain, kept at first a north by east direction; at a distance of three miles the plain became everywhere stony, being scattered over with quartz-pebbles, and a little farther on we came to low quartz-ranges, the higher portions of which are covered with porcupine-grass, but the valleys are well clothed with a variety of coarse and rank herbage. At about 5 miles we
crossed a creek with a sandy bed, which has been named Green's Creek. There were blacks not far above where we crossed, but we did not disturb them. After crossing the creek, we took a due north course, over very rugged quartz-ranges of an auriferous character. Pieces of iron ore, very rich, were scattered in great numbers over some of the hills. On our being about to cross one of the branch-creeks in the low range, we surprised some blacks—a man, who, with a young fellow apparently his son, was upon a tree cutting out something, and a lubra with a piccaninny. The two former did not see me until I was nearly close to them, and then they were dreadfully frightened. Jumping down from the trees, they started off shouting what sounded to us very like "Joe, joe!" Thus disturbed, the lubra, who was some distance from them, just then caught sight of the camels and the remainder of the party as they came over the hill into the creek, and this tended to hasten their flight over the stones and porcupine-grass. Crossing the range at the head of this creek, we came on a gully running north, down which we proceeded, and soon found it open out into a creek at two or three points, in which we found water. On this creek we found the first specimen of an eucalyptus, which has a very different appearance from the members of the gum-tree race; it grows as high as a good-sized gum-tree, but with the branches less spreading; in shape it much resembles the elm; the foliage is dark, like that of the lightwood; the trunk and branches are covered with a grey bark, resembling in outward appearance that of the box-tree. Finding that the creek was trending too much to the eastward, we struck off to the north again, and at a short distance came on a fine creek running about s.s.e. As it was now time to camp, we travelled it up for about a mile and a half, and came to a fine water-hole in a rocky basin, at which there were lots of birds.

Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria.—Fieldbook No. 7; lat. 20° 15' to 19° 45'. Camp 105 to 112, middle part of Cloncurry.

Sunday, Jan. 27, 1861.—Started from Camp 105, five minutes past two in the morning; we followed along the bends of the creek by moonlight, and found the creek wind about very much, taking on the whole a north-east course. At about 5 miles it changed somewhat its features; from a broad and sandy channel, winding about through gum-tree flats, it assumes the unpropitious appearance of a straight narrow creek running in a n.n.e. direction between high perpendicular earthy banks. After running between 3 and 4 miles in this manner, it took a turn to the west, at which point there is a fine water-hole, and then assumed its original character. Below this we found water at several places, but it all seemed to
be either from surface-drainage or from springs in the sand. The land in the vicinity of the creek appears to have received plenty of rain, the vegetation everywhere green and fresh, but there is no appearance of the creek having flowed in this part of the channel for a considerable period. Palm-trees are numerous, and some bear an abundance of small round dates (nuts) just ripening. These palms give a most picturesque and pleasant appearance to the creek.

Wednesday, Jan. 30.—Started at half-past seven A.M. After several unsuccessful attempts at getting Golah out of the bed of the creek, it was determined to try bringing him down until we could find a place for him to get out at; but after going in this way two or three miles, it was found necessary to leave him behind, as it was almost impossible to get him through some of the water-holes, and King had separated from the party, which became a matter for very serious consideration, when we found blacks hiding in the box-trees close to us.

Fieldbook No. 8.—Cooper’s Creek to Carpentaria.—Camp 112 to Camp 119. Southern latitude 19° 15' to 17° 53', lower part of Cloncurry.

Fieldbook No. 9, returning from Carpentaria to Cooper’s Creek.

Sunday, February 3, 1861.—Finding the ground in such a state from the heavy falls of rain that the camels could scarcely be got along, it was decided to leave them at Camp 119, and for Mr. Burke and I to proceed towards the sea on foot. After breakfast we accordingly started, taking with us the horse and three days’ provisions. Our first difficulty was in crossing Billy’s Creek, which we had to do where it enters the river, a few hundred yards below the camp. In getting the horse in here, he got bogged in a quicksand-bank so deeply as to be unable to stir, and we only succeeded in extricating him by undermining him on the creek side, and then lunging him into the water. Having got all the things in safety, we continued down the river-bank, which bent about from east to west, but kept a general north course. A great deal of the land was so soft and rotten that the horse, with only a saddle and about 25 pounds on his back, could scarcely walk over it. At a distance of about five miles we again had him bogged in crossing a small creek, after which he seemed so weak that we had great doubts about getting him on. We, however, found some better ground close to the water’s edge where the sandstone-rock runs out, and we stuck to it as far as possible.
Finding that the river was bending about so much that we were making very little progress in a northerly direction, we struck off due north, and soon came on some tableland where the soil is shallow and gravelly, and clothed with box and swamp-gums. Patches of the land were very boggy, but the main portion was sound enough; beyond this, we came on an open plain covered with water up to one's ankles. The soil here was a stiff clay, and the surface very uneven, so that between the tufts of grass one was frequently knee-deep in water. The bottom, however, was sound, and no fear of bogging. After floundering through this for several miles, we came to a path formed by the blacks, and there were distinct signs of a recent migration in a southerly direction. By making use of this path we got on much better, for the ground was well-trodden and hard. At rather more than a mile the path entered a forest, through which flowed a nice water-course, and we had not gone far before we found places where the blacks had been camping. The forest was intersected by little pebbly rises on which they had made their fires; and in the sandy ground adjoining, some of the former had been digging yams,* which seemed to be so numerous that they could afford to leave lots of them about, probably having only selected the very best. We were not so particular, but ate many of those that they had rejected, and found them very good. About half a mile farther we came close on a black fellow, who was coiling by a camp-fire, whilst his gin and piccaninny were jabbering alongside. We stopped for a short time to take out some of the pistols that were on the horse, and that they might see us before we were so near as to frighten them. Just after we stopped, the black got up to stretch his limbs, and after a few seconds looked in our direction. It was very amusing to see the way in which he stared, standing for some time as if he thought he must be dreaming, and then having signalled to the others, they dropped on their haunches and shuffled off in the quietest manner possible. Near their fire was a fine hut, the best I have ever seen, built on the same principle as those at Cooper's Creek, but much larger and more complete. I should say a dozen blacks might comfortably coil in it together. It is situated at the end of the forest, towards the north, and looks out on an extensive marsh, which is at times flooded by the seawater. Hundreds of wild geese, plover, and pelicans were enjoying themselves in the water-courses on the marsh; all the water on which was too brackish to be drinkable, except some holes that are filled by the stream that flows through the forest. The neighbourhood of this encampment is one of the prettiest we have seen during the journey. Proceeding on our course across the marsh,

* The Dioscorea of Carpentaria.
we came to a channel through which the sea-water enters. Here we passed three blacks, who, as is universally their custom, pointed out to us, unasked, the best part down. This assisted us greatly, for the ground we were taking was very boggy. We moved slowly down, about three miles, and then camped for the night. The horse, Billy, being completely baked, next morning we started at daybreak, leaving him short-hobbled.

5th Nov., 1861.

Memo.—Verbally transcribed from the fieldbooks of the late Mr. Wills. Very few words, casually omitted in the author's manuscript, have been added in brackets. A few botanical explanations have been appended. A few separate general remarks referring to this portion of the diary will be published, together with the meteorological notes to which they are contiguous. No other notes in reference to this portion of the journey are extant.

Fred. Mueller.

Mr. Wills's Journal of the Return from Carpentaria to Cooper's Creek.

(Transcribed by Mr. James Smith.)

Tuesday, February 19, 1861, Boocha's Camp.
Wednesday, Feb. 20, Pleasant Camp, 5 R.
Thursday, Feb. 21, Recovery Camp, 6 R.—Between four and five o'clock a heavy thunderstorm broke over us, having given very little warning of its approach. There had been lightning and thunder towards the south-east and south ever since noon yesterday. The rain was incessant and very heavy for an hour and a half, which made the ground so boggy that the animals could scarcely walk over it. We nevertheless started at ten minutes to seven A.M., and, after floundering along for half an hour, halted for breakfast. We then moved on again, but soon found that the travelling was too heavy for the camels, so camped for the remainder of the day. In the afternoon the sky cleared a little, and the sun soon dried the ground, considering. Shot a pheasant, and much disappointed at finding him all feathers and claws. This bird nearly resembles a cock-pheasant in plumage, but in other respects it bears more the character of the magpie or crow: the feathers are remarkably wiry and coarse.

Friday, Feb. 22, Camp 7 R.—A fearful thunderstorm in the evening, about eight p.m., E.S.E., moving gradually round to south. The flashes of lightning were so vivid and incessant as to keep up a continual light for short intervals, overpowering even the moonlight. Heavy rain and strong squalls continued for more than an hour, when the storm moved off w.n.w.; the sky re-
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

remained more or less overcast for the rest of the night, and the following morning was both sultry and oppressive, with the ground so boggy as to be almost impassable.

Saturday, Feb. 23, Camp 8 R.—In spite of the difficulties thrown in our way by last night's storm, we crossed the creek. We were shortly afterwards compelled to halt for the day, on a small patch of comparatively dry ground near the river. The day turned out very fine, so that the soil dried rapidly; and we started in the evening to try a trip by moonlight. We were very fortunate in finding sound ground along a billabong, which permitted of our travelling for about five miles up the creek, when we camped for the night. The evening was most oppressively hot and sultry—so much so, that the slightest exertion made one feel as if he were in a state of suffocation. The dampness of the atmosphere prevented any evaporation, and gave one a helpless feeling of lassitude that I have never before experienced to such an extent. All the party complained of the same sensations, and the horses showed distinctly the effect of the evening trip, short as it was. We had scarcely turned in half an hour when it began to rain, some heavy clouds having come up from the eastward, in place of the layer of small cirro cumuli that before ornamented the greater portion of the sky. These clouds soon moved on, and we were relieved from the dread of additional mud. After the sky cleared, the atmosphere became rather cooler and less sultry; so that, with the assistance of a little smoke to keep the mosquitoes off, we managed to pass a tolerable night.

Sunday, Feb. 24, Camp 9 R.—Comparatively little rain has fallen above the branch-creek with the running water. The vegetation, although tolerably fresh, is not so rank as that we have left. The water in the creek is muddy but good, and has been derived merely from the surface-drainage of the adjoining plains. The Melaleuca continues in this branch-creek, which creeps along the foot of the ranges.

Monday, Feb. 25, Camp 10 R.—There has been very little rain on this portion of the creek since we passed down. There was, however, no water at all there, at this point. At the Tea-tree Spring, a short distance up the creek, we found plenty of water in the sand, but it had a disagreeable taste from the decomposition of leaves and the presence of mineral matter—probably iron. There seems to have been a fair share of rain along here, everything is so very fresh and green; and there is water in many of the channels we have [crossed].

Tuesday, Feb. 26, Apple-tree Camp, 11 R.

Thursday, Feb. 28, Reedy Gully Camp, 12 R.—Came into the Reedy Gully Camp about midnight on Tuesday, the 26th.
Remained there throughout the day on Wednesday, starting at 2 A.M. on Thursday.

Friday, March 1, Camp of the Three Crows, 13 R.

Saturday, March 2, Salt-bush Camp, 14 R.—Found Golah. He looks thin and miserable. Seems to have fretted a great deal, probably at finding himself left behind; and he has been walking up and down the tracks till he has made a regular pathway. Could find no sign of his having been far off it, although there is splendid feed, to which he could have gone. He began to eat as soon as he saw the other camels.

Sunday, March 3, Eureka Camp, 15 R.—In crossing a creek by moonlight, Charley rode over a large snake. He did not touch him, and we thought it was a log until he struck it with the stirrup-iron. We then saw that it was an immense snake, larger than any that I have ever before seen in a wild state. It measured 8 feet 4 inches in length, and 7 inches in girth round the belly. It was nearly the same thickness from the head to within 20 inches of the tail; it then tapered rapidly. The weight was 11½ lbs. From the tip of the nose to five inches back the neck was black, both above and behind; throughout the rest of the body the under part was yellow, and the sides and back had irregular brown transverse bars on a yellowish-brown ground. I could detect no poisonous fangs, but there were two distinct rows of teeth in each jaw, and two small claws or nails, about three-eighths of an inch long, one on each side of the vent.

Monday, March 4, Feasting Camp, 16 R.—Shortly after arriving at Camp 16, we could frequently hear distant thunder towards the east, from which quarter the wind was blowing. During the afternoon there were frequent heavy showers, and towards evening it set in to rain steadily, but lightly. This lasted until about eight p.m., when the rain ceased, and the wind got round to west; the sky, however, remained overcast until late in the night, and then cleared for a short time; the clouds were soon succeeded by a dense fog, or mist, which continued until morning. The vapour having then risen, occupied the upper air in the form of light cirrus-stratus and cumuli clouds.

Tuesday, March 5, Camp 17 R.—Started at two A.M. on a s.s.w. course, but had soon to turn in on the creek, as Mr. Burke felt very unwell, having been attacked by dysentery since eating the snake. He now felt giddy, and unable to keep his seat. At six A.M., Mr. Burke feeling better, we started again, following along the creek, in which there was considerably more water than when we passed down. We camped at 2:15 p.m., at a part of the creek where the date-trees* were very numerous, and found the fruit

* Probably Livistonas.
nearly ripe, and very much improved on what it was when we were here before.

**Wednesday, March 6, Camp 18 R.**—Arrived at the former camp; and find the feed richer than ever, and the ants just as troublesome. Mr. Burke is a little better, and Charley looks comparatively well. The dryness of the atmosphere seems to have a beneficial effect on all. We found, yesterday, that it was a hopeless matter about Golah, and we were obliged to leave him behind, as he seemed to be completely done up, and could not come on, even when the pack and saddle were taken off.

**Thursday, March 7, Fig-tree Camp, 19 R.**—Palm-tree Camp, No. 104, and 20° latitude; by observation coming down, 20' 21:40'. There is less water here than there was when we passed down, although there is evidence of the creek having been visited by considerable floods during the interval. Feed is abundant, and the vegetation more fresh than before. Mr. Burke almost recovered; but Charley is again very unwell, and unfit to do anything. He caught cold last night through carelessness in covering himself.

**Friday, March 8, Camp 20 R.**—Followed the creek more closely coming up than going down. Found more water in it generally.

**Saturday, March 9, Camp 21 R.**— Reached our former camp at 1:30 p.m. Found the herbage much dried up, but still plenty of feed for the camels.

**Sunday, March 10, Camp 22 R.**—Camped at the junction of a small creek from the westward, a short distance below our former camp, there being plenty of good water here; whereas the supply at Specimen Camp is very doubtful.

**Monday, March 11, Camp 23 R.**—Halted for breakfast at the Specimen Camp at 7:15 A.M. Found more water and feed there than before. Then proceeded up the creek, and got safely over the most dangerous part of our journey. Camped near the head of the gap, in a flat about two miles below our former camp at the gap.

**Tuesday, March 12, Camp 24 R.**

**Wednesday, March 13, Camp 25 R.**—Rain all day, so heavily that I was obliged to put my watch and fieldbook in the pack, to keep them dry. In the afternoon the rain increased, and all the creeks became flooded. We took shelter under some fallen rocks, near which was some feed for the camels, but the latter was of no value, for we had soon to remove them up amongst the rocks, out of the way of the flood, which fortunately did not rise high enough to drive us out of the cave; but we were obliged to shift our packs to the upper part. In the evening the water fell
as rapidly as it had risen, leaving everything in a very boggy state. There were frequent light showers during the night.

_Thursday, March 14_, Camp 26 R, Sandstone Cave.—The water in the creek having fallen sufficiently low, we crossed over from the cave, and proceeded down the creek. Our progress was slow, as it was necessary to keep on the stony ridge instead of following the flats, the latter being very boggy after the rain. Thinking that the creek must join Scratchley’s near our old camp, we followed it a long way, until, finding it trend altogether too much eastward, we tried to shape across for the other creek; but were unable to do so, from the boggy nature of the intervening plain.

_**Friday, March 15**, Camp 27 R._

_**Saturday, March 16**, Camp 28 R, Scratchley’s Creek._

_**Sunday, March 17**, Camp 29 R._

_**Monday, March 18**, Camp 30 R._

_**Tuesday, March 19**, Camp 31 R._

_**Wednesday, March 20**, Camp 32 R, Feasting Camp._—Last evening the sky was clouded about nine p.m., and a shower came down from the north. At ten o’clock it became so dark that we camped on the bank of the creek, in which was a nice current of clear water. To-day we halted, intending to try a night-journey. The packs we overhauled, and left nearly 60 lbs. weight of things behind. They were all suspended in a pack from the branches of a shrub close to the creek. We started at a quarter to six, but were continually pulled up by billibongs and branch-creeks, and soon had to camp for the night. At the junction of the two creeks just above [are] the three cones, which are three remarkable small hills to the eastward.

_**Thursday, March 21**, Humid Camp, 33 R._—Unable to proceed on account of the slippery and boggy state of the ground. The rain has fallen very heavily here to-day, and every little depression in the ground is either full of water or covered with slimy mud. Another heavy storm passed over during the night, almost [extinguishing] the miserable fire we were able to get up with our very limited quantity of water-logged and green wood. Having been so unfortunate last night, we took an early breakfast this morning at Camp 33, which I have named the Humid Camp, from the state of dampness in which we found everything there; and crossing to the east bank of the main creek, proceeded in a southerly direction nearly parallel with the creek. Some of the flats near the creek contain the richest alluvial soil, and are clothed with luxuriant vegetation. There is an immense extent of plain back, of the finest character for pastoral purposes, and the country bears every appearance of being permanently well watered.
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

We halted on a large billabong at noon, and were favoured during dinner by a thunderstorm, the heavier portion of which missed us, some passing north and some south, which was fortunate, as it would otherwise have spoiled our baking process, a matter of some importance just now. We started again at seven o'clock, but the effects of the heavy rain prevented our making a good journey.

Friday, March 22, Muddy Camp, 34 R.—Had an early breakfast this morning, and started before sunrise. Found that the wet swampy ground that checked our progress last night was only a narrow strip, and that had we gone a little farther we might have made a fine journey. The country consisted of open, well-grassed, pebbly plains, intersected by numerous small channels, all containing water. Abundance of fine rich *portulaca* was just bursting into flower along all these channels, as well as on the greater portion of the plain. The creek that we camped on last night ran nearly parallel with us throughout this stage. We should have crossed it to avoid the stony plains, but were prevented by the flood from so doing.

Saturday, March 23, Mosquito Camp, 35 R.—Started at a quarter to six, and followed down the creek, which has much of the characteristic appearance of the river Burke where we crossed it on our up-journey. The land in the vicinity greatly improves as one goes down, becoming less stony and better grassed. At eleven o'clock we crossed a small tributary from the eastward, and there was a distant range of considerable extent visible in that direction. Halted for the afternoon in a bend, where there was tolerable feed, for the banks are everywhere more or less scrubby.

Sunday, March 24, Three-hour Camp, 36 R.

Monday, March 25, Native-Dog Camp, 37 R.—Started at half-past five, looking for a good place to halt for the day. This we found at a short distance down the creek, and immediately discovered that it was close to Camp 89 of our up-journey. Had not expected that we were so much to the westward. After breakfast, took some time-altitudes, and was about to go back to last camp for some things that had been left, when I found Grey behind a tree, eating skilligolee. He explained that he was suffering from dysentery, and had taken the flour without leave. Sent him to report himself to Mr. Burke, and went on. He having got King to tell Mr. Burke for him, was called up, and received a good thrashing. There is no knowing to what extent he has been robbing us. Many things have been found to run unaccountably short. Started at seven o'clock, the camels in first-rate spirits. We followed our old course back (south). The first portion of the plains had much the same appearance as when we came up; but that near Camp 88, which then looked so fresh and green, is now very much dried up, and we saw no signs of water anywhere.

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In fact there seems to have been little or no rain about here since we passed. Soon after three o'clock we struck the first of several small creeks or billibongs, which must be portions of the creek with the deep channel that we crossed on going up, we being now rather to the westward of our former course. From here, after traversing about 2 miles of the barest clay-plain, devoid of all vegetation, we reached a small water-course, most of the holes in which contained some water of a milky or creamy description. Fine salt-bush and portulac being abundant in the vicinity, we camped here at 4:30 A.M. When we started in the evening, a strong breeze had already sprung up in the south, which conveyed much of the characteristic feeling of a hot wind. It increased gradually to a force of five and six, but by eleven o'clock had become decidedly cool, and was so chilly towards morning that we found it necessary to throw on our ponchos. A few cir. cum. clouds were coming up from the east when we started, but we left them behind, and nothing was visible during the night but a thin hazy veil. The gale continued throughout the 26th, becoming warmer as the day advanced. In the afternoon it blew furiously, raising a good deal of dust. The temperature of air at four P.M. was 94° in the shade. Wind trees all day.

Tuesday, March 26, Salt-bush Camp, 38 R.
Wednesday, March 27, Camp 39 R.
Thursday, March 28, Camp 40 R.
Friday, March 29, Camp 41 R.—Camels' last feast. Fine green feed at this camp. Plenty of vine and young polygonums on the small billibongs.

Saturday, March 30, Camp 42 R, Boocha's Rest.—Employed all day in cutting up, jerking, and eating Boocha. The day turned out as favourable for us as we could have wished, and a considerable portion of the meat was completely jerked before sunset.

Sunday, March 31, Camp 43 R, Mia-Mia Camp.—Plenty of good dry feed, various shrubs, salt-bushes, including cotton-bush and some coarse kangaroo-grass; water in the hollows on the stony pavement. The neighbouring country chiefly composed of stony rises and sand-ridges.

Monday, April 1, Camp 43 R.
Tuesday, April 2, Camp 44 R.—Thermometer broken.
Wednesday, April 3, Camp 45 R, Salt-Meat Camp.
Thursday, April 4, Camp 46 R, The Plant Camp.
Friday, April 5, Camp 47 R, Oil Camp.—Earthy and clayey plains, generally sound and tolerably grassed; but in other places bare salt-bush, withered.

Saturday, April 6, Wild-Duck Camp, 48 R.—Earthy flats, cut into innumerable watercourses [succeeded by] fine open plains, generally very bare, but having in some places patches of fine salt-
bush. The dead stalks of portulac and mallows show that those plants are very plentiful in some seasons. [Towards noon came upon] earthy plains and numerous billabongs.

_Sunday, April 7, Camp 49 R._—Find the water and feed much dried up. Nearly all the water we have met with has a slightly brackish taste of a peculiar kind, somewhat resembling in flavour potassio tartrate of soda.

_Monday, April 8, Camp 50 R._—Camped a short distance above Camp 75. The creek here contains more water, and there is a considerable quantity of green grass in its bed, but it is much dried up since we passed before. Halted 15 minutes to send back for Gray, who gammoned he could not walk. Some good showers must have fallen lately, as we have passed surface-water on the plains every day. In the latter portion of to-day’s journey the young grass and portulac are springing freshly in the flats and on the sides of the sand-ridges.

_Tuesday, April 9, Camp 51 R._—Camped on the bank of the creek, where there is a regular field of salt-bush, as well as some grass in its bed, very acceptable to the horse, who has not had a proper feed for the last week until last night, and is, consequently, nearly knocked up.

_Wednesday, April 10, Camp 52 R._—Remained at Camp 52 R all day to cut up and jerk the meat of the horse Billy, who was so reduced and knocked up for want of food, that there appeared little chance of his reaching the other side of the desert; and, as we were running short of food of every description ourselves, we thought it best to secure his flesh at once. We found it healthy and tender, but without the slightest trace of fat in any portion of the body.

_Thursday, April 11._—Plenty of water in creek down to this point.

_Friday, April 12._—Extensive earthy plains, intersected by numerous watercourses.

_Saturday, April 13._—Small watercourses lined with lakes. Plenty of salt-bush and chrysanthemums on either side. Camped on Stony Desert.

[Note by Transcriber.—Up to this point, as it appears from Mr. Wills’s Fieldbook, the Expedition never passed a day in which they did not traverse the banks of, or cross, a creek or other watercourse.]

_Sunday, April 14._

_Monday, April 15._—It commenced to rain lightly at five A.M. this morning, and continued raining pretty steadily throughout the day. Owing to the wet and the exertion of crossing the numerous sand-ridges, Linda became knocked up about four o’clock, and we
had to halt at a claypan amongst the sandhills. [The party seems to have crossed a creek near a native camp, about ten A.M.]

**Tuesday, April 16.**

**Wednesday, April 17.**—This morning, about sunrise, Gray died. He had not spoken a word distinctly since his first attack, which was just as we were about to start.

**Thursday, April 18.**—[Another creek and native camp were passed.]

**Friday, April 19.**—Camped again without water on the sandy bed of the creek, having been followed by a lot of natives who were desirous of our company; but as we preferred camping alone, we were compelled to move on until rather late, in order to get away from them. The night was very cold. A strong breeze was blowing from the south, which made the fire so irregular, that, as on the two previous nights, it was impossible to keep up a fair temperature. Our general course throughout the day had been S.S.E.

**Saturday, April 20.**

**Sunday, April 21.**—Arrived at the depot this evening just in time to find it deserted. A note left in the plant by Brahé communicates the pleasing information that they have started to-day for the Darling; their camels and horses all well and in good condition; we and our camels being just done up, and scarcely able to reach the depot, have very little chance of overtaking them. Brahé has fortunately left us ample provisions to take us to the bounds of civilisation, namely:—flour, 50 lbs.; rice, 20 lbs.; oatmeal, 60 lbs.; sugar, 60 lbs.; and dried meat, 15 lbs. These provisions, together with a few horse-shoes and nails, and some castaway odds and ends, constitute all the articles left, and place us in a very awkward position in respect to clothing. Our disappointment at finding the depot deserted may easily be imagined;—returning in an exhausted state, after four months of the severest travelling and privation, our legs almost paralysed, so that each of us found it a most trying task only to walk a few yards. Such a leg-bound feeling I never before experienced, and hope I never shall again. The exertion required to get up a slight piece of rising ground, even without any load, induces an indescribable sensation of pain and helplessness, and the general lassitude makes one unfit for anything. Poor Gray must have suffered very much, many times when we thought him shamming. It is most fortunate for us that these symptoms, which so early affected him, did not come on us until we were reduced to an exclusively animal diet of such an inferior description as that offered by the flesh of a worn-out and exhausted horse. We were not long in getting out the grub that Brahé had left, and we made a good supper off some
oatmeal-porridge and sugar. This, together with the excitement of finding ourselves in such a peculiar and almost unexpected position, had a wonderful effect in removing the stiffness from our legs. Whether it is possible that the vegetables can so have affected us, I know not; but both Mr. B. and I remarked a most decided relief and a strength in the legs greater than we had had for several days. I am inclined to think that but for the abundance of portulac that we obtained on the journey, we should scarcely have returned to Cooper's Creek at [all].

Burke's Notes of the Expedition.

These notes were often illegible, and in many places the pages of the book had been ripped and cut out. The book was evidently kept for rough memoranda.

The following extracts are from the memorandum-book of Mr. Burke. Mr. Archer, to whom the task of transcribing it was entrusted, writes the following preface:—“I went carefully through Burke's note-book last night. It is an ordinary memorandum-book, with a clasp, and a side pocket for a pencil. It is much dilapidated, and several of the leaves are torn out. Some so torn had been written on. I have numbered these consecutively throughout. The following is a copy, letter for letter, and word for word, of all that remains of Burke's pencillings. I have queried all doubtful points.”

No. 69 line of course on bags, 1, 4, 19, 20, 11, 3. Think well before giving an answer, and never speak except from strong convictions.

Dec. 16, 1860.—Left Depot 65, followed by the creek.
Dec. 17.—The same, 66.
Dec. 18.—The same, 67.
Dec. 19.—We made a (?) small creek, supposed to be Otta Era (?), or in the immediate neighbourhood of it. Good water, Camp 69.

Dec. 20.—Made a creek where we found a great many natives—they presented us with fish and offered their women, Camp 70.
Dec. 21.—Made another creek, Camp 71. Splendid water, fine feed for the camels; would be a very good place for a station. Since we have left Cooper's Creek we have travelled over a very fine sheep-grazing country, well watered, and in every respect well suited for occupation.
Dec. 22, Camp 72.—Encamped on the borders of the desert.
Dec. 23.—Travelled day and night, and encamped in the night in the bed of a creek, as we supposed we were near water.

Dec. 24.—Encamped on the morning of this day on the banks of Gray's Creek, called after him because he was detached on
horseback from the party, and found it good water. The third
day without it. Now for a retrospective glance. We started from
Cooper's Creek, Camp 66, with the intention of going through to
Eyre's Creek without water. Loaded with 800 pints of water,
four riding-camels carried 130 pints, each horse 150, two pack-
camels 50 each, and 5 pints each man.

Dec. 25, Christmas-day.—Started at four A.M. from Gray's
Creek, and arrived at a creek which appears to be quite as large
as Cooper's Creek. At two P.M. Golah-Sing gave some very
decided hints about stopping by lying down under the trees; splendid prospect.

Dec. 26, Dec. 27, Dec. 28, Dec. 29, followed up the creek until
it took a turn to the south-east, which I thought rather too much
to put up with, therefore left it on the morning of the 30th
December, 12:30, on the road—started at seven o'clock, travelled
eleven hours. 31st, started at 2:20, sixteen and a-half hours on
the road, travelled thirteen and a half hours.

Jan. 1, 1861.—Water.

Jan. 2, from King's Creek.—Eleven hours on the road. Started
at seven, travelled nine and a half hours; desert.

Jan. 3.—Five started, travelled twelve hours no minutes.

Jan. 4.—Twelve hours on the road.

Jan. 5.—Water at Wills' or King's Creek. It is impossible to
say the time we were up, for we had to load the camels, to pack
and feed them, to watch them and the horse, and to look for
water, but I am satisfied that the frame of man never was more
severely taxed. [Here follows an entry for March 28th, com-
mencing thus, "March 28th—At the conclusion of" then some of
the leaves appear to have been torn out from pages 43 to 55.]

Jan. 13, 1861.—As I find it impossible to keep a regular diary,
I shall jot down my ideas when I have an opportunity and put the
date. Upon two occasions, at Cooper's Creek and at King's
Creek, on New Year's Day, whenever the natives tried to bully or
bounce us and were repulsed, although the leaders appeared to be
in earnest, the followers and particularly the young ones laughed
heartily and seemed to be amused at their leaders' repulse. The
old fellow at King's Creek who stuck his spear into the ground
and threw dust in the air, when I fired off my pistol, ran off in the
most undignified manner. Names for places:—Thackeray, Barry,
Bindon, Lyons, Forbes, Archer, Bennet, Colles, O. S. Nicholson,
Wood, Wrixon, Cope, Turner, Scratchley, Ligar, Griffith, Green,
Roe, Hamilton, Colles.

Jan. 18.—Still on the ranges, the camels sweating profusely
from fear.

Jan. 20.—I determined to-day to go straight at the ranges, and
so far the experiment has succeeded well. The poor camels
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria. 487

sweating and groaning, but we gave them a hot bath in Turner's Creek, which seemed to relieve them very much. At last through—the camels bleeding, sweating, and groaning. [Leaves 35 to 39 torn out, and eight leaves preceding torn out, no marks of writing visible on the remnant. Leaves 24 to 33, both inclusive, blank on both sides.]

**March 28.**—At the conclusion of report, it would be well to say that we reached the sea, but we could not obtain a view of the open ocean, although we made every endeavour to do so.

Leaving Carpentaria—Flour, 83 lbs.; pork, 3 lbs.; D. meat, 35 lbs.; biscuits, 12 lbs.; rice, 12 lbs.; sugar, 10 lbs. [Page 15 blank.]—Return party from Carpentaria arrived here last night, and found that the D. party had started on the same day. We proceed slowly down the creek towards Adelaide by Mount Hopeless, and shall endeavour to follow Gregory's track, but we are very weak, the camels are done up, and we shall not be able to travel faster than 5 miles a day at most. Gray died on the road from hunger and fatigue. We all suffered much from hunger, but the provisions left here will, I think, restore our strength. We have discovered a practicable route to Carpentaria, the principal portion of which lies in the 140th meridian of east longitude. Between this and the Stony Desert there is some good country; to the tropic the country is dry and stony; between the tropic and Carpentaria a considerable portion is rangy, but it is well watered and richly grassed.

[Pages 20 and 21 torn, no writing apparent.

Pages 22 and 23 contain a memorandum of stores, but without any particular reference to time and place.]

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*Journal of Trip from Cooper's Creek towards Adelaide, April, 1861.*

(Transcribed by Mr. Archer.)

The advance party of the Victorian Exploring Expedition, consisting of Burke, Wills, and King (Gray being dead), having returned from Carpentaria on the 21st April in an exhausted and weak state, and finding that the depot party left at Cooper's Creek had started for the Darling, with their horses and camels fresh and in good condition, deemed it useless to attempt to overtake them, having only two camels, both done up, and being so weak themselves as to be unable to walk more than 4 or 5 miles a day; finding also that the provisions left at the depot for them would scarcely take them to Menindie, started down Cooper's Creek for Adelaide, via Mount Hopeless, on the morning of the 23rd April, intending to follow as nearly as possible the route taken by
Gregory; by so doing they hope to be able to recruit themselves and the camels whilst sauntering slowly down the creek, and to have sufficient provisions left to take them comfortably, or at least without risk, to some station in South Australia. Their equipment consists of the following articles:—flour, 50 lbs.; sugar, 60 lbs.; rice, 20 lbs.; oatmeal, 60 lbs.; jerked meat, 25 lbs.; ginger, 2 lbs.; salt, 1 lb.

[Then follow some native words, with their meanings.]

Tuesday, April 23, from Depot.—Having collected together all the odds and ends that seemed likely to be of use to us, in addition to provisions left in the plant, we started at a quarter past nine A.M., keeping down the southern bank of the creek. We only went about 5 miles, and camped at half-past eleven on a billabong, where the feed was pretty good. We find the change of diet already making a great improvement in our spirits and strength. The weather is delightful, days agreeably warm, but the nights very chilly. The latter is more noticeable from our deficiency in clothing, the depot party having taken all the reserve things back with them to the Darling. To Camp 1.

Wednesday, April 24, from Camp 1.—As we were about to start this morning some blacks came by, from whom we were fortunate enough to get 12 lbs. of fish for a few pieces of straps and some matches, &c. This is a great treat for us, as well as a valuable addition to our rations. We started at a quarter past eight P.M., on our way down the creek, the blacks going in the opposite direction, little thinking that in a few miles they would be able to get lots of pieces for nothing, better than those they had obtained from us. To Camp 2.

Thursday, April 25, from Camp 2.—Awoke at five o'clock, after a most refreshing night's rest. The sky was beautifully clear, and the air rather chilly. The terrestrial radiation seems to have been considerable, and a slight dew had fallen. We had scarcely finished breakfast when our friends the blacks, from whom we obtained the fish, made their appearance with a few more, and seemed inclined to go with us and keep up the supply. We gave them some sugar, with which they were greatly pleased. They are by far the most well-behaved blacks we have seen on Cooper's Creek. We did not get away from the camp until half-past nine A.M., continuing our course down the most southern branch of the creek, which keeps a general south-west course. We passed across the stony point which abuts on one of the largest water-holes in the creek, and camped at half-past twelve about a mile below the most dangerous part of the rocky path. At this latter place we had an accident, that might have resulted badly for us. One of the camels fell while crossing the worst part, but we fortunately got him out with only a few cuts and bruises. The water-hole at this
camp is a very fine one, being (to Camp 3) several miles long, and on an average about * chains broad. The waterfowl are numerous, but rather shy—not nearly so much so, however, as those on the creeks between here and Carpentaria; and I am convinced that the shyness of the latter, which was also remarked by Sturt, on his trip to Eyre's Creek, arises entirely from the scarcity of animals, both human and otherwise, and not from any peculiar mode of catching them that the blacks may have.

Friday, April 26, from Camp 3.—Last night was beautifully calm, and comparatively warm, although the sky was very clear. Reloaded the camels by moonlight this morning, and started at a quarter to six. Striking off to the south of the creek, we soon got on a native path, which leaves the creek just below the stony ground, and takes a course nearly west across a piece of open country, bounded on the south by sand-ridges, and on the north by the scrubby ground which flanks the bank of the creek at this part of its course. Leaving the path on the right at a distance of 3 miles, we turned up a small creek which passes down between some sand-hills; and, finding a nice patch of feed for the camels at a water-hole, we halted at fifteen minutes past seven for breakfast. We started again at fifty minutes past nine A.M. Continuing our westerly course along the path, we crossed to the south of the watercourse above the water, and proceeded over the most splendid salt-bush country that one could wish to see, bounded on the left by sandhills, whilst to the right the peculiar looking flat-topped sandstone ranges form an extensive amphitheatre, through the far side of the arena of which may be traced the dark line of creek-timber. At twelve o'clock we camped in the bed of the creek, at Camp,* our last camp on the road down from the Gulf, having taken four days to do what we then did in one. This comparative rest and the change in diet have also worked wonders, however; the leg-tied feeling is now entirely gone, and I believe that in less than a week we shall be fit to undergo any fatigue whatever. The camels are improving, and seem capable of doing all that we are likely to require of them. To Camp 4.

Saturday, April 27.—First part of night clear, with a light breeze from south. Temperature at midnight, 10° (Réaumur); towards morning there were a few cir. cum. clouds passing over north-east to south-west, but these disappeared before daylight; at five A.M. the temperature was 7-5° (Réaumur). We started at six o'clock, and, following the native path—which at about a mile from our camp takes a southerly direction—we soon came to the high sandy alluvial deposit, which separates the creek at this point from the stony rises. Here we struck off from the path, keeping

* Blank in ms.
well to the south of the creek, in order that we might mess in a branch of it that took a southerly direction. At twenty minutes past nine we came in on the creek again where it runs due south, and halted for breakfast at a fine water-hole, with fine fresh feed for the camels. Here we remained until noon, when we moved on again, and camped at one o'clock on a general course, having been throughout the morning south-west 8 miles. The weather is most agreeable and pleasant; nothing could be more favourable to us up to the present time. The temperature in the shade at half-past ten A.M. was 17.5° (Réaumur), with a light breeze from south, and a few small cir.-cum. clouds towards the north. I greatly feel the want of more instruments, the only things I have left being my watch, prism-compass, pocket-compass, and one thermometer (Réaumur). To Camp 5.

Sunday, April 28, from Camp 5.—Morning fine and calm, but rather chilly. Started at a quarter to five A.M., following down the bed of a creek in a westerly direction, by moonlight. Our stage was, however, very short; for about a mile one of the camels (Linda) got bogged by the side of a water-hole, and although we tried every means in our power, we found it impossible to get him out. All the ground beneath the surface was a bottomless quicksand, through which the beast sank too rapidly for us to get bushes or timber fairly beneath him; and, being of a very sluggish, stupid nature, he could never be got to make sufficiently strenuous efforts towards extricating himself. In the evening, as a last chance, we let the water in from the creek, so as to buoy him up, and at the same time soften the ground about his legs; but it was of no avail. The brute lay quietly in it, as if he quite enjoyed his position. To Camp 6.

Monday, April 29, from Camp 6.—Finding Linda still in the hole, we made a few attempts at extricating him, and then shot him, and after breakfast commenced cutting off what flesh we could get at for jerking.

Tuesday, April 30, Camp 6.—Remained here to-day, for the purpose of drying the meat, for which process the weather is not very favourable. [Meteorological note follows.]

Wednesday, May 1, from Camp 6.—Started at twenty minutes to nine, having loaded our only camel, Rajah, with the most necessary and useful articles, and packed up a small swag each of bedding and clothing for our own shoulders. We kept on the right bank of the creek for about a mile, and then crossed over at a native camp to the left, where we got on a path running due west, the creek having turned to the north. Following the path, we crossed an open plain, and then sand-ridges, whence we saw the creek straight ahead of us, running nearly south again. The path took us to the southernmost point of the bend, in a distance of
about 2½ miles from where we had crossed the creek; thereby saving us from 3 to 4 miles, as it cannot be less than 6 miles round by the creek. To Camp 7.

Thursday, May 2, Camp 7.—Breakfasted by moonlight, and started at half-past six. Following down the left bank of the creek in a westerly direction, we came, at a distance of 6 miles, on a lot of natives, who were camped on the bed of a creek. They seemed to have just breakfasted, and were most liberal in the presentations of fish and cake. We could only return the compliment by some fish-hooks and sugar. About a mile farther on we came to a separation of the creek, where what looked like the main branch looked towards the south. This channel we followed; not, however, without some misgivings as to its character, which were soon increased by the small and unfavourable appearance that the creek assumed. On our continuing along it a little farther it began to improve, and widened out with fine water-holes of considerable depth. The banks were very steep, and a belt of scrub lined it on either side. This made it very inconvenient for travelling, especially as the bed of the creek was full of water for a considerable distance. At eleven A.M. we halted until half-past one P.M., and then moved on again, taking a s.s.w. course for about 2 miles; when, at the end of a very long water-hole, it breaks into billibongs, which continue splitting into sandy channels until they are all lost in the earthy soil of a box-forest. Seeing little chance of water ahead, we turned back to the end of the long water-hole, and camped for the night. On our way back Rajah showed signs of being done up. He had been trembling greatly all the morning. On this account his load was further lightened to the amount of a few pounds, by doing away with the sugar, ginger, tea, cocoa, and two or three tin plates. To Camp 8.

Friday, May 3, Camp 8.—Started at 7 A.M., striking off in a northerly direction for the main creek. At 1½ mile came to a branch which [left unfinished.] To Camp 9.

Saturday, May 4, Junction from Camp 9.—Night and morning very cold. Sky clear, almost calm; occasionally a light breath of air from south. Rajah appears to feel the cold very much. He was so stiff this morning as to be scarcely able to get up with his load. Started to return down the creek at 6:45, and halted for breakfast at 9 A.M., at the same spot as we breakfasted at yesterday. Proceeding from there down the creek, we soon found a repetition of the features that were exhibited by the creek examined on Thursday. At 1½ mile we came to the last water-hole, and below that the channel became more sandy and shallow, and continued to send off billibongs to the south and west, slightly changing its course each time, until it disappeared altogether in a north-westerly direction. Leaving King with the camel, we went
on a mile or two to see if we could find water; and, being unsuccessful, we were obliged to return to where we had breakfasted, as being the best place for feed and water.

_Sunday, May 5_, to _Camp 10._—Started by myself to reconnoitre the country in a southerly direction, leaving Mr. Burke and King with the camel at Camp 10. Travelled south-west by south for two hours, following the course of the most southerly billabongs. Found the earthy soil becoming more loose and cracked up, and the box-track gradually disappearing. Changed course to west, for a high sand-ridge, which I reached in one hour and a half; and, continuing in the same direction to one still higher, obtained from it a good view of the surrounding country. To the north were the extensive box-forests, bounding the creek on either side; to the east, earthy plains, intersected by watercourses and lines of timber, and bounded in the distance by sand-ridges; to the south, the projection of the sand-ridge partially intercepted the view; the rest was composed of earthy plains, apparently clothed with chrysanthemums; to the westward, another but smaller plain was bounded also by high sand-ridges, running parallel with the one on which I was standing. This dreary prospect offering no encouragement for one to proceed, I returned to Camp 10 by a more direct and better route than I had come, passing over some good salt-bush land which borders on the billabongs to the westward. [Here follow some meteorological notes.]

_Monday, May 6_, from Camp 10 back to Camp 9.—Moved up the creek again to Camp 9, at the junction, to breakfast, and remained the day there. The present state of things is not calculated to raise our spirits much. The rations are rapidly diminishing; our clothing, especially the boots, are all going to pieces, and we have not the materials for repairing them properly. The camel is completely done up, and can scarcely get along, although he has the best of feed, and is resting half his time. I suppose this will end in our having to live like the blacks for a few months.

_Tuesday, May 7_, Camp 9.—Breakfasted at daylight; but when about to start, found that the camel would not rise, even without any load on his back. After making every attempt to get him up, we were obliged to leave him to himself. Mr. Burke and I started down the creek to reconnoitre. At about 11 miles we came to some blacks fishing. They gave us some half-a-dozen fish each for luncheon, and intimated that if we would go to their camp we should have some more, and some bread. I tore in two a piece of macintosh-stuff that I had, and Mr. Burke gave one piece, and I the other. We then went on to their camp, about 3 miles farther. They had caught a considerable quantity of fish, but most of them were small. I noticed three different kinds—a small one, that they call cupi, 5 to 6 inches long, and not broader
than an eel; the common one, with large coarse scales, termed perú; and a delicious fish, some of which run from 1 pound to 2 pounds' weight—the natives call them cawilehi. On our arrival at the camp they led us to a spot to camp on, and soon afterwards brought a lot of fish and bread, which they call nardoo. The lighting a fire with matches delights them, but they do not care about having them. In the evening various members of the tribe came down with lumps of nardoo and handfuls of fish, until we were positively unable to eat any more. They also gave us some stuff they call bedegery, or pedgery. It has a highly intoxicating effect when chewed even in small quantities. It appears to be the dried stems and leaves of some shrub.

Wednesday, May 8.—Left the blacks' camp at half-past seven, Mr. Burke returning to the junction, whilst I proceeded to trace down the creek. This I found a shorter task than I had expected, for it soon showed signs of running out, and at the same time kept considerably to the north of west. There were several fine water-holes within about 4 miles of the camp I had left, but not a drop all the way beyond that, a distance of 7 miles. Finding that the creek turned greatly towards the north, I returned to the blacks' encampment; and, as I was about to pass, they invited me to stay. I did so, and was even more hospitably entertained than before, being on this occasion offered a share of a gunyah, and supplied with plenty of fish and nardoo, as well as a couple of nice fat rats. The latter found most delicious. They were baked in the skins. Last night was clear and calm, but unusually warm. We slept by a fire, just in front of the blacks' camp. They were very attentive in bringing us firewood, and keeping fire up during the night.

Thursday, May 9.—Parted from my friends the blacks at half-past seven, and started for Camp 9.

Friday, May 10, Camp 9.—Mr. Burke and King employed in jerking the camel's flesh, whilst I went out to look for the nardoo-seed for making bread. In this I was unsuccessful, not being able to find a single tree of it in the neighbourhood of the camp. I, however, tried boiling the large kind of bean which the blacks call padlu; they boil easily, and when shelled are very sweet, much resembling in taste the French chestnut. They are to be found in large quantities nearly everywhere.

Saturday, May 11, Camp 9.—To-day Mr. Burke and King started down the creek for the blacks' camp, determined to ascertain all particulars about the nardoo-seed. I have now my turn at the meat-jerking, and must devise some means for trapping the birds and rats, which is a pleasant prospect after our dashing trip to Carpentaria, having to hang about Cooper's Creek, living like the blacks.
Sunday, May 12.—Mr. Burke and King returned this morning, having been unsuccessful in their search for the blacks, who, it seems, have moved over to the other branch of the creek. Decided on moving out on the main creek to-morrow, and then trying to find the natives of the creek.

Monday, May 13.—Shifted some of the things and brought them back again; Mr. Burke thinking it better for one to remain here with them for a few days, so as to eat the remains of the fresh meat, whilst the others went in search of the blacks and nardoo.

Tuesday, May 14.—Mr. Burke and King gone up the creek to look for blacks, with four days' provisions. Self employed in preparing for a final start on their return. This evening Mr. Burke and King returned, having been some considerable distance up the creek, and found no blacks. It is now settled that we plant the things, and all start together the day after to-morrow. The weather continues very fine; the nights calm, clear, and cold, and the days clear, with a breeze generally from south, but to-day from east, for a change. This makes the first part of the day rather cold. When clouds appear they invariably move from west to east.

Wednesday, May 15.—Camp 9. Planting the things, and preparing to leave the creek for Mount Hopeless.

Thursday, May 16.—Having completed our planting, &c., started up the creek to the second blacks' camp, a distance of about eight miles. Finding our loads rather too heavy, we made a small plant here of such articles as could best be spared. [Here follow a few meteorological notes.]

Friday, May 17, Nardoo.—Started this morning on a blacks' path, leaving the creek on our left, our intention being to keep a south-easterly direction until we should cut some likely-looking creek, and then to follow it down. On approaching the foot of the first sandhill, King caught sight in the flat of some nardoo-seeds, and we soon found that the flat was covered with them. This discovery caused somewhat of a revolution in our feelings, for we considered that with the knowledge of this plant we were in a position to support ourselves, even if we were destined to remain on the creek and wait for assistance from town. Crossing some sand-ridges running north and south, we struck into a creek which runs out of Cooper's Creek, and followed it down. At about five miles we came to a large water-hole, beyond which the watercourse runs out on extensive flats and earthy plains. Calm night; sky cleared towards morning, and it became very cold. A slight easterly breeze sprang up at sunrise, but soon died away again. The sky again became overcast, and remained so throughout the
day. There was occasionally a light breeze from south, but during the greater portion of the day it was quite calm. Fine halo around the sun in the afternoon.

Saturday, May 18, Camp 16.—[No entry except the following meteorological entry on an opposite page, which may probably refer to this date.] Calm night, sky sometimes clear and sometimes partially overcast with veil-clouds.

Sunday, May 19.—[No entry beyond this citation of date.]

Monday, May 20.—[No entry beyond this citation of date.]

Tuesday, May 21, Creek.—[No entry beyond this citation of date.]

Wednesday, May 22, Cooper's Creek.—[No entry beyond citation of date.]

Thursday, May 23.—[No entry beyond this citation of date.]

Friday, May 24.—Started with King to celebrate the Queen's birthday by fetching from Nardoo Creek what is now to us the staff of life. Returned at a little after two P.M., with a fair supply, but find the collecting of the seed a slower and more troublesome process than could be desired. Whilst picking the seed, about eleven o'clock A.M., both of us heard distinctly the noise of an explosion, as if of a gun, at some considerable distance. We supposed it to have been a shot fired by Mr. Burke; but on returning to the camp, found that he had not fired nor heard the noise. The sky was partially overcast with high cum-str. clouds, and a light breeze blew from the east, but nothing to indicate a thunderstorm in any direction.

Saturday, May 25.—[No entry beyond this.]

Sunday, May 26.—[No entry beyond this.]

Monday, May 27.—Started up the creek this morning for the depot, in order to deposit journals and a record of the state of affairs here. On reaching the sandhills below where Landa was bugged, I passed some blacks on a flat collecting nardoo-seed. Never saw such an abundance of the seed before. The ground in some parts was quite black with it. There were only two or three gins and children, and they directed me on, as if to their camp, in the direction I was before going; but I had not gone far over the first sandhill when I was overtaken by about twenty blacks, bent on taking me back to their camp, and promising any quantity of nardoo and fish. On my going with them, one carried the shovel, and another insisted on taking my swag, in such a friendly manner that I could not refuse them. They were greatly amused with the various little things I had with me. In the evening they supplied me with abundance of nardoo and fish; and one of the old men, Poko Tinnamira, shared his gunyah with me. . . . The night was very cold, but, by the help of several fires—[The entry
suddenly stops, but in the margin of the opposite page are written the names of several natives, and certain native words, with their meanings in English.

**Tuesday, May 28.**—Left the blacks’ camp, and proceeded up the creek. Obtained some mussels near where Landa died, and halted for breakfast. Still feel very unwell from the effects of the constipation of the bowels. The stools are exceedingly painful. After breakfast travelled on to our third camp coming down. Pay to Blowr [sic].

**Wednesday, May 29.**—Started at seven o’clock, and went on to the duck-holes, where we breakfasted coming down. Halted there at thirty minutes past nine for a feed, and then moved on. At the stones saw a lot of crows quarrelling about something near the water. Found it to be a large fish, of which they had eaten a considerable portion. Finding it quite fresh and good, I decided the quarrel by taking it with me. It proved a most valuable addition to my otherwise scanty supper of nardoo-porridge. This evening I camped very comfortably in a mia-mia, about eleven miles from the depot. The night was very cold, although not entirely cloudless. A brisk easterly breeze sprang up in the morning, and blew freshly all day. In the evening the sky clouded in, and there were one or two slight showers, but nothing to wet the ground.

**Thursday, May 30.**—Reached the depot this morning, at eleven o’clock. No traces of any one, except blacks, having been here since we left. Deposited some journals, and a notice of our present condition. Started back in the afternoon, and camped at the first water-hole. Last night being cloudy, was unusually warm and pleasant.

**Friday, May 31.**—Decamped at thirty minutes past seven, having first breakfasted. Passed between the sandhills at nine, and reached the blanket mia-mias at twenty minutes to eleven; from there proceeded on to the rocks, where I arrived at half-past one, having delayed about half-an-hour on the road in gathering some portulac. It had been a fine morning, but the sky now became overcast, and threatened to set in for a steady rain; and as I felt very weak and tired, I only moved on about a mile farther, and camped in a sheltered gully, under some bushes. Night clear and very cold. No wind. Towards morning sky became slightly overcast with cirro-str. clouds.

**Saturday, June 1.**—Started at a quarter to eight A.M. Passed the duck-holes at ten A.M., and my second camp up at two P.M., having rested in the mean time about forty-five minutes. Thought to have reached the blacks’ camp, or at least where Landa was bogged, but found myself altogether too weak and exhausted; in
fact, had extreme difficulty in getting across the numerous little gullies, and was at last obliged to camp from sheer fatigue. Night alternately clear and cloudy, with occasional showers.

Sunday, June 2.—Started at half-past six, thinking to breakfast at the blacks' camp, below Landa's grave; found myself very much fagged, and did not arrive at their camp until ten A.M., and then found myself disappointed as to a good breakfast, the camp being deserted. Having rested awhile, and eaten a few fish-bones, I moved down the creek, hoping by a late march to be able to reach our own camp, but I soon found, from my extreme weakness, that that would be out of the question. A certain amount of good luck, however, still stuck to me, for, on going along by a large water-hole, I was so fortunate as to find a large fish, about a pound and a-half in weight, which was just being choked by another which it had tried to swallow, but which had stuck in its throat. I soon had a fire lit, and both of the fish cooked and eaten. The large one was in good condition. Moving on again after my late breakfast, I passed Camp 67 of the journey to Carpentaria, and camped for the night under some polygonum-bushes.

Monday, June 3.—Started at seven o'clock, and, keeping on the south bank of the creek, was rather encouraged, at about three miles, by the sound of numerous crows a-head; presently, fancied I could see smoke, and was shortly afterwards set at my ease by hearing a cooey from Pitchery, who stood on the opposite bank, and directed me around the lower end of the water-hole, continually repeating his assurance of abundance of fish and bread. Having with some considerable difficulty managed to ascend the sandy path that led to the camp, I was conducted by the chief to a fire, where a large pile of fish were just being cooked in the most approved style. These I imagined to be for the general consumption of the half-a-dozen natives gathered around, but it turned out that they had already had their breakfast. I was expected to dispose of this lot—a task which, to my own astonishment, I soon accomplished, keeping two or three blacks pretty steadily at work extracting the bones for me. The fish being disposed of, next came a supply of nardoo-cake and water, until I was so full as to be unable to eat any more, when Pitchery allowing me a short time to recover myself, fetched a large bowl of the raw nardoo-flour, mixed to a thin paste—a most insinuating article, and one that they appear to esteem a great delicacy. I was then invited to stop the night there, but this I declined, and proceeded on my way home.

Tuesday, June 4.—Started for the blacks' camp, intending to test the practicability of living with them, and to see what I could learn as to their ways and manners.

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Wednesday, June 5.—Remained with the blacks. Light rain during the greater part of the night, and more or less throughout the day, in showers. Wind blowing in squalls from south.

Thursday, June 6.—Returned to our own camp; found that Mr. Burke and King had been well supplied with fish by the blacks. Made preparation for shifting our camp nearer to theirs on the morrow.

Friday, June 7.—Started in the afternoon for the blacks' camp, with such things as we could take; found ourselves all very weak, in spite of the abundant supply of fish that we have lately had. I myself could scarcely get along, although carrying the lightest swag—only about thirty pounds. Found that the blacks had decamped, so determined on proceeding to-morrow up to the next camp, near the nardoo-field.

Saturday, June 8.—With the greatest fatigue and difficulty we reached the nardoo-camp. No blacks, greatly to our disappointment. Took possession of the best mia-mia, and rested for the remainder of the day.

Sunday, June 9.—King and I proceeded to collect nardoo, leaving Mr. Burke at home.

Monday, June 10.—Mr. Burke and King collecting nardoo; self at home, too weak to go out. Was fortunate enough to shoot a crow.

[Here follow some meteorological notes, which appear to relate to another period.]

Tuesday, June 11.—King out for nardoo. Mr. Burke up the creek to look for the blacks.

Wednesday, June 12.—King out collecting nardoo. Mr. Burke and I at home, pounding and cleaning. I still feel myself, if anything, weaker in the legs, although the nardoo appears to be more thoroughly (?) digested.

Thursday, June 13.—Last night the sky was pretty clear, and the air rather cold, but nearly calm; a few cir.-str. hung about the north-east horizon during the first part of the night. Mr. Burke and King out for nardoo. Self weaker than ever, scarcely able to go to the water-hole for water. Towards afternoon cir.-cum. and cir.-str. began to appear, moving northward; scarcely any wind all day.

Friday, June 14.—Night alternately clear and cloudy, cir.-cum. and cum.-st. moving northwards; no wind, beautifully mild for the time of year; in the morning some heavy clouds on the horizon. King out for nardoo; brought in a good supply. Mr. Burke and I at home, pounding and cleaning seed. I feel weaker than ever, and both Mr. Burke and King are beginning to feel very unsteady in the legs.

Saturday, June 15.—Night clear, calm, and cold; morning
very fine, with a light breath of air from north-east. King out for nardoo; brought in a fine supply. Mr. Burke and I pounding and cleaning. He finds himself getting very weak, and I am not a bit stronger. I have determined on beginning to chew tobacco and eat less nardoo, in hopes that it may induce some change in the system. I have never yet recovered from the effects of the constipation, and the passage of the stools is always exceedingly painful.

**Sunday, June 16.**—Wind shifted to north, clouds moving from west to east; thunder audible two or three times to the southward; sky becoming densely overcast, with an occasional shower about nine A.M. We finished up the remains of the Rajah for dinner yesterday. King was fortunate enough to shoot a crow this morning. The rain kept all hands in pounding and cleaning seed during the morning. The weather cleared up towards the middle of the day, and a brisk breeze sprang up in the south, lasting till near sunset, but rather irregular in its force. Distant thunder was audible to westward and southward frequently during the afternoon.

**Monday, June 17.**—Night very boisterous and stormy. Northerly wind blowing in squalls, and heavy showers of rain with thunder in the north and west. Heavy clouds moving rapidly from north to south; gradually clearing up during the morning, the wind continuing squally during the day from west and north-west. King out in the afternoon for nardoo.

**Tuesday, June 18.**—Exceedingly cold night. Sky clear, slight breeze, very chilly and changeable; very heavy dew. After sunrise, cir.-st. clouds began to pass over from west to east, gradually becoming more dense, and assuming the form of cum.-st. The sky cleared, and it became warmer towards noon.

**Wednesday, June 19.**—Night calm; sky during first part overcast with cir.-cum. clouds, most of which cleared away towards morning, leaving the air much colder, but the sky remained more or less hazy all night, and it was not nearly as cold as last night. About eight o'clock a strong southerly wind sprang up, which enabled King to blow the dust out of our nardoo-seeds, but made me too weak to render him any assistance.

**Thursday, June 20.**—Night and morning very cold, sky clear. I am completely reduced by the effects of the cold and starvation. King gone out for nardoo. Mr. Burke at home pounding seed; he finds himself getting very weak in the legs. King holds out by far the best; the food seems to agree with him pretty well. Finding the sun come out pretty warm towards noon, I took a sponging all over, but it seemed to do little good beyond the cleaning effects, for my weakness is so great that I could not do it with proper expedition. I cannot understand this nardoo at all;
it certainly will not agree with me in any form. We are now reduced to it alone, and we manage to get from four to five pounds per day between us. The stools it causes are enormous, and seem greatly to exceed the quantity of bread consumed: it is very slightly altered in appearance from what it was when eaten.

Friday, June 21.—Last night was cold and clear, winding up with a strong wind from north-east in the morning. I feel much weaker than ever, and can scarcely crawl out of the mia-mia. Unless relief comes in some form or other, I cannot possibly last more than a fortnight. It is a great consolation, at least, in this position of ours, to know that we have done all we could, and that our deaths will rather be the result of the mismanagement of others than of any rash acts of our own. Had we come to grief elsewhere, we could only have blamed ourselves: but here we are, returned to Cooper's Creek, where we had every reason to look for provisions and clothing; and yet we have to die of starvation, in spite of the explicit instructions given by Mr. Burke, that the depot party should await our return, and the strong recommendation to the Committee that we should be followed up by a party from Menindee. About noon a change of wind took place, and it blew almost as hard from the west as it did previously from the north-east. A few cir.-cum. continued to pass over toward east.

Saturday, June 22.—Night cloudy and warm. Every appearance of rain. Thunder once or twice during the night. Clouds moving in an easterly direction. Lower atmosphere perfectly calm. There were a few drops of rain during the night; and in the morning, about 9 A.M., there was every prospect of more rain until towards noon, when the sky cleared up for a time. Mr. Burke and King out for nardoo. The former returned much fatigued. I am so weak today as to be unable to get on my feet.

Sunday, June 23.—All hands at home. I am so weak as to be incapable of crawling out of the mia-mia. King holds out well, but Mr. Burke finds himself weaker every day.

Monday, June 24.—A fearful night. At about an hour before sunset a southerly gale sprang up and continued throughout the greater portion of the night; the cold was intense, and it seemed as if one would be shrivelled up. Towards morning it fortunately lulled a little, but a strong cold breeze continued till near sunset, after which it became perfectly calm. King went out for nardoo, in spite of the wind, and came in with a good load, but he himself terribly cut up. He says that he can no longer keep up the work, and as he and Mr. Burke are both getting rapidly weaker, we have but a slight chance of anything but starvation, unless we can get hold of some blacks.
**Tuesday, June 23 [sic]**.—Night calm, clear, and intensely cold, especially towards morning. Near daybreak King reported seeing a moon in the east, with a haze of light stretching up from it; he declared it to be quite as large as the moon, and not dim at the edges. I am so weak that any attempt to get a sight of it was out of the question; but I think it must have been Venus in the zodiacal light that he saw, with a corona around her. Mr. Burke and King remain at home cleaning and pounding seed. They are both getting weaker every day. The cold plays the deuce with us, from the small amount of clothing we have. My wardrobe consists of a wide-awake, a merino shirt, a regatta-shirt without sleeves, the remains of a pair of flannel trousers, two pairs of socks in rags, and a waistcoat of which I have managed to keep the pockets together. The others are no better off. Besides these, we have between us, for bedding, two small camel-pads, some horsehair, two or three little bits of rag, and pieces of oil-cloth saved from the fire. The day turned out nice and warm.

**Wednesday, June 24 [sic].**—Calm night; sky overcast with hazy cum.-strat. clouds. An easterly breeze sprang up towards morning, making the air much colder. After sunrise there were indications of a clearing up of the sky, but it soon clouded in again, the upper current continuing to move in an easterly direction, whilst a breeze from the east and north-east blew pretty regularly throughout the day. Mr. Burke and King are preparing to go up the creek in search of the blacks. They will leave me some nardoo, wood and water, with which I must do the best I can until they return. I think this is almost our only chance. I feel myself, if anything, rather better, but I cannot say stronger. The nardoo is beginning to agree better with me; but without some change I see little chance for any of us. They have both shown great hesitation and reluctance with regard to leaving me, and have repeatedly desired my candid opinion in the matter. I could only repeat, however, that I considered it our only chance, for I could not last long on the nardoo, even if a supply could be kept up.

**Thursday, June 25 [sic].**—Cloudy, calm, and comparatively warm night, clouds almost stationary. In the morning a gentle breeze from east. Sky partially cleared up during the day, making it pleasantly warm and bright; it remained clear during the afternoon and evening, offering every prospect of a clear cold night.

**Friday, June 26 [sic].**—Clear cold night, slight breeze from the east, day beautifully warm and pleasant; Mr. Burke suffers greatly from the cold, and is getting extremely weak; he and King start to-morrow up the creek to look for the blacks: it is the only chance we have of being saved from starvation. I am weaker
than ever [sic], although I have a good appetite and relish the nardoo much, but it seems to give us no nutriment, and the birds here are so shy as not to be got at. Even if we got a good supply of fish, I doubt whether we could do much work on them and the nardoo alone. Nothing now but the greatest good luck can save any of us; and as for myself, I may live four or five days if the weather continues warm. My pulse is at forty-eight, and very weak, and my legs and arms are nearly skin and bone. I can only look out, like Mr. Micawber, "for something to turn up;" but starvation on nardoo is by no means very unpleasant, but for the weakness one feels, and the utter inability to move oneself, for, as far as appetite is concerned, it gives me the greatest satisfaction. Certainly, fat and sugar would be more to one's taste: in fact, those seem to me to be the great stand by for one in this extra-ordinary Continent; not that I mean to depreciate the farinaceous food, but the want of sugar and fat in all substances obtainable here is so great that they become almost valueless to us as articles of food, without the addition of something else.

(Signed) W. J. WILLS.

[In the last four days it will be observed that the dates are wrongly stated. Doubtless the melancholy situation of the party had in some degree affected the writer. The journal was kept in a note-book which was completely filled up, the signature being attached at the bottom of the last page. The journal closes on the 27th June; and about four days afterwards, King having left Burke dead on the route, returned to the hut and found that Wills also had expired.]

Mr. Wills's Astronomical Observations on his Return from Carpentaria to Cooper's Creek.

These observations consist of a series of sextant measures, for latitude, chronometer errors, and lunar distances, with two observations of the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites. The latitude observations I think were all approximately computed by himself, for the positions of the camps as laid down on his chart correspond very closely in that respect with those that have since been computed carefully from his observations. But, as regards the longitude, his chart positions I believe to be "by account," or "dead reckoning."

As the question of the longitude at which the Expedition reached the northern part of the continent is a matter of considerable interest and importance, the few observations available for the determination have been very rigorously computed, especially as, although they appear to have been made with every care possible, their results differ considerably from the plotted track at the northern portion of the journey, and appear somewhat anomalous.

It is especially fortunate that on the dates on which Mr. Wills made his lunar observations, the moon's places were obtained both at the Greenwich and the Williamstown observatories (having received observations made at Greenwich by last mail), enabling me to correct the observations for errors of the "Nautical Almanac" which at two of the camps would have made his longitude from 20 to 30 miles east of where they really were. Subjoined are the positions of the camps at which longitude observations were made, deduced
from the observations. At all the other return camps, observations for latitude only were obtained, and their positions in that particular are laid down with sufficient accuracy on Mr. Wills's chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Northernmost camp</th>
<th>Lat.</th>
<th>Long.</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17 53 38 S.</td>
<td>No observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Return, Feb. 15</td>
<td>18 11 38 S.</td>
<td>140 59 30 E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Return, Feb. 17</td>
<td>18 16 30 S.</td>
<td>141 28 0 E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Return, Feb. 18</td>
<td>18 23 16 S.</td>
<td>141 15 12 E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>Return, Feb. 26</td>
<td>19 13 47 S.</td>
<td>140 55 15 E.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ROBERT L. J. ELLERY, Government Astronomer, &c.

No observations made on the journey from Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria have come to hand.

Memorandum for the information of His Excellency Sir H. Barkly.

It will be seen that Mr. Wills did not reduce his observations for Longitude, or he would not have plotted his route on the Exploration Chart, forwarded herewith, in the way he has done, at Camp 3 (R.) Return. This Camp, by the reduction of his observations at the Williamstown Observatory, would be very much to the eastward of his route, as plotted by himself, 24 miles and 12 seconds. But your Excellency will be pleased to learn that the differences between his own Map and the Astronomical Observations, as reduced at the Williamstown Observatory, are reduced to 3½ miles at the Northern extremity of the route at the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and leave no reasonable doubt as to its having been Flinders River which the Exploration reached.

C. W. V. LIGON, Surveyor-General.

Instructions to Leader.

Exploration Committee, Royal Society of Victoria, Melbourne, 18th August, 1860.

Sir,—I am directed by the Committee to convey to you the instructions and views which have been adopted in connection with the duties which devolve upon you as Leader of the party now organized to explore the interior of Australia.

The Committee having decided upon Cooper's Creek, of Sturt's, as the basis of your operations, request that you will proceed thither, form a depot of provisions and stores, and make arrangements for keeping open a communication in your rear to the Darling, if in your opinion advisable; and thence to Melbourne, so that you may be enabled to keep the Committee informed of your movements, and receive in return the assistance in stores and advice of which you may stand in need. Should you find that a better communication can be made by way of the South Australian Police Station, near Mount Serle, you will avail yourself of that means of writing to the Committee.

In your route to Cooper's Creek, you will avail yourself of any opportunity that may present itself for examining and reporting on the character of the country east and west of the Darling.

You will make arrangements for carrying the stores to a point opposite Mount McPherson, which seems to the Committee to be the best point of departure from this river for Cooper's Creek; and while the main body of the party is proceeding to that point you may have further opportunities of examining the country on either side of your route.
In your further progress from Mount McPherson towards Cooper’s Creek, the Committee also desires that you should make further détours to the right and left with the same object.

The object of the Committee in directing you to Cooper’s Creek, is, that you should explore the country intervening between it and Leichhardt’s track, south of the Gulf of Carpentaria, avoiding, as far as practicable, Sturt’s route on the west, and Gregory’s down the Victoria on the east.

To this object the Committee wishes you to devote your energies in the first instance; but should you determine the impracticability of this route, you are desired to turn westward into the country recently discovered by Stuart, and connect his farthest point northward with Gregory’s farthest Southern Exploration in 1856 (Mount Wilson).

In proceeding from Cooper’s Creek to Stuart’s Country, you may find the Salt Marshes an obstacle to the progress of the camels; if so, it is supposed you will be able to avoid these marshes by turning to the northward as far as Eyre’s Creek, where there is permanent water, and going then westward to Stuart’s farthest.

Should you, however, fail in connecting the two points of Stuart’s and Gregory’s farthest, or should you ascertain that this space has been already traversed, you are requested if possible to connect your explorations with those of the younger Gregory, in the vicinity of Mount Gould, and thence you might proceed to Sharks’ Bay, or down the river Murchison to the settlements in Western Australia.

This country would afford the means of recruiting the strength of your party, and you might, after a delay of five or six months, be enabled, with the knowledge of the country you shall have previously acquired, to return by a more direct route through South Australia to Melbourne.

If you should, however, have been successful in connecting Stuart’s with Gregory’s farthest point in 1856 (Mount Wilson), and your party should be equal to the task, you would probably find it possible from thence to reach the country discovered by the younger Gregory.

The Committee is fully aware of the difficulty of the country you are called on to traverse, and in giving you these instructions has placed these routes before you more as an indication of what it has been deemed desirable to have accomplished than as indicating any exact course for you to pursue.

The Committee considers you will find a better and a safer guide in the natural features of the country through which you will have to pass. For all useful and practical purposes it will better be for you and the object of future settlement that you should follow the watercourses and the country yielding herbage, than pursue any route which the Committee might be able to sketch out from an imperfect map of Australia.

The Committee intrust you with the largest discretion as regards the forming of depôts, and your movements generally, but request that you will mark your routes as permanently as possible, by leaving records, sowing seeds, building cairns, and marking trees at as many points as possible, consistently with your various other duties.

With reference to financial subjects; you will be furnished with a letter of authority to give orders on the Treasurer for the payment of any stores or their transport; cattle, sheep, or horses you may require; and you will not fail to furnish the Treasurer from time to time with detailed accounts of the articles for which you have given such orders in payment.

Each person of the party will be allowed to give authority for half of his salary being paid into any bank, or to any person he may appoint to receive the same; provided a certificate is forwarded from you to the effect that he has efficiently discharged his duty.

The Committee request that you will make arrangements for an exact
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria. 505

account being taken of the stores and their expenditure by the person you place in charge of them.

The Committee also requests that you would address all your communications on subjects connected with the exploration to the Honorary Secretary; and that all persons acting with you should forward their communications on the same subject through you.

You will cause full reports to be furnished by your officers on any subject of interest, and forward them to Melbourne as often as may be practicable without retarding the progress of the expedition.

The Committee has caused the enclosed set of instructions to be drawn up having relation to each department of science, and you are requested to hand each of the gentlemen a copy of the part more particularly relating to his department.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed)     John Macadam, M.D.,

Robert O'Hara Burke, Esq., Honorary Secretary, E.C., R.S.V.
Leader, Victorian Exploring Expedition.

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Mr. Burke's Despatch from Torowotto.
(Received 3rd December, 1860.)

Torowotto, October 29th, 1860.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that I left Menindie on the 19th instant, with the party as per margin and Mr. Wright, who had kindly volunteered to show me a practicable route towards Cooper's Creek, for a distance of a hundred miles from the Darling; and he has more than fulfilled his promise, for we have now travelled for upwards of two hundred miles, generally through a fine sheep-grazing country, and we have not had any difficulty about water, as we found creeks or water-holes, many of them having every appearance of being permanent water, at distances never exceeding twenty miles. Mr. Wills's report, herewith forwarded, gives all the necessary details. Although travelling at the rate of twenty miles a day, the horses and camels have all improved in condition, and the country improves as we go on. Yesterday, from Wannaminta to Paldromatta Creek, we travelled over a splendid grazing country, and to-day we are encamped on a creek or swamp, the banks of which are very well grassed and good feed all the way from our last camp (44), except for two miles, and here the ground was barren and swampy. Of course it is impossible for me to say what effect an unusually dry summer would produce throughout this country, or whether we are now travelling in an unusually favourable season or not. I describe things as I find them.

Mr. Wright returns from here to Menindie. I informed him that I should consider him third officer of the expedition, subject to the approval of the Committee, from the day of our departure from Menindie, and I hope that they will confirm the appointment. In the mean time I have instructed him to follow me up with the remainder of the camels to Cooper's Creek, to take steps to procure a supply of jerked meat, and I have written to the doctor to inform him that I have accepted his resignation, as, although I was anxious to await the decision of the Committee, the circumstances will not admit of delay, and he has positively refused to leave the settled districts. I am willing to admit that he did his best, until his fears for the safety of the party overcame him; but those fears, I think, clearly show how unfit he is for his post. If Mr. Wright is allowed to follow out the instructions I have given him, I am confident that the result will be satisfactory; and if the Committee
think proper to make inquiries with regard to him, they will find that he is
well qualified for his post, and that he bears the very highest character. I
shall proceed on from here to Cooper's Creek: I may or may not be able to
send back from there until we are followed up. Perhaps it would not be
prudent to divide the party: the natives here have told Mr. Wright that we
shall meet with opposition on our way there. Perhaps I might find it
advisable to leave a depot at Cooper's Creek, and to go on with a small party
to examine the country beyond it: under any circumstances it is desirable
that we should be soon followed up. I consider myself very fortunate in
having Mr. Wills as my second in command; he is a capital officer, zealous
and untiring in the performance of his duties, and I trust that he will remain
my second as long as I am in charge of the expedition. The men all conduct
themselves admirably, and they are all most anxious to go on; but the
Committee may rely upon it that I shall go on steadily and carefully, and
that I shall endeavour not to lose a chance or to run any unnecessary risk.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
R. O'HARA BURKE, Leader.

P. S.—The two blacks and four horses go back with Mr. Wright.

Dr. MACADAM, Secretary.

Mr. Burke's Despatch from Cooper's Creek.
(Received 30th June, 1861.)

Cooper's Creek, 13th December, 1860.

SIR,—I have the honour to report that the expedition under my command
left Torowotto on the 31st of October, and arrived at Cooper's Creek on the
11th November, men, horses, and camels well. The road from Torowotto to
Wright's Creek is good, but from Wright's Creek to the point where we
struck Cooper's Creek it is in some places very stony, although not by any
means impracticable. From the 11th of November we travelled slowly down
the creek until the 20th of November, in order to recruit the strength of the
animals. On the 20th we arrived at what I considered to be an eligible spot
for the depot, and we remained there (Camp 63) until the 5th instant, when
we were driven out by the rats, and obliged to remove lower down, to the
place from whence I now write (Camp 65), and where I have permanently
established the depot.

The feed upon this creek is good, and the horses and camels have greatly
improved in condition; but the flies, mosquitoes, and rats which abound here
render it a very disagreeable summer residence.

From Camp 63 we made frequent excursions in order to endeavour (in
accordance with instructions) to find a practicable route northward, between
Gregory's and Sturt's track, but without success. Mr. Wills, upon one occasion,
travelled ninety miles to the north without finding water, when his camels
escaped, and he and the man who accompanied him were obliged to return on
foot, which they accomplished in forty-eight hours. Fortunately upon their
return they found a pool of water. The three camels have not yet been
recovered.

I am satisfied that a practicable route cannot be established in that
direction, except during the rainy season, or by sinking wells, as the natives
have evidently lately abandoned that part of the country for want of water,
which is shown by their having sunk for water in all directions in the beds of
the creeks.

I also think that it would be very desirable to establish the route to
Cooper's Creek, and from Cooper's Creek to the north farther to the westward,
as the eastern, or upper part of the creek, up to Camp 63, runs through earthy plains, which even now, in fine weather, are very difficult to travel over; but in winter, or during wet weather, they must be quite impassable for horses and cattle.

I have therefore left instructions for the officer in charge of the party, which I expect will shortly arrive here, to endeavour during my absence to find a better and shorter route between the depot (Camp 65) and Wright's Creek, or between the depot and the Darling. I proceed on to-morrow with the party as per margin to Eyre's Creek, and from thence I shall endeavour to explore the country to the north of it, in the direction of Carpentaria; and it is my intention to return here within the next three months at latest.

I shall leave the party which remain here under the charge of Mr. Brahe, in whom I have every confidence. The feed is very good; there is no danger to be apprehended from the natives, if they are properly managed; and there is, therefore, nothing to prevent the party remaining here until our return, or until their provisions run short.

I did not intend to start so soon, but we have had some severe thunder storms lately, with every appearance of a heavy fall of rain to the north, and as I have given the other route a fair trial, I do not wish to lose so favourable an opportunity.

We are all in good health, and the conduct of the men has been admirable. Mr. Wills co-operates cordially with me. He is a most zealous and efficient officer. I have promoted Mr. Brahe to the rank of officer—the position he is now placed in rendered it absolutely necessary that I should do so. He is well qualified for the post, and I hope the Committee will confirm the appointment.

I have given instructions to Mr. Brahe to forward this letter by the first opportunity.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. O'Hara Burke, Leader.

Mr. Wright's Diary.

Saturday, 26th January. Panamoroo, Darling River, New South Wales.—Packing stores until 11 a.m., when the camels were sent on under charge of Dr. Beckler, with instructions to camp on the west side of Panamoroo Lake. Owing to the unruly dispositions of the horses recently purchased, it was one o'clock before Smith, accompanied by the native boy Dick (who had been persuaded to venture again in the interior), started with four of the horses, followed at 2 p.m. by Mr. Hodgkinson and Stone with five, and 3 p.m. by Mr. Becker and myself with the remaining four horses. The afternoon was occupied in packing and unpacking, nearly every horse throwing off his load, and the party becoming separated by the trouble thus caused. Smith was unable to find Dr. Beckler's halting-place, and camped about a mile and a-half to the east of it. Two horses broke loose, and went away with their packs into the thick polygonum of the lake, where they remained till next day. Distance, five miles; weather very hot, with occasional light breezes. Country occupied by Mr. McGregor.

Sunday, 27th. Panamoroo Lake.—Started at dawn to look for the two missing horses. Took Dick with me, and found one some eight miles away, at a place called Tandower Swamp. Returned with it to camp, sending Dick after the other horse, which he recovered in the afternoon, and brought into camp. In accordance with my instructions Dr. Beckler had moved the camp two miles farther on the western border of the swamp. During the day Smith came up and reported his horses all safe. Resolved upon issuing the
following weekly scale of rations per man:—Flour, 7 lbs.; meat, 7 lbs., salt or dried; sugar, ½ lb.; tea, 3 oz.; with preserved vegetables, rice, &c., at discretion. Thermometer at 2 P.M., 104 degrees.

*Monday, 28th. Pamamaroo Lake.—In consequence of the intense heat and the certainty of a small allowance of water for three or four days, I decided upon travelling at night, and instructed the party to prepare for a move a little before sundown. After breakfast Dick, the native, who had shown on several occasions a disposition to slip away, borrowed a clean shirt and then bolted. His unwillingness to accompany the party arose from his fear of the natives, and was to be regretted, as his absence deprived us of our only interpreter. At 10 A.M. the thermometer stood at 104 degrees in the shade, and at 2 P.M. had risen to 112 degrees. At a quarter to 6 o’clock commenced packing, and started at 9 P.M., with the rise of the full moon. The horses went first and were followed by the camels, both keeping Mr. Burke’s track, which was well marked from the recent trip of Dr. Beckler to Duroodo. Continued travelling all night, the men walking and greatly fatigued.*

*Tuesday, 29th. Coorkerega, or Kokriega.—At 7 A.M. the horses arrived at the base of a rocky range, 25 miles north-west of the Darling, and camped in a glen close to the main track. A large cave, adorned with native drawings, and covered with the marks of various visitors, furnished an acceptable shelter from the scorching heat; and at 9 A.M. the whole party were recruited by the arrival of Dr. Beckler with the camels. Water being very scarce, owing to the evaporation from our leathern water-bags, Hodgkinson and Smith set to work cleaning out a well about 100 yards from the mouth of the cave. In a short time water commenced to percolate through the sand, and ultimately several buckets of a rather nauseous though desirable fluid were obtained. I then had another well sunk higher up the glen, and fortunately succeeded in procuring a bucket of water for nine of our horses, together with a sufficient supply for personal use. About 6 P.M. a cool breeze sprang up, but the horses suffered greatly from want of water, huddling round the well, and refusing to feed until near sunset, when they scrambled up the rocks and travelled along the crest of the range. Though there is no permanent water at Coorkerega, and in fact none nearer than the Darling, except at rare intervals, the worn-out cavities of the rocks furnish shelter to numerous marsupial animals, more particularly to a species of rock wallaby, termed wanguroo by the natives, and to the best of my belief not found southward of the Darling. I should, however, be infringing on the province of the naturalist were I to furnish a detailed description of this interesting animal; but I may state that I called Mr. Beckler’s attention to several which were shot by Mr. Hodgkinson during the progress of his party.*

*Wednesday, 30th.—On searching for the horses at dawn, it was found they had strayed considerably. Stone and Hodgkinson started in quest of them. Dr. Beckler, Belooch, and the cook packed the camels, and had just completed their task when Hodgkinson returned with one horse, and stated that he had followed the tracks of four until he caught one; the others, which were not in sight, heading straight for the Darling. Giving instructions to Dr. Beckler to move on with the camels to Bilpa, the next stage, I saddled the horse thus opportunely brought in and started after the others. It was dark ere they were recovered; but I decided upon moving, and started as soon as possible, camping within three miles of Bilpa, at which spot two water-bags had been deposited previous to our leaving the Darling. Dr. Beckler camped at Bilpa, and reported to me that a thunderstorm, accompanied by rain, had broken to the north of his course at 1 P.M., and a few drops had fallen at Bilpa. Distance from Coorkerega to Bilpa, twelve miles.*

*Thursday, 31st. Bilpa.—Started at dawn, and reached Bilpa with the horses at 6 A.M. Found the camels packed and just about to start. Kept
Hodgkinson to assist in watering the horses; and told Dr. Beckler to move on to Batoja, eighteen miles in front. The water remaining in the two pair of water-bags sent here from the Darling filled about fifteen buckets of seven quarts each, but was nauseous to the taste, being tainted by the smell from the camel tarpaulins with which it was covered. We were only too glad, however, to drink it, and to have the opportunity of giving each horse about two gallons. As there were two other pairs of bags at Batoja, I decided upon losing no time in going there, and immediately the horses were watered started for that spot, keeping Mr. Burke's track, and travelling over eighteen miles of uninteresting and arid sandhills. At 5 P.M. I rejoined Dr. Beckler, and heard with regret that two of the four bags cached near the camp were quite empty on his arrival, and that the other two only contained five buckets. The horses were suffering much from the want of water, being accustomed to a well-watered country, and it was evident that unless speedily relieved they would perish at the outset of the journey. Under these circumstances I resolved upon sending to Motanie or Mutwongee Ranges for water, Mr. Burke's track leading to them, and the distance to the first water not exceeding twenty miles. Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch accordingly started in the morning with the ten camels and five pairs of water-bags. At 1 A.M. they reached the Motanie Range, tied up the camels, and worked all night at filling the bags from a small rocky basin situated in a gloomy ravine. During their absence Mr. Becker discovered a plant of Mr. Haverfield's containing a jar of water, but I did not make use of it, as the quantity was too small to be of much service, and I thought it likely Mr. Haverfield might suffer inconvenience and disappointment, as he was still out in the back country.

Friday, 1st February.—Upon inspecting the horses this morning, I found them so knocked up from thirst that a few hours' further suffering would inevitably cause the loss of several. I therefore thought it advisable to push on for the Motanie Ranges, leaving the packs, saddles, &c., behind. I was the more resolved to pursue this course, as Hodgkinson and Belooch were unarmed, and I thought it possible they might have fallen in with natives at the water, and been prevented from obtaining a supply. Shortly after dawn I started with Stone driving the horses. To my great satisfaction I met Hodgkinson and Belooch with a supply of water, ten miles from Batoja. I immediately gave the horses a bucket of water each, which enabled them to go on to Motanie, where we arrived in the course of the afternoon, and camped in a valley covered with kangaroo-grass, leading to a rocky basin containing an abundance of beautifully clear water.

Saturday, 2nd, to Thursday, 7th. Motanie Range.—During the period intervening between Saturday morning and Thursday, the 7th, the party was encamped in the Motanie Range, Dr. Beckler bringing up the camels with their loads, and Smith and Hodgkinson again returning to Batoja with six of the camels for the purpose of fetching up the horse packs, saddles, and bridles. As this country has doubtless been described to you by Mr. Burke as far as Torowotto (or Duroodo) Swamp, I do not think it necessary to state more than that it abounds in fine pasturage, and consists of a valley some twenty miles in length, flanked on its eastern and western sides by ranges of lofty hills, formed of rock, and intersected by picturesque gorges, in many cases forming at their heads fine pools of clear water. Though we saw the country under a very different aspect from that it presented at the period of Mr. Burke's transit, it appeared even at the time we passed through it still a fine and verdant tract. On Wednesday I moved the camp to another gorge about eight miles north. On Thursday morning we left Motanie Range, and shortly before sundown reached Nantherunge Creek, eighteen miles distant from our last camp in the ranges.

Friday, 8th. Nantherunge Creek.—The morning broke cloudy, with strong
gusts of wind from the south-west. During the night it was piercing cold, and most of us were glad to augment our wearing apparel. Nantherunge is a fine creek, with water-holes two-thirds of a mile in length, bordered with heavy gum-trees, but at this time the water in them was rather shallow. Near the camp there were some pine-bearing sandhills, and somewhat peculiar dome-shaped eminences. The camels, which had hitherto been tied up at night, I now turned out in hobbles, and found they gave little more trouble, if any, than the horses. This creek seemed to be a great resort for feathered game. Emu tracks were very numerous, and droves of water-hen ran along the margin. Early in the morning flocks of Sturt’s pigeons came down from the sandhills to drink, and flights of parrots enlivened the vicinity of the camp by their cries. We saw no natives here, but there were a number of mimias close by us, and the fences which they form, in order to catch water-hen, met the gaza in every bend of the creek. At 6 a.m. we commenced packing, and at 11 a.m. started for the next creek, Wannaminta. Our course bore a little to the west of north, and the track was flanked on the right by a bold range called by the natives Tooriloora, and on the left by undulating sandhills, beyond which were the ranges east of Flood’s Creek, called Wa-Ya-Boora. The sandhills were covered with pine and withered acacia, commonly known as mulgar. Grasses of various descriptions were abundant, and a small tree, with a light-green foliage and bushy form, lent quite a charm to the otherwise somewhat sombre character of the vegetation. The journey throughout the day was very heavy for the camel men, who, in consequence of the heavy loads on their beasts, were obliged to walk. About three miles from Wannaminta two small hills of a singular shape rear themselves from the flat country by which they are surrounded, and form a natural landmark, showing the termination of the plateau to the south. On reaching a spot midway between them, a fine view, peculiarly Australian, presents itself. To the north a line of white gum-trees mark the course of Wannaminta Creek; while at some distance (nine or ten miles) to the n.e. a bold but short and very remarkable range, called Kooringbirri by the blacks, Wannaminta Range by Mr. Wills, and I understand Mount Jamieson by Mr. Haverfield, forms a striking feature in the scene. During the day two turkeys were seen, but were too wild to be approached within gunshot. We reached the creek at sundown, and estimated the distance from Nantherunge at twenty miles. The weather throughout the day was cold and cloudy, and at about 2 p.m. a slight shower fell. We reached Teltawinge Creek at 4 p.m. I had to send back to our last camp for a swag of stores which was found to have been left behind. Mr. Hodgkinson shot six water-hen, a teal, and four of Sturt’s pigeons.

Sunday, 10th.—Moved the camp eight miles to a fine waterhole on the Teltawinge. A number of emu were seen here, and several birds shot. Mr. Hodgkinson here complained of rheumatic pains. During the day the mirage was observable in every direction, and the range to the n.e. presented strange changes of outline as we approached it.

Monday, 11th.—At thirty-five minutes past 8 the camels left Teltawinge, but some delay was occasioned by two of the horses having strayed. Our course lay over clay-plains, on which Mr. Burke’s track was very indistinct, and in some places altogether invisible. Kooringbirri, of which Mr. Becker made a sketch, now bore s.e., and a large, though low, hill faced Teltawinge, on its western bank. The vegetation consisted chiefly of cotton bush and salt flag plants, and the absence of timber, except in the vicinity of the creek, rendered the scene rather uninteresting. The country around our camp of last night bore traces of inundation, and the footprints of the natives who had accompanied either Mr. Burke or Lyons were deep in the clay soil. Shallow watercourses intersected the wide plain extending around us, and every hollow was coated with dry sand, glistening and cracked. A
few of Sturt's pigeons, with occasionally a small bird not unlike a mule canary, were the only animated objects to be seen. The heat was excessive. The camels were unable to stand in one place more than a few minutes, lifting their feet from the hot sand in quick succession. An emu was started, which was feeding near the track; and so bewildered did the bird appear to be, that it kept walking in front and around us for some time, but eventually made off. At half-past 5 we reached Paldrumatta Creek, where we camped for the night, with abundance of shallow water of a creamy hue. The distance from Telawinge to Paldrumatta is about twenty-two miles.

Tuesday, 12th.—We left Paldrumatta Creek at 9 A.M., running up its southern bank for about half a mile to Mr. Burke's crossing-place, and then ascending the northern bank, bounded by sandhills presenting the usual features. About a mile from Paldrumatta the track passes to the east of a salt lake, which presented a remarkable view, from the contrast of its snowy white incrustations with the scenery around. Mount Kooringbirri and other ranges were nearly out of sight. About 5 p.m. the horses reached Torowotto (or Duroodo) Swamp, and shortly afterwards were joined by the camel party, camping on the site of Mr. Burke's forty-fifth camp, though no numerals are marked on the tree bearing his initials.

Wednesday, 13th.—Torowotto Swamp, where I resolved on spelling for a couple of days, is one of a numerous series of hollows, receiving the drainage of the surrounding country, and presents a surface of thick green foliage, intersected by a thousand little watercourses, and traversed by a main channel running nearly east and west. Stunted box-trees overshadow the swamp, which is matted with a thick undergrowth of polygonum and plants particularly agreeable to the camels. Besides this there is abundance of maralice, a plant creeping close to the ground, with leaves not unlike clover, and bearing a seed largely used by the natives as food. On this seed Lyons and McPherson subsisted for some time, and the tree under which they camped and pounded their bread was close by us. Shortly after our arrival at Torowotto a tribe of natives came towards us. They were about seventeen, perfectly unarmed. A tassel tied round the loins of the men, and a few emu feathers depending from the chin as ornaments, composed their stock of clothing. They appeared to be very healthy and in good condition. I gave them two tomahawks and some broken biscuit, endeavouring to make them comprehend that I wished two of them to accompany the party. I selected two, and gave them each a shirt. They were well acquainted with the various creeks, and named several places in advance, but our mutual ignorance of each other's language rendered it impossible to obtain any serviceable information. In the evening they brought their women to the camp, and freely offered them as presents in return for the few things we had given them. Most of the males were circumcised, but the cicatrices in the arms and breasts peculiar to some tribes were not marked in the Torowotto natives. The weather during the day was very hot, while occasionally, without the least intimation of its approach, a whirlwind would sweep round the packs and scatter the lighter articles in every direction. These winds moved in segments of circles, and their directions seemed quite capricious.

Thursday, 14th.—Spelled at Torowotto. The day was employed in mending saddles, cleaning firearms, and looking over the stores. I discovered that the flour planted by Mr. Burke had been dug up, the hoops of the cask lying near our camp. The camel-rug under which Lyons and McPherson lay was still suspended from the tree to which it had been tied, the natives apparently thinking it too heavy to be useful to them. All day our black visitors kept walking about, pilfering any little articles they could, and burying them in the sand with their feet.

Friday, 15th.—Rose at dawn, filled water-bags, packed and started the
horses at 8 A.M. and the camels at 9. Two of the natives accompanied the horses as guides, but proceeded only a short distance with us. On leaving Torowotto the tribe gathered together, and the women made a show of whimpering at our departure. Skirting the n.e. shore of the swamp for half a mile, we then struck over the sandhills on our old course to w. of n., passing over precisely similar country to that bordering the southern shores of the swamp. At eighteen miles' distance from Torowotto the track cut the summit of a lofty sand-ridge, affording a view of the surrounding country. To the north lay a dreary salt-bush plain, diversified by claypans, and flanked on its eastern and western slopes by sandhills of small elevation. As there was no sign of water, and the camel-men were fatigued by a long walk through heavy sand, I camped upon the verge of this plain, and experienced considerable difficulty in preventing the horses from wandering during the night back to Torowotto. No water. Weather close and oppressive.

**Saturday, 16th. Mud-Plain Camp.**—Fortunately we had brought from Torowotto a pair of leather bags filled with water, and all the goat-skin bags. The latter, however, would not retain water at all, and arrived at the camp nearly empty. Neither camels nor horses would feed; the former, though closely hobbled, going straight away, and requiring strict watching to keep them near the camp. At the period of Mr. Burke's transit this country was completely bogged, the tracks of his party being deeply imbedded in the claypans around. At the date of my arrival not a sign of water was discernible, no birds could be seen save hawks, and the ground was burrowed in every direction by rats, which seemed to exist independent of water. As the cattle were suffering from thirst, I sent Stone back with the horses to Torowotto, and Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, and Belooch with the camels. They took all the water-bags with them. Shortly after their departure, I started with Smith to look for water in a northerly direction. Mr. Becker and Purell remained at the camp.

At 7 p.m. a peculiarly brilliant meteor fell towards the n.e.

**Sunday, 17th. Mud-Plain Camp.**—Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, Stone, and Belooch returned to camp with the cattle and a supply of water. I was absent throughout the day, searching the n.w. boundary of the plain and adjacent ranges for water, and ultimately discovered a small puddle about twenty miles north of the camp, and about two miles west of Mr. Burke's track. Weather intensely hot.

**Monday, 18th. Mud-Plain Camp.**—During the night the camels and horses were very troublesome, requiring watching to prevent them straying in search of water. The water-bags were protected as well as possible from evaporation, by tarpaulins. At 3 p.m. I returned to camp with Smith, having travelled at least 140 miles since my departure on the 16th. I found the country in front of the most fearful description. Mr. Burke's track runs to the n.w., over some high ranges covered with sharp stones, and emerges upon the plains upon which we are camped, at a spot where it changes to an apparently limitless expanse of dried mud. The track is utterly effaced, and the whole country the picture of desolation, not a vestige of herbage growing upon the plains. The horses were watched throughout the night, and the camels tied up. A bucket of water was given to each quadruped from our water-bags.

**Tuesday, 19th.**—At 4 A.M. called all the hands. Saddled and started with the horses at 7 A.M., the camels following half an hour later. A fierce glare, even at this early hour, rose from the plains, and the sun beat down overhead with an intense heat. Till 1 o'clock we traversed this weary plain of baked mud, skirting the sandhills upon its western flank, and leaving Mr. Burke's track, which ran more to the eastward. Not a sign of animal life was discernible, save the clouds of flies which tormented us throughout the journey.

At 1 p.m. two prominent headlands reared themselves to the west, and in a
lay between them was sufficient feed to warrant me in camping there, at about
one and a-half miles distant from the water I had discovered. I had left the
horses to go on in advance, and returned to the camels in order to lead them
to the spot, previously cautioning those in charge not to let the horses get to
the water. Unfortunately, however, the horses rushed into the hole in spite
of every opposition, and in a very few minutes rendered it a mass of mud.
The camels were tied up during the night to some bushes, on which they
greedily fed, but the horses remained near the water. At nightfall a thunder-
storm gathered in the western horizon, breaking upon us and passing, un-
accompanied by rain, to the southward. For hours afterwards we were buoyed
up by the hopes of a rainfall, but, beyond a few drops, none fell near our camp,
though it seemed to be raining heavily a short distance to the southward.

Wednesday, 20th. Rat Point.—This morning slight showers fell, from
which we managed to collect three or four quarts of water. At thirty
minutes past one I started with Smith in search of water, taking about eight
quarts from the bags as a supply, and two camels. Previous to leaving, I
inspected the store of water at the camp, and found it to amount to forty-two
quarts for eight camels, thirteen horses, and six men. The nearest supply
known to us was at Torowotto, thirty-eight miles distant. I placed the water
in Mr. Hodgkinson’s charge, with instructions to issue two quarts daily to each
man, and three pints to each horse, and requested Dr. Beckler to take a pair
of water-bags to the mud-hole and scoop up any small quantity he might be
able to obtain. I also instructed Stone if I was not back by 10 A.M. on
Friday following to return to Torowotto with the horses, and Dr. Beckler,
Mr. Hodgkinson, and Belooch with the camels, for a supply of water. Dr.
Beckler succeeded in obtaining four quarts of a very indifferent fluid from the
hole. Thunder continued throughout the day, but no rain fell. A water-hen
was shot close to the camp in the afternoon.

Thursday, 21st. Rat Point.—The camels remained near the camp all last
night. The first annoyance was experienced from the rats, which abound
throughout this country.

Friday, 22nd. Rat Point.—The rats visited the camp in myriads, not only
gnawing through every pack-bag, but absolutely biting the men when at rest.
The horses suffering greatly from thirst, Stone started with them for Torowotto,
and at a few minutes past ten I returned to camp just as Dr. Beckler, Mr.
Hodgkinson, and Belooch were starting with the camels. During my absence
I travelled upwards of a hundred miles, crossing the country northwards in
every direction, without finding a drop of water. The camels with me suffered
greatly from rapid travelling and thirst, but I thought it best to send them on
at once with the others to Torowotto. Stone and the camel party met with
water from the late rainfall about ten miles from camp, and the horses re-
turned in the evening after drinking as much as they could. Dr. Beckler also
came back with a pair of water-bags containing a small supply, but Mr.
Hodgkinson and Belooch went on, as no more water could be found near the
spot.

Saturday, 23rd.—Remained in camp throughout the day. At 10 P.M.
Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch returned with a supply of water, which they
had procured from the claypans on the plain, sixteen miles distant.

Sunday, 24th. Rat Point.—Mr. Hodgkinson reporting that a good supply
of water might be stored by sinking a hole in the vicinity of the claypans
from which he obtained the late supply, I instructed him to proceed thither
with Dr. Beckler, and sink a hole for that purpose. At the same time I sent
six of the camels and Stone with all the horses to spell there, during my
absence on a further attempt to explore northward. Should the claypans dry
up previous to my return, they were to proceed to Torowotto, leaving Mr.
Becker and Purcell at Rat Point in charge of the stores. At noon I left Rat

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Point with Smith and Belooch, four camels, and seven days’ rations, resolving to penetrate to the first permanent water on the line of route, and if possible to reach Cooper’s Creek, which I conjectured to be within a hundred miles. Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, Stone, and the cattle remained near the claypans; the two former sinking a hole and watching the camels, and the latter attending to the horses. In order to preserve the continuation of events at the camp during my absence, the report of my trip will be given on the date of my return.

Monday, 25th.—Dr. Beckler and Mr. Hodgkinson finished sinking their water-hole this morning, and collected a considerable supply of water from the claypans adjacent. Neither camels nor horses strayed from the vicinity.

Tuesday, 26th. Rat Point.—The water in the claypans being exhausted, Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, and Stone moved with the cattle to Torowotto, reaching that place at 3 P.M. The natives were still at the swamp, and very friendly.

Wednesday, 27th. Rat Point.—Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, and Stone remained at Torowotto with the cattle; Mr. Becker and Purcell at Rat Point.

Thursday, 28th. Rat Point.—Dr. Beckler conveyed a supply of water to Rat Point, and Mr. Hodgkinson and Stone remained with the cattle at Torowotto.

Friday, 1st March. Rat Point.—The party, as before mentioned, were divided between Torowotto and Rat Point. A drizzling rain fell through the night at Torowotto. The natives became rather troublesome, pilfering little articles.

Saturday, 2nd. Rat Point.—Dr. Beckler returned to Torowotto with rations. The party were stationed as before. Mr. Hodgkinson killed a snake some three feet in length, very thick in proportion to its length, of a dirty deep brown colour, with large livid irregularly-marked blotches. The natives represented it as highly poisonous, but did not scruple to devour it with great relish.

Sunday, 3rd. Rat Point.—No change in the disposition of the party.

Monday, 4th. Rat Point.—Still no change.

Tuesday, 5th. Rat Point.—No change. Prepared to return to Rat Point on the following day.

Wednesday, 6th. Rat Point.—Mr. Hodgkinson took a supply of water to Mr. Becker and Purcell, from Torowotto.

Thursday, 7th. Rat Point.—The party stationed at Rat Point and Torowotto, as before.

Friday, 8th. Rat Point.—Mr. Hodgkinson returned to Torowotto with rations, having previously submitted to Mr. Becker a plan for following my track, as they were apprehensive, from my lengthened absence, that some accident had occurred to me. The horses strayed from Torowotto, but were recovered some ten miles distant.

Saturday, 9th. Rat Point.—No change in the disposition of the party.

Sunday, 10th. Rat Point.—Dr. Beckler and Messrs. Hodgkinson and Stone, having filled six pair of water-bags, started for Rat Point with the intention of pushing out in search of me, with four of the camels and two men; but on their arrival at the waterhole, sixteen miles from Rat Point, found Smith and Belooch, whom, on my arrival this morning, I had sent there with the camels, and instructions that Stone should return accompanied by Smith to Torowotto, that Dr. Beckler should at once push on to Rat Point with water, and that he should be followed on the following day by Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch with the camels. The events occurring during my absence northward are as follow:—On February 24th, the day I started, I went about twelve miles nearly due north, searching for water in every likely spot, and camping upon a dry sandy creek. From thence I proceeded twenty
miles farther on the same course, crossing large dry gum-creeks running from all directions, and finally camped on one of them. The third day, while still seeking water, I saw Mr. Burke's track for the first time since leaving Rat Point, and camped that evening upon some sandhills to east of Karriapundi Swamp, whence I could not obtain water, in consequence of the boggy nature of the ground, and the presence of a large body of natives. The next morning I struck for the north-east, over a sandy undulating country, and at 2 P.M. reached a large watercourse coming from the eastward, but containing no water. Upon the fifth morning, at dawn, I noticed a fire from a native camp, about half a mile from my own, and passed the day in searching for water, not once seeing Mr. Burke's track, which I then conjectured must be upon the northwestern side of the swamp. On the sixth morning I found the camels greatly exhausted from fatigue and want of water, they having had but twelve quarts each since leaving Rat Point. I returned, therefore, to where I had seen the water in the swamp, and camped, still unable to get a supply. The following (seventh day) I skirted the swamp, and at noon succeeded in reaching a place where the water was accessible. On tasting it, it was found to be excessively brackish, or rather like lime-water, since when thrown on the heated claypans it caused a hissing sound. The camels drank greedily without any ill effects, but the men and myself suffered from it very considerably. On the eighth morning I returned to the place where I had last seen Mr. Burke's track, and found that he had diverged from his course of N. by W. to N.E. Our rations were this day all finished, with the exception of three pounds of oatmeal and a little tea. I was determined, however, to push on to the next permanent water, in order to be enabled to bring on the party. I gave orders that each man should have three spoonfuls of oatmeal per diem. Camped thirty-four miles from the lime water in Karriapundi Swamp, on a sandhill. On the ninth day I made a water-hole about five miles north-east of my last camp, and saw two bullocks there. Passed on, and twenty-seven miles farther, still crossing undulating sandy country, reached a fine creek (Poria), and camped six miles on its north side. On the tenth morning I made a camp of Mr. Burke's, marked 52, and situated upon a dry arm of Bulloo Creek. Crossed during the day, twenty-five miles from Poria Creek, another fine creek (Koorliatto), apparently dry. Saw no water or natives throughout the day, though signal-fires rose in every direction, at brief intervals. On the eleventh day I reached Bulloo, and after remaining a few minutes returned to Rat Point, arriving there on the fifteenth day. We were fortunate enough to kill a turkey and three pigeons during our return, the former of which enabled us to get along tolerably well, but the pigeons were stolen by the rats in the night.

Monday, 11th. Rat Point.—The horses and camels stayed during the night from the water-hole dug upon the plains to Torowotto, and it was 12 o'clock before the latter reached Rat Point, as they were not overtaken till they had regained the swamp. The horses were left in charge of Stone and Smith at Torowotto, with orders to start thence on Wednesday. The health of the men gave me much anxiety. Smith, Belooch, and myself suffered from diarrhoea. Mr. Becker and Stone manifested scurvy symptoms, and Purcell had swollen legs and numerous sores. Trusting that a change from the inaction of Rat Point would benefit them, I gave orders to start on the following morning.

Tuesday, 12th.—Upon uncovering our stores, which we had buried, in order to preserve them as much as possible from the rats, I was gratified to find that less damage had been caused than I had had reason to expect. I thought proper to despatch Dr. Beckler, Mr. Becker, Mr. Hodgkinson, Purcell, and Belooch, with the camels in advance, so that the water they carried might enable the horses to reach the water-hole I had discovered between Karriapundi and Poria Creek, a distance of 102 miles from Torowotto. After

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travelling twelve miles, the camels had to stop, from the bottom of one of the pack-bags falling out. Mr. Becker and myself remained at Rat Point.

*Wednesday, 13th.*—I had given orders to Dr. Beckler not to tie up the camels at night, in order that they might have every opportunity to feed. Unfortunately the majority of them took advantage of this liberty to stray back to Torowotto, and Dr. Beckler and Belooch had to return there, a distance of fifty-two miles, for their recovery. Mr. Hodgkinson and Purcell remained with the saddles, stores, and water, amounting to twenty buckets. Dr. Beckler, in returning to Torowotto, took three pairs of water-bags with him, and previously to his starting a couple of buckets were given to the camel he rode. Stone and Smith came into Rat Point with the horses, as instructed, and camped there with Mr. Becker and myself. The weather was so fearfully hot that the horses appeared knocked up by their journey from Torowotto here.

*Thursday, 14th.*  *Mud Plains.*—I started early in the morning with the horses, and on reaching the camel camp, at twelve miles’ distance, gave each horse a bucket of water, and took four buckets for use. Leaving instructions for the camels to push on as soon as they should arrive from Torowotto, I hastened onwards with Mr. Becker, Stone, Smith, and the horses, reaching the water-hole north of the Karriapundi Swamp on the 16th inst., after experiencing great difficulty, both men and horses being knocked up; our supply of four buckets of water from the camel-camp having almost all leaked away.

*Friday, 15th.*  *Mud Plains.*—Mr. Hodgkinson and Purcell remained at the camel-camp with the stores. Dr. Beckler and Belooch were engaged in getting the camels back from Torowotto.

*Saturday, 16th.*  *Mud Plains.*—Dr. Beckler and Belooch returned from Torowotto with the camels, and rejoined Mr. Hodgkinson and Purcell at the camp.

*Sunday, 17th.*—The camel camp started after me, and reached a spot seventeen miles in advance of their last camp. Fortunately for them, a shower fell, which filled the claypans near their camp, and enabled the camels to drink to their content. Purcell was reported to me as suffering greatly from pains in his legs, and rode upon one of the camels throughout the day. Two of the camels, Gobin and Raugee, had very bad hump-sores, from the ill-fitting saddles supplied them. The horses reached Poria Creek with the party accompanying me, and one horse died from want of water and fatigue, though every caution was used in supplying the weaker ones with a drink.

*Monday, 18th.*  *Karriapundi Plains.*—The camels, skirting the north-west bank of Karriapundi Swamp, camped about eight miles to the north of it. Gobin, one of the camels, became very footsore, and his load was distributed among the other camels. Coppin, or Janglee, one of the Cremorne camels, was also slightly affected in the same manner; and the whole of the camels were considerably fatigued by the heavy work they had lately performed. Shadow, the smallest of the camels, was by far the best in condition, and carried her heavy load with apparent ease. Another horse died at Poria to-day from the effects of his push across the waterless plain south of it.

*Tuesday, 19th.*  *Mud Plains, at 3 p.m.*—Still among the same uninteresting salt-bush plains. The camels reached the water-hole where the horses had camped on the 16th inst. Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch contrived to preserve sufficient water by digging a hole and filtering the mud through the large marsh-mallow seeds growing near the spot. Smith, whom I sent this morning from Poria Creek with a supply of water, joined the camel party in the afternoon, but found them tolerably well supplied from the rain that had fallen south of Karriapundi.

*Wednesday, 20th.*  *Poria Creek.*—The camel party reached Poria Creek
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this day, and I found Purcell much worse than when I last saw him at Rat Point. Poria is a fine creek, abounding in fish, and when very full throwing its surplus waters towards Karriapundi. Our camp was situated at its south termination, its course being nearly north and south. The banks were fringed with stunted bastard box, and we derived much benefit during our stay there from the waterfowl shot.

Thursday, 21st, to Thursday, 28th. Poria Creek.—During the period included between the above dates I spelled the party at the creek, hoping that the men would in some degree regain their health. I regret to state, however, that I had little reason to congratulate myself upon the results. Mr. Becker and Purcell became much worse, and utterly unable to walk about, and Smith and Stone did not at all improve, though energetically discharging their respective duties. As I had found no water in the crossing at the next creek (Koorliatto), I sent Dr. Beckler, Smith, and Belooch thither with a supply, directing them to conceal it as well as possible from the natives.

Friday, 29th. Poria Creek.—The rats committed great ravages during our stay at this creek, and were far bolder than the majority of domesticated animals in their attacks. Owing to the necessity of examining every bag, it was half-past 12 before the camels started with Dr. Beckler, Mr. Becker, and Purcell, who had to be carried upon camels. Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch, Smith, Stone, and myself, remained at the creek with the horses. The camel party camped at 4 P.M. on the site of Mr. Burke's 51st camp. A heavy fall of rain took place during the night.

Saturday, 30th. Koorliatto Creek.—At 9 A.M. the camels started, the rain still falling, but ceasing in an hour's time. At 3 P.M. they reached Koorliatto Creek, and at 8 P.M. the horses, which travelled from Poria, joined them. Stone, who had received a wetting on the night of the 29th, became much worse, and I had a tent put up for Mr. Becker and Purcell, who were unable to proceed farther. We found the creek running, though dry a few days before. Its course trended from E. to N.W. for seven or eight miles, skirting the south-west base of the Bulloo Range, and then turning sharp to the west direct for Poria Creek, of which I conjecture it to be a main feeder. There was much more timber on this creek than on Poria, and splendid feed for the cattle on the sandhills adjacent.

Sunday, 31st. Koorliatto Creek.—Morning broke piercingly cold, with a cloudy sky and drizzling rain. About 10 A.M. the rain cleared off, but I did not think it prudent to move with so many sick.

Monday, 1st April. Koorliatto Creek.—Spelled, as rain fell at intervals throughout the day. No improvement in the health of the men.

Tuesday, 2nd. Koorliatto Creek.—Though the weather cleared up, I was compelled to remain in camp, Stone being affected with severe rheumatic pains. In the morning a native made his appearance, and gave us the names of the surrounding localities. He wore no covering, save a tassel of native grass round his loins, and pointed out Bulloo as lying much more to the west than our course lay. After taking a minute survey of the camp, he left.

Wednesday, 3rd. Koorliatto Creek.—Seeing plainly that any attempt to move Mr. Becker and Purcell would retard their prospect of ultimate recovery, and finding no cause for apprehension from the natives, I resolved to push forward to Bulloo, which I conjectured from our northern position would be Cooper's Creek. My anxiety to move arose from the fact that I feared Mr. Burke's stores must require replenishment, and that any party left at Cooper's Creek would be anxiously expecting our arrival. On these considerations I gave orders to prepare for a start on the following day.

Thursday, 4th. Bulloo or Wright's Creek.—At 9 A.M. the camels started, under charge of Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch, Gobin's saddle being left behind, as her back was getting very sore, and her lameness incapacitated her from
carrying any load. Considerable difficulty was experienced in crossing the creek, which had been slightly scarped from the steepness of the banks, but eventually the camels with their loads were got over without injury. The track led over the narrow belt of sandhills bordering the north bank of the creek, and then, debouching upon an extensive plain, intersected with water-courses, and crowded with rat-holes, pursued a course some few degrees to the east of north. In places Mr. Burke's track was hardly perceptible, but no difficulty was found in regaining it, as it was flanked on the west side by the Bulloo Range, and on the east side by a line of creek-timber running with prominent headlands towards it at distances varying from six to eight miles. Twelve miles from Koorliatto we passed one of these points where Mr. Burke had pitched his 52nd camp. We found no water there. Eight miles farther we sighted Bulloo, and established the camp at the point where we first struck it. The horses which started after the camels overtook the latter, and reached camp about half an hour before them. We saw no natives throughout the day, save two who accompanied us a few miles from Koorliatto, but signal-fires broke out in all directions. The weather continued fearfully hot.

Friday, 6th, to Wednesday, 17th. Bulloo.—Throughout the period included in the above-mentioned dates Mr. Hodgkinson, Stone, Smith, and Belooc remained with me at Bulloo, spelling the camels and occasionally visiting Koorliatto, to convey supplies to the party there. Dr. Beckler's patients were gradually sinking, and Stone became much worse. As the natives were very numerous, and apparently collecting from the surrounding districts, I cut logs for a rough stockade, which was subsequently erected. Though there was no feed near the camp, at four or five miles' distance grass and salsolaceous plants were abundant, so that the cattle rapidly improved. From the absence of any indication that Mr. Burke had stopped at this creek, I felt convinced that Cooper's Creek lay still farther in advance, and made two advances, north-east and north-west, for the purpose of tracing the course of the track. I found Bulloo watercourse to consist of a large sheet of water, extending some five miles to the north of our camp, with a breadth of 100 to 200 yards and a depth in some parts of sixteen or twenty feet. Fish of a considerable size were caught by the party; and at the northern termination of the water-hole, where the creek branched with insignificant channels, numbers of ingeniously-constructed fishing dams showed that the natives derived a considerable sustenance from its waters. At the northern commencement of the small channels, which apparently connect the larger water basins, but from their intricate courses are difficult to follow, the plains became extremely stony, and the track, turning rapidly to the west, completely obliterated. On the two occasions to which I have referred as advancing northerly I was compelled to turn back from the hostility of the natives, who, upon my camping, collected in large numbers, making fires all round me, and trying to entice Smith, who accompanied me, by means of their women. Bands often visited the camp, signifying the ground to be theirs, and ordering us to move away. All these demonstrations, in the present state of my party, gave me much anxiety, and I felt anxious to obtain additional stores for recruiting the sick and effectually supplying the advance party. I instructed Mr. Hodgkinson, therefore, to start for Menindee on the 18th instant, with Belooc and seven of the camels, to escort Mr. Becker and Purcell to that township, and having engaged two men in their places, to return as quickly as possible with stores. By these means I should do away with the inconvenience of two camps, afford two of the sick what I considered a chance of ultimate recovery, and only, by Dr. Beckler's return to the Bulloo camp, lose one available hand. Moving backwards or forwards with the whole depot was impossible with so many sick, and I thought myself still sufficiently strong to hold an intrenched position against any attack made by the natives.
Thursday, 18th. Bulloo.—This morning I sent Mr. Hodgkinson on his journey to Menindie, directing him to take charge of Mr. Becker and Purcell, and to request Dr. Beckler to rejoin me. I had constructed a cudjowar, or camel-palanquin, for the carriage of the two sick men, and I trusted that the prospect of a return to the settled districts would lend them energy for the journey. The natives visited the camp during the day, and pertinaciously hung round the stores. They were accompanied by a boy, some eight years of age, singularly impudent in his behaviour. Stone rapidly got worse, being seized frequently with severe rheumatic pains. Mr. Hodgkinson, as afterwards reported, reached Koorliatto.

Friday, 19th. Bulloo.—On this day Mr. Hodgkinson returned from Koorliatto, bringing with him a note from Dr. Beckler, in which that officer so strongly protested against the removal of Mr. Becker and Purcell to Menindie as to leave me no alternative but that of countermarching my instructions on that point. I therefore directed Mr. Hodgkinson to return to Koorliatto and bring Mr. Becker and Purcell to Bulloo, together with the whole of the camels, as I resolved not to send to Menindie any of the party until I could form some more definite opinion regarding the prospects of the recovery of the sick. Stone being much worse, I instructed Dr. Beckler to return without any delay, that he might afford his medical assistance. No natives came near the camp throughout the day, but the necessity of watching throughout the night fell very severely on the few in health.

Saturday, 20th. Bulloo.—Mr. Hodgkinson left for Koorliatto, reaching there at 11 A.M., but Dr. Beckler did not start for Bulloo, being unable to leave Mr. Becker and Purcell with safety.

Sunday, 21st. Bulloo.—Throughout last night signal-fires were burning around the camp here, and the natives imitated the howl of the native dog, apparently for the purpose of ascertaining our vigilance. Fifty-one rats were killed by means of a trap which I had made; but this slaughter, though greatly exceeding the subsequent nightly average, did not seem to diminish either their boldness or their numbers. Dr. Beckler arrived at Bulloo at 5 p.m., and Mr. Becker and Purcell were not reported as having suffered from their removal. Two tents were at once pitched for their accommodation. Mr. Hodgkinson remained at Koorliatto, as only two of the camels were found when Dr. Beckler and Belooch started.

Monday, 22nd. Bulloo.—Between 9 and 10 this morning, eight natives came to the camp, armed; and upon being told to move off, two went up, and the other six down the creek, joining respectively two bands who had crossed the plains west of the camp, and concealed themselves in the creek-timber. In a few minutes a large body of them appeared on the bank of the creek, distant sixty yards from our stores, thronging through the scrub, and occasionally showing in the open, in parties of seven and eight. A black fellow, who went by the appellation of “Shirt,” from having had that garment presented to him by us, was particularly active, coming boldly up to the stores, and walking unconcernedly around them. He then picked up about forty rats, that were lying dead around, and, dropping a portion of them, motioned for me to pick them up and carry them for him, merely, I think, to get my head in an unguarded position. Several other blacks were meanwhile drawing nearer to us, violently gesticulating, making signs that they were hungry, and that we were camped upon their ground. One tall, strapping lubra accompanied them, and was exceedingly active, bearing a boomerang with considerable grace, and inciting her companions to attack us. At this time I had but two able men with me, Dr. Beckler and Smith, Belooch having started for Koorliatto to assist Mr. Hodgkinson in finding the camels and bringing them in. Our cooking-place was close to the creek, for the benefit of shade and water; and the utensils were round the fire, together with several
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clothes which had been washed by the party. Dr. Beckler reporting to me that he saw natives creeping on their hands and knees near the fire, I took Smith down with me to clear them away. It was indeed high time. Several of them were fingering their boomerangs as if impatient for a fight; and lifting up the lappels of Purell's tent, commenced unpacking the medicine-basket, while a third, with an armful of boomerangs, was throwing them carelessly upon the ground near his brother warriors. However, they were not quite resolved upon hostilities, as when Smith and I pointed our pieces at them they quietly moved off before us, and retired without any further manifestations of hostility. Throughout this scene Stone, though dying, behaved with great intrepidity, raising himself upon his bed and aiming his revolver at the natives when they approached him. About 2 p.m., just as the blacks moved off, I was called by Stone, who, grasping me by the hand, said, "I am going." He then spoke a few words, and repeatedly asked that cold water should be thrown over him, as he could not breathe. Within ten minutes from the time he first called me, he turned upon his face and died. At 7 p.m. he was buried near the camp, by Dr. Beckler and Smith. I have omitted to state that the blacks took away every portable article from the fire, throwing away the tea and salt, and taking the bags. Belooch reached Koorliatto early this morning, and Mr. Hodgkinson started with him towards Bulloo, but were compelled to camp eight miles from Koorliatto, owing to the late time at which they recovered the camels.

Tuesday, 23rd. Bulloo.—Mr. Hodgkinson and Belooch reached Bulloo with the camels at 8 this morning, and immediately they arrived we unpacked all the stores, and passed the day in mending rat-holes, and repacking them in the form of a stockade; two sides being formed by as many logs sufficiently straight as we could procure at a reasonable distance. These logs were about four feet in height above the ground, allowing us to fire easily over them. The other two sides were not so high, but still a tolerable protection. Inside the stockade, every available weapon was placed so as to be handy for immediate use, and some of us always slept within it. At the same time our fire was brought within ten yards of it, as we had no more cooking-apparatus to spare. Our watch commenced at 8 p.m., and terminated at 6 a.m.

Wednesday, 24th. Bulloo.—The first announcement this morning was that Purell had died in the doctor's presence during the night. For some days past he had been so weak as to faint after drinking a little water, and we had long been expecting his decease. I sent Belooch and Smith to look after the horses which fed between Bulloo and a tributary creek. About an hour after they started the natives made their appearance, coming in twos and threes through the thick scrub on the creek, until about a score had collected. They were armed with new boomerangs, spears, and waddies, and were accompanied by the boy previously mentioned, whose conduct was even more impudent than before. At first the boy advanced with two powerful fellows hesitatingly towards the stockade, while in their rear could be seen a dozen others attentively watching their proceedings. Mr. Hodgkinson having brought in the things from the fire, I advanced with him towards the natives, motioning them to be off. Disregarding my attempts to clear them off, I caught hold of the boy, and, turning him round, gave him plainly to understand that he would not be allowed to remain near the camp. I thought proper to do this, as he was evidently only brought to insult us, and at length he retired with the others to a short distance. We then entered the stockade and watched the proceedings of the natives, who were joined about this time by another party from the south-west. The whole body then clustered around Stone's grave and became most insulting in their demeanour. Taking up a dead rat, one of them made a harangue upon it, and concluded by flinging it contemptuously
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

at us. Finding we did not notice this, they threw the earth from Stone's grave in the air, and after carrying logs as if mocking the erection of the stockade, made signs that we should all meet the same fate as those dead. I was very unwilling to fire at them, and allowed them to throw several sticks at us rather than commence actual hostilities. By noon they had concluded their demonstrations, and moved quietly off to a camp which they had established to the north of us. Smith and Belooch returned at nightfall, having been unable to find the horses. Shortly afterwards Dr. Beckler and Mr. Hodgkinson commenced digging Purcell's grave.

Thursday, 25th. Bulloo.—At daylight I directed Mr. Hodgkinson to complete Purcell's grave, and, with Dr. Beckler's assistance, he was buried by 8 A.M. Immediately after breakfast I started with Smith for the horses, but had not proceeded two miles before signal-fires rose all around me, and I returned to the camp, so that the natives should not derive any advantage from my absence. I should have premised that we had heard a horse-bell in the morning on the opposite side of Bulloo Creek, and that Mr. Hodgkinson, who swam over for the purpose, ascertained that six of the horses were feeding upon the bank. I now resolved upon crossing them if possible, and Dr. Beckler swam with Mr. Hodgkinson across the creek at mid-day, for the purpose of driving them into the water. This desirable object was accomplished, after a little delay in getting them to take the water. The natives did not molest us throughout the day, and in the afternoon I disposed of the few clothes belonging to the men lately deceased, as some of us were sadly in want of a fresh supply.

Friday, 26th. Bulloo.—The day passed very quietly, no natives appearing.

Saturday, 27th. Bulloo.—This morning, fortunately, no one went after the cattle, as the horses were quietly feeding within sight, and the camels came home with great regularity at sunset, camping close to the stockade. The stores were all unpacked, and, after the rat-holes had been mended, replaced in their former position. About 11 o'clock the cry of "Natives!" started us to our feet, and every article near the fire was carried into the stockade with the utmost celerity. On looking out, a body of natives, numbering between forty and fifty, could be seen advancing towards us from the west, not seeking any cover, but marching in good order straight across the open plain. On this occasion I saw plainly that they meant mischief, as they were all painted, and bore more spears than we had seen on any former occasion. Most of them were painted with a deep-red band, from the neck down the centre of the chest, crossed by similar bands at right angles to it. When within a couple of hundred yards, they quickened their pace into a run, exciting each other with war-cries, and placing their arms in position. "Shirt," accompanied by two other leaders, was in the van, and despite all my motions for them to stop, had approached within a few yards of us before I gave the order to fire. A few discharges repulsed them, but as they collected again some 600 yards off, I fired a rifle at them and effectually dispersed them. As soon as they disappeared, we visited Mr. Becker in his tent, and found that he was quite unconscious of any unusual occurrence. I now resolved to quit Bulloo immediately, as such a small party was quite unfit to maintain a long contest against the large tribes around, and any men would be picked off while necessarily absent in search of the camels. I instructed Mr. Hodgkinson and Smith to get up the camels without delay, and all save Coppins and Mutwala, which could not be found, were brought in, and tied around the stockade.

Sunday, 28th. Bulloo.—At 6 A.M. Dr. Beckler and Belooch started after the two missing camels, and succeeded in getting them. The day was passed in preparing for a start on the following morning—repacking the loads, and burning all articles of a cumbrous and useless description. The cattle were kept near the camp all day, and appeared inclined to remain near us.
Monday, 29th. Bulloo.—The horses were very troublesome during the night, perpetually trying to steal away, and, though closely hobbled, more than once attempting to swim the broad creek. About 3 A.M. a bell was heard from the south, and a number of dark objects, like cattle, could be dimly seen through the darkness. When daylight broke these objects were recognised as forming part of the mob of horses taken on by Mr. Burke, and shortly afterwards Mr. Brahé came up, and reported that he had just arrived from Cooper's Creek, where Mr. Burke had left him on the 16th of December in charge of a depot consisting of Patten, McDonough, Botan, six camels, and twelve horses. Mr. Brahé had received instructions to remain at Cooper's Creek for three or four months, but had extended that period to eighteen weeks, and only left when his rations ran short. Previous to leaving he had made a cache of provisions, sufficient to enable Mr. Burke and party, if competent to retrace their steps, to reach the Darling. Mr. Brahé had not followed Mr. Burke's track to Bulloo, but had pursued a direct course, and reached the 52nd camp of Mr. Burke, eight miles south of my depot, in about eighty miles. His horses had been 100 hours without water, but travelled with much less difficulty than could have been hoped for. On proceeding to Mr. Brahé's camp I found Patten suffering from scurvy to an alarming extent, McDonough almost unable to work, and Botan complaining. Mr. Brahé placed himself under my orders, and I united the two camps in the course of the morning. Of the camels brought down by Mr. Brahé I found three—Beer, Rowa, and Mustana—suffering severely from scab. The others were in good condition.

Monday, 29th.—At a quarter-past 5 this afternoon Mr. Becker died.

Tuesday, 30th. Bulloo.—The night passed quietly, no signs of natives being near having occurred. Early this morning Mr. Becker was buried, the stockade pulled down, and the logs used to form, as far as possible, a protection for use, were burned, and his other effects placed in a pack for conveyance to Melbourne.

Wednesday, 1st May. Bulloo.—Saddling commenced at 6 A.M., and at half-past 10 A.M. we left Bulloo on our return to Menindie. Dr. Beckler, Mr. Hodgkinson, Mr. Brahé, Botan, and myself were the only healthy members of the party; and I did not see the utility of pushing on the depot to Cooper's Creek for the purpose of remaining there the few weeks our stores would last. Our cavalcade made quite an imposing appearance with its twenty-two horses and fifteen camels, and the spirits of the whole party were animated by the prospect of regaining the settled districts. Several stoppages took place during the day, from the necessity of altering the seat of our invalids or re-adjusting loads; and, to show that our departure was not unnoticed by the natives, fires sprang up at every mile of our progress until we reached Koorliatto, at a tolerably early hour in the afternoon. Patten was greatly fatigued by his ride.

Thursday, 2nd. Koorliatto.—Spelted at Koorliatto. Got up a tent for Patten.

Friday, 3rd. Koorliatto.—As I was anxious to ascertain before finally leaving the country whether Mr. Burke had visited the old depot at Cooper's Creek between the present date and that on which he left on his advance northward, or whether the stores cached there had been disturbed by the natives, I started with Mr. Brahé and three horses for Cooper's Creek, and reached the head waters of that creek on Sunday, the 5th, in about seventy miles, steering about W.N.W. I did not find any water throughout that distance, but crossed several fine large gum-creeks, and saw an immense number of native dogs. The remainder of the party stayed at Koorliatto.

Saturday, 4th. Koorliatto.—The party at Koorliatto got up two other tents for the accommodation of the invalids, and formed a temporary stockade of camel-saddles, &c. A black fellow visited them during the day.
Sunday, 5th. Koorliatto.—Depôt spelt at Koorliatto.

Monday, 6th. Koorliatto.—Depôt spelt at Koorliatto. McDonough and Smith became much worse, and, with Belooch, were unfit for any duty whatever.

Tuesday, 7th. Koorliatto.—The depôt spelt at Koorliatto.

Wednesday, 8th. Koorliatto.—This morning I reached the Cooper's Creek depôt and found no sign of Mr. Burke having visited the creek, or the natives having disturbed the stores. I therefore retraced my steps to the depôt which remained at Koorliatto.

Thursday, 9th. Koorliatto.—The depôt still spelling here. Simla, one of Mr. Burke’s camels, strayed during the day, and could not be found.

Friday, 10th. Koorliatto.—The natives appeared again within sight of the depôt, and one walked through the camp. Mr. Brahé and myself still en route for Koorliatto.

Saturday, 11th. Koorliatto.—The depôt still spelling at Koorliatto. Mr. Brahé and myself en route for the depôt.

Sunday, 12th. Koorliatto.—Mr. Hodgkinson and Botan engaged in searching for Simla, and found that he had lain on the previous night at a place called the Doctor’s Camp, a little higher up the creek. At 6 p.m. a violent thunderstorm broke over the camp, during which the absent camel voluntarily rejoined the mob. Rain continued throughout the night.

Monday, 13th. Koorliatto.—I returned to the depôt at 8 this morning, and found the country between it and Cooper’s Creek to be in general well grassed, but destitute of any permanent water-supply, though, from the presence throughout my course of numerous wild dogs, pigeons, &c., there must be water accessible. The country bordering Cooper’s Creek is the most miserable I have ever seen, and I am at a loss to account for the favourable impression it has made upon the minds of previous explorers. The creek itself is bordered by stony rises entirely destitute of herbage, and mud-plains so fissured as to render travelling over them when dry extremely dangerous, and so liable to inundation that it would be unsafe to camp upon them for any length of time. The natives who camped in great numbers while Mr. Brahé’s depôt was there, had disappeared at the period of my visit, and but four were seen by Mr. Brahé and myself. Our horses had no water from Friday evening until last evening, when the same thunderstorm that visited the Koorliatto depôt passed over us.

Tuesday, 14th. Koorliatto.—The depôt prepared for a start, and took down the tents, &c.

Wednesday, 15th. Koorliatto.—Packed stores, &c.; the camels did not return to camp at night, as was their usual custom, the females, accompanied by Simla and Bell Sing, staying out.

Thursday, 16th, to Sunday, 19th. Koorliatto.—Looking for the lost camels, which were eventually recovered on Sunday, the 19th, by Mr. Brahé and Belooch, with the exception of Bell Sing, which camel they were unable to find.

Monday, 20th. Koorliatto.—Mr. Brahé and Smith engaged in looking for Bell Sing, but were unable to find him either on this or Poria Creek, or in the country lying between. At night they returned, and all the camels were tied up ready for starting next morning.

Tuesday, 21st. Koorliatto.—Commenced loading at 6, but did not finish till 1 p.m., the horses being a considerable distance from the camp, and the sick requiring great care in their removal. When about to place Patten on a camel, he stated that he should not feel safe upon the contrivance rigged for his conveyance; I therefore gave orders to unpack, and re-camp immediately, pitching a tent for his convenience. At nightfall only eight of our fifteen camels returned to the camp.
Wednesday, 22nd. Koorlatto.—During the night the cries of the camels were heard in the direction of Mr. Burke's camp on this creek, and at daylight they were discovered to have passed the night there. Getting them up at twenty minutes past 12 we effected another start, but had not travelled above half-a-mile before we were compelled to re-camp, McDonough, who rode on horseback, fainting from weakness. Finding the camels greatly encumbered by the carriage of the sick, I placed 3 cwt. of their loading upon the horses, which were but lightly burdened.

Thursday, 23rd. Koorlatto.—Having made some change in the disposition of the camels, I started at a quarter past 11, and reached a sandhill twelve miles from Koorlatto, where I camped. During the day the horses were watered at a claypan filled by the recent rains. The weather, which was very cold and windy, prevented the camels from feeling any inclination to drink. A continual watch was set upon them while feeding.

Friday, 24th. Poria Creek.—Saddled at dawn. The morning was bitterly cold and very dark. Got away at a quarter past 10, and after travelling three miles passed near a large body of natives, who slunk away on observing us. Our rate of progress with the camels was very slow, Patten frequently entreating me to stop, as the motion gained him. At 4 p.m. Poria Creek was sighted, and half an hour subsequently we camped within a mile of Mr. Burke's 50th camp, keeping watch all night.

Saturday, 25th May, to 1st June. Poria Creek.—During the period thus included, the depot remained at Poria Creek, partly in the hope of recruiting the weak, and partly to secure the country between here and Torowotto, as I could not hope for water between these points, unless rain fell. For a few days I had some hope of a serviceable fall of rain, as heavy clouds passed to the southward, and a few drops occasionally fell near the camp. The camels all became affected with the scab, and one of them died from its effects. I made several searches after Bell Sing without avail, and on the 28th Mr. Brahe and Botan started with the camels fit for service to take on water two days' journey towards Torowotto, and on the 31st they returned; Mr. Brahe reporting that he had deposited the water six miles north of Karriapundi Swamp, which appeared to be quite dry. While searching for Bell Sing, I several times met a small body of natives, camped down the creek, and presented them with a tomahawk in return for some fish which they gave me. Patten appeared slightly improved by his stay at Poria, and McDonough and Belooch were decidedly better. Weather exceedingly cold.

Sunday, 2nd. Karriapundi Plain.—At 4 a.m. all hands were called, and at 9 o'clock we started for our next water dependence, Torowotto, 118 miles distant. Smith and McDonough, who were much better, rode on horseback. Botan conducted the camels, and Dr. Beckler and Mr. Hodgkinson escorted Patten and Belooch, who were carried by Jambel. After great and frequent delays, caused by the necessity of adjusting pillows, &c., for Patten, the camp was pitched fifteen miles from Poria Creek. The camels were watched while feeding till 9 p.m., and then tied up.

Monday, 3rd. Karriapundi.—At 2 a.m. the camels were fed and watched, and at 8 a start effected. Patten, who fancied he could ride Simla with greater ease, being placed upon that animal, I started with the horses some time after the camels, overtaking them at 1 p.m. I learned from Dr. Beckler that Patten had been incessantly moaning since leaving the camp, and begging that we might stop. This request, with no prospect of water before reaching Torowotto, except that we had sent on, was not to be listened to, however much to be regretted; and, after attempting to console the poor fellow as far as possible, I gave orders to Dr. Beckler not to allow any delays under any circumstances whatever. Soon after Patten became delirious, insisting that we had brought him on to kill him, and begging to be allowed to die where
he then was. Under these painful circumstances, the party proceeded till a quarter to 6, when I reached the spot where Mr. Brahé had deposited the water. I was alarmed to find that a great portion of the water had leaked out, and issued one bucket to each horse and camel. We had very little rest throughout the night, as the horses kept hanging about the water, and, at twenty minutes to 12, I ordered the camels to be loosed, in order to give them every chance of feeding. Heavy rain-clouds hung over us for many hours, and a few drops disappointed our hopes of a greater fall.

Tuesday, 4th. Karriapundi.—At a quarter to 8 started, and, travelling without stoppage till sunset, reached a spot twelve miles north of Rat Point; finding there to our great surprise a fine pool of water. Half a mile previously to reaching it, Burra, one of the sick camels, fell down, and, evidently being unable to travel, was left behind. Patten travelled in nearly an insensible condition all day. The weather was bitterly cold, and a tent was pitched at night immediately we arrived at camp for his accommodation. The feed was very luxuriant, and the camels were allowed to remain loose all night.

Wednesday, 5th. Rat Point.—The unexpected meeting with water induced me to delay a little this morning, for the purpose of giving all those desirous of doing so the opportunity of a good wash, and it was twenty minutes to 11 before a start was effected. While saddling, an unusual number of native dogs were noticed hunting round the water, and regarding the camels with great curiosity. My intention on leaving camp was to camp at Rat Point, as I confidently expected to find water in the hole I had previously discovered when leaving Torowotto. On arriving at the spot, however, so circumscribed was the area covered by the late rainfall, I found no traces of water, and camped 5 miles nearer Torowotto. Patten was all day insensible, and unconscious of any change in his position.

Thursday, 6th. Mud-Plains.—At 4 A.M. it was found that Patten had died during the night, and Mr. Brahé and myself dug a grave for him by firelight. As soon as his funeral could be performed, the party started for the hole dug by Dr. Beckler and Mr. Hodgkinson during their stay at Rat Point, and reached it at 1 o'clock, finding abundance of water in the vicinity.

Friday, 7th. Torowotto.—A great improvement was discernible in the health of the men. Smith, Belooch, and McDonough, the former especially, were able to work a little, and Botan was the only man in very bad health. At an hour before sunset the horses reached Torowotto, but not a drop of water could be found in any part of the swamp. This was a great disappointment, as I had certainly calculated upon finding a supply, and was unwilling to send the camels backward and forward as water-carriers. There was a strong probability of rain from the appearance of the sky, and during the evening and night sufficient fell to afford us a tolerably good stock of water.

Saturday, 8th. Torowotto.—Spelled at Torowotto. Put up two tents for protection against the rain, which fell intermittingly throughout the day.

Sunday, 9th. Torowotto.—Spelled at Torowotto. Packed up for a start. Intermittent showers throughout the day.

Monday, 10th. Paldromatta Creek.—Started at twenty-five minutes past 9 A.M. Camped at Paldromatta at a quarter past 8 P.M. No water in the creek, but passed a little on the road.

Tuesday, 11th. Wannaminta.—Started at fifteen minutes past 8 A.M.; travelled sixteen miles, and camped at a claypan near the creek, which was erroneously named Teltawinge in the first part of the diary.

Wednesday, 12th. Wannaminta.—Started at 2 P.M. with the camels, as they strayed during the night. Met some natives who had accompanied Mr. Burke to Torowotto, and accepted their services as guides to a shallow rocky water-hole, eight miles from our last camp.

Thursday, 13th. Teltawinge.—Started at a quarter to 10, and reached
water in Tirltawinge Creek, formerly marked on the diary as Wannaminta, at 4 p.m. Tracks of kangaroo abundant, whence the name of the creek, Tirlta signifying kangaroo. Not expecting water at the next creek (Nuntherunge), I had a couple of bags filled for a supply. The natives remained near us, and were very solicitous to assist us.

Friday, 14th. Nuntherunge.—On leaving Teltawinge I made several presents to our black friends, and took one of them, a youth of some fifteen years of age, on with the party. We reached Nuntherunge at an early hour in the afternoon, and found the bed of the creek quite dry, but, by sinking a couple of feet, obtained sufficient water for camels, horses, and bathing purposes. Splendid feed on the creek.

Saturday, 15th, to Friday, 21st. Nuntherunge.—After camping at Nantabulla or Hobson's Basin, and Wotwinge—two gorges amply supplied with water, in the Motanie Ranges—I proceeded to Batoja; and finding no water there, and only sufficient for the camels at Bilpa, pushed on with the horses to Coorkerea, or Kokriega, from whence, after remaining two days, I reached the Darling on the 18th instant; the camels arrived on the following day. Experiencing heavy rain-storms at Bilpa, and between Coorkerea, or Kokriega, and the river, I established the defat camp in its former situation at the junction of Panameroo Creek with the Darling. I had the honour, on the Friday following, to despatch Mr. Brahe with a summary of this diary, and Mr. Burke's despatches, addressed to the Committee; and I trust that the celerity with which I forward the messenger will be sufficient excuse for its imperfect compilation and clerical deficiencies.

W. Wright, Officer in Charge.

William Brahe's Report.

(Received 1st July, 1861.)

To the Hon. Secretary, Exploration Committee, Melbourne.

Melbourne, 30th June, 1861.

Sir,—I have the honour to report to you, for the information of the Committee, that on the 16th of December last Mr. Burke gave me charge of the defat formed by him at Cooper's Creek, and started for Eyre's Creek, en route for the Gulf of Carpentaria, at 6:40 A.M. on the same day. His party consisted of himself, Mr. Wills, King, and Gray. He took with him six camels and one horse. The party was provided with provisions for twelve weeks. I accompanied the party for a distance of twenty-two miles along the watercourse of the creek. The party remaining at the defat consisted of myself, Patten, McDonough, and Dost Mahommed. My instructions, received by word of mouth, were to remain at the defat three months, or longer, if provisions and other circumstances would permit. I left the party at 4 o'clock p.m. on the same day and returned to the defat. On the following day, the 17th December, we commenced cutting timber, for the purpose of erecting a stockade.

22nd December.—Natives, about twenty-five in number, approached the camp, but I considered it advisable not to allow them to come near the tents.

30th.—On several days during the week were annoyed by number of natives. On Wednesday they succeeded in stealing six camel pack-bags, which we had washed that morning and spread out on the turf on the water's edge to dry. The thief, by keeping under shelter of the high bank, escaped unobserved. Noticing the loss only late in the afternoon I did not think it advisable to go in pursuit. During the night of Thursday I observed two blacks within a hundred yards of the camp, but on my shouting to them they ran off. On the 23rd finished the stockade, 20 by 18 feet, and put up Mr.
Burke's tent within it. In this tent I kept the ammunition and firearms. From within the stockade we had the other tents and the camels, which were kept tied at night, under cover of our guns.

31st.—Observed some blacks stealing stealthily along the bank of the creek towards the camp, while one directed them from behind a big tree. I allowed them to come to within twenty paces of the camp, when suddenly I called out to them, we at the same time firing off our guns over their heads. They seemed much frightened and hardly able to run away. Great numbers of blacks camped near us.

6th January, 1861.—A large number of natives came to the camp, whose demeanour roused my suspicions. Got hold of a young native and shoved him off, when he fell down. In the afternoon the whole tribe returned, the men armed, some with spears and some with boomerangs; most of them had painted their faces and bodies. I met them at a short distance from the camp; and, marking a circle round it, I gave them to understand that they would be fired at if they entered it. On some of them crossing the line I fired off my gun into the branches of a tree, when they retired, and did not molest us any more.

24th December [sic].—I should like to explore the neighbourhood a little, but cannot safely leave the camp for longer than three or four hours; one of the men looking after the camels the greater part of the day, while the other is away from four to five hours daily to prevent the horses from straying. I should have mentioned that I had charge of six camels and twelve horses, two of the camels very scabby. Grass is getting very dry and scarce near the camp. We are obliged to hang all our stores on boughs of trees to protect them from the rats, of which we killed about forty every night for some time.

26th February.—I rode up a conical hill bearing north-west by north from the depot. It is distant about nine miles, and one of a chain of hills running north-east and south-west. From the top of this hill I saw another range, distant about fifteen to twenty miles, much broken and considerably higher than the one I was on. The country between the two is stony, like that between the first range and the depot.

1st March.—Natives less numerous. Looking out anxiously for Mr. Burke's return. One day I took a ride up the creek which joins Cooper's Creek opposite our camp, coming from E.S.E., following it up about six miles, and found bed and banks thickly timbered with myall. The country in that direction is very stony. From the top of a stony rise I saw a low range running east and west, distant about fifteen miles. Blacks passing now and then, offering us nets and fish; we made it a rule never to accept the least thing from them, but made some of them little presents, as left-off clothes.

15th.—About twenty-five natives with their families passed here last night on their way up the creek, offering nets and fish. They gave me to understand that there would be plenty of water in the creek shortly, and that we might swim on the flat the stockade was on.

1st April.—During the first twenty-four days of March the heat has been greater than might be expected for the season, and especially the nights were intolerably sultry, a great deal more so than the warmest of January. On the 24th there was a sudden change; it began to blow hard, the nights became very cool. On the evening of the 29th we observed lightning in all quarters, and heard thunder in the north. A slight shower of rain fell between 8 and 9 o'clock p.m., and another on the following morning, not sufficient, however, to lay the dust. The blacks stole a camel pack-saddle from us on the 27th, while I was away from the camp. They carried it about a mile down the creek, where Patten overtook them and recovered the saddle, but it was torn to pieces.
4th.—Patten commenced shoeing the horses, lest he might become incapacitated by disease, as he felt very unwell.

Patten, after shoeing two horses, was obliged to take to his bed, suffering acute pain, and was not afterwards able to move about.

15th.—Patten is getting worse. McDonough and I began to feel alarming symptoms of the same disease.

18th.—There is no probability of Mr. Burke returning this way. Patten is in a deplorable state, and desirous of being removed to the Darling to obtain medical assistance, and our provisions will soon be reduced to a quantity insufficient to take us back to the Darling, if the trip should turn out difficult and tedious. Being also sure that I and McDonough would not much longer escape scurry, I, after most seriously considering all circumstances, made up my mind to start for the Darling on Sunday next, the 21st. The horses have lately got into the habit of straying; missed five of them a few days ago, and found them about fifteen miles from the camp. Last Monday we had a welcome rain for the first time since 8th December (except some slight showers on 24th and 25th March). The last three days have been fine and cool, but now it again looks like rain, although the barometer is very high—higher, indeed, than it has been during our stay here.

21st.—Left the depot at 10 o'clock A.M., leaving 50 lbs. of flour, 50 lbs. of oatmeal, 50 lbs. of sugar, and 30 lbs. of rice buried near the stockade, at the foot of a large tree, and marked the word "dig" on the tree. I took 150 lbs. of flour, 75 lbs. of sugar, about 70 lbs. of oatmeal, 1 bag of rice, 4 lbs. of tea, and a small quantity of biscuits. Taking into consideration that we would be obliged to travel slowly on account of Patten, and on account of the scarcity of water which I calculated to have to contend with, and would probably be on the road to the Darling at least six or seven weeks, I considered that I could not take less provisions. Patten was placed on a quiet camel. We travelled very slowly, and halted at 5 o'clock P.M., having made about fourteen miles.

22nd.—Started at 8 o'clock, and reached Camp 63 (Hat's Hole) at 11-30 A.M., finding the frame of a camel pack-saddle stuck in a tree. We had put away the saddle in some bushes when we abandoned the place on account of the rats, but the natives had found it. Halted at Camp 62.

23rd.—Were visited by about seventy or eighty natives, some of them old acquaintances. Threw away a bag of camel-shoes to lighten the burthens of the two sick camels. Travelled twenty-eight miles, and halted at Camp 60. Splendid grass in bed of creek.

24th.—Filled two pair of water-bags with water, and started for Bulloo at 12-30 P.M., going E.S.E. Finding a little water and plenty of good grass, hailed at 5 P.M. Was compelled to throw away nine pair of water-bags to be able to carry water. Finest country in the neighbourhood of Cooper's Creek.

25th.—Started at 8 A.M. From eleven o'clock passed over very stony country. Three o'clock, stony range. Halted at 6-15 P.M., between ranges without water or grass.

26th.—Having kept a careful watch over the camels and horses, we were enabled to start at 6-30 A.M. Till 11 o'clock very stony and scrubby country to pass over. When clear of ranges, followed an E.S.E. course, crossing several creeks without water running; south-west bank of creeks thickly timbered with gum. The creeks looked likely to contain some water, but pushed on without searching for it. At 3 P.M. came upon sandy, well-grassed and thinly-timbered country; saw a variety of birds, as pigeons, crows, &c.; halted at a creek, probably McDonough's Creek. We had to watch our cattle closely the whole night, as want of water made them inclined to ramble, and they showed no inclination to feed.

27th.—Started at 6-4 A.M., taking an east by south course, as the appearance
from Victoria to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

of the ranges to the north and north-east led me to believe that I had kept rather too much to the south. I continued on this course till 9 A.M., when I got a glimpse of a high ridge, which I recognised as the western boundary ridge of the Bulloo Plains. Went east till 10 A.M., then east by north, and arrived at the Bulloo Creek, at Camp 52, at 1:45 P.M. When crossing Mr. Burke's old track I noticed fresh tracks of horses and camels going in different directions, which were not more than ten to twelve days old, and I conjectured that the party left at Menindie had been at Bulloo, or were there still. As I could not expect to find water down the creek, I followed up our old track, knowing that there must be water in a large channel which we had passed on our way to Cooper's Creek, about five miles from Camp 52. At 4 P.M. I reached several small but deep water-holes with plenty of water, and camped there. We had much trouble to keep the horses from plunging into the water, most of them having had no water for exactly 100 hours. I decided upon remaining there the whole of the following day, not only to refresh the cattle, but also to search for traces of the Darling party.

28th.—Went very early in search of the horses up the creek. At about daylight I got in sight of them, at the same time observing smoke rising within 300 yards from me, and near the horses. There was not light enough to see well, and I thought I had dropped upon a camp of natives, and resolved to try to obtain some information from them respecting the Darling party. After going a few yards farther, I saw to my great surprise a European advance towards me. It was Mr. Hodgkinson. He led me to Mr. Wright's camp; and after bringing in our party, with horses and camels, &c., I placed myself and party under the orders of Mr. Wright.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM BRAHÉ.

XXVII.—Route in Exploring a Road from Albernie Canal to Nanaimo, in Vancouver Island, in May, 1861, with a Track Chart. By Commander RICHARD C. MAYNE, R.N., F.R.G.S.

[Communicated by the LORDS COMMISSIONERS of the ADMIRALTY.]

Read, May 12, 1862.

To Captain G. H. Richards, R.N., F.R.G.S., H.M.S. Hecate.

SIR,

I have the honour to inform you that, in compliance with your orders, I left the Albernie settlement at 10 on the morning of the 29th of April, with six Indians, one man from the Hecate, and Mr. Bamfield, the Indian agent. After crossing the low coast-ridge we passed over about 2 miles of level land, and then commenced a gradual ascent, and continued to ascend till we camped,—our camp being about 800 feet above the sea. During the latter part of the day the old hunter, who was the leader among the Indians, had been edging more to the northward than I liked; and I explained that we wanted to pass between Mounts Arrowsmith and Moriarty, and pointed it out on the chart to him. He insisted that if we went that way we should have to cross snow mountains,

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