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RICHARDSON'S JOURNAL OF AN  
EXPEDITION TO CAPE YORK.

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Map illustrating the  
OVERLAND EXPEDITION  
From  
PORT DENISON TO CAPE YORK

A. D. 1845  
under the command of F & A Gardiner Esq<sup>r</sup>  
to accompany M<sup>r</sup> Richardson Esq<sup>r</sup>



II.—*An Overland Expedition from Port Denison to Cape York; under the command of F. and A. Jardine, Esqrs.* By Mr. RICHARDSON, Surveyor to the Expedition.

Read, November 27, 1865.

THE Queensland Government having made arrangements for forming a settlement at Cape York, it became necessary to adopt some plan by means of which Cape York settlers could be supplied with fresh meat and other necessaries. Mr. Frank Jardine then agreed to take a herd of cattle overland to meet the wants of the settlement, and at the same time to open up the unexplored country of the peninsula without going out of his road. I was appointed to accompany the party as surveyor; and a grant of 150*l.* was made by the Government to supply me with horses and necessaries for the trip. A sextant, artificial horizon, prismatic compass, Gregory-compass, and barometer were also supplied. My duties were defined in a letter from A. C. Gregory, Esq., the Surveyor-General. They were as follows:—To keep a field-book of the route, and in it to notice the nature of the soil, timber, grasses, and so forth; also the abundance or scarcity of water, any suitable place for settlement, &c.

The party left Rockhampton on the 14th of May, 1864, under the superintendence of Mr. A. Jardine, and journeyed, by the old road to Port Denison, as far as Macdonald's station on the Bogie River; then to a good camping-ground on the north bank of the river Burdekin, within 12 miles of Mr. Anthill's station, crossing that river at Hamilton's public-house. The party was then ten in number, and consisted of the following persons: Messrs. A. Jardine, Scrutton, Binney, and Conderoy, and six black boys—Euler, Peter, Sambo, Barney, Charley, and Pluto. They reached the camping-ground on the 17th of June, 1864. They had with them thirty-one horses. Mr. Frank Jardine and I reached Port Denison, from Rockhampton, in the *Diamantina*, s. s., Captain Champion, having touched at Port Mackay, about the 16th of July. The leader then purchased five horses for my use with the money which had been granted for that purpose.

In a week's time, agreeably spent by me at Burdekin Downs, the party reached that station. I then joined them, and we proceeded to "Reedy Lake," and encamped there.

Shortly before leaving Reedy Lake our advanced party was enlarged by the addition of two persons—Mr. Bode, a gentleman in search of new country, and his black boy. His path and ours being the same we journeyed on together. We left Reedy Lake on the 17th of August, 1864, and on the 24th reached the station

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of Messrs. Firth and Atkinson, Upper Burdekin, near which we encamped.

*Aug. 26.*—Travelled about 17 miles w. by s. over broken ridges, lightly timbered with ironbark, moderately-well grassed, but now very dry. Encamped on the west border of a small plain, without finding water.

*27th.*—Travelled about 16 miles w. by s. At 6 miles from our last camp crossed the range dividing the water of the supposed Lynd and Burdekin rivers; both the ascent and descent were very gradual; the remaining 10 miles undulating, open, ironbark forest, well grassed, but no water until the end of our day's journey, when we encamped near some water-holes, on the western side of a small black-soil plain, the grass of which had been burnt.

*28th.*—Travelled about 14 miles w.n.w. through what would generally be called good country, although at this season very dry. On our way we noticed small-leaved bauhinia, myrtle, and grevillia. Passed the homestead of Mr. McKinnon, encamping about 3 miles beyond, on the north-east bank of a creek, then supposed to be the Lynd River of Leichhardt. Abundance of water in the creek, near our camp, and, immediately opposite, a low basaltic ridge appears a few yards from the bank of the creek, which latter is lined on both sides with melaleuca. In its bed are basalt and mica slate. Floodmarks 2 feet above the bank. Latitude  $18^{\circ} 55' 23''$ .

*29th.*—Travelled about 15 miles north-west. At first stony ridges, timbered chiefly with ironbark; afterwards the soil became more sandy, and we noticed bloodwood, acacia, and apple-gum, and some good grass. At 11 miles from the last camp we crossed the creek, whose sandy bed is there dry and shallow, 60 yards wide, having in it masses of basalt and mica-slate. At 4 miles beyond the crossing-place we encamped near an excellent water-hole in the creek. The adjacent country to our left, while travelling this distance, appeared to be scrubby. The bed of the creek is frequently filled with melaleuca.

*30th.*—Travelled about 13 miles north-west, the creek running nearly parallel with us—open undulating ironbark forest, tolerably well grassed—soil sandy. At this distance from last camp we reached the homestead of Mr. Yates, then crossing the creek, which is there about 70 yards wide, sandy bed, with masses of mica-slate, and banks 15 feet deep, continued on our journey, over a basaltic flat, lightly timbered with box for one mile E.N.E., crossing and encamping on the north side of an ana-branch of the creek above-mentioned, within a quarter of a mile of the homestead of J. G. Macdonald, Esq.,—our resting-place until the cattle are purchased.

Messrs. A. Jardine and Bode, with two black boys, leave the camp, taking with them a fortnight's provisions. Their intention is to follow down the creek near which we are encamped, supposed to be the Lynd River, as far as its junction with the Mitchell, observing which side of the creek was most suitable for travelling. During their absence I took seven sets of lunar observations, the result of which gave a mean longitude  $144^{\circ} 3' 30''$  E. of Greenwich, in latitude  $18^{\circ} 37' 10''$  s., as the mean latitude from several northern and southern observations. The variation of the compass I found, by theodolite (not a very good one) to be about  $6^{\circ}$  E. The prismatic compass with which I was provided had no coloured glasses nor any reflector.

*August and September.*—After being absent for nearly three weeks, Messrs. A. Jardine and Bode return, much puzzled with regard to the course of the supposed River Lynd. They had followed it down for about 180 miles, and say that the last 60 miles they were travelling nearly due west. Mr. Jardine plotted his course roughly on a sheet of foolscap (120 miles of the distance I afterwards found to be tolerably correct); and I gave it as my opinion that we were on the main branch of the River Gilbert. We afterwards found the river, shown in the map by a dotted line, as a branch of the River Lynd, was a new river, and is probably the main branch of the River Gilbert. We named it the River Einnasleigh. I ascended a hill about 1 mile to the N.E. of our camp, and obtained several bearings of adjacent mountains and ranges. The surrounding country is mountainous on all sides except south and south-east, and the smoke of burning grass is to be seen in all directions, occasioned by the blacks.

*Oct. 6.*—The cattle are here, and start in a few days—about 250 head. Our leader thinks it necessary to reduce the party; and two black boys, Charley and Pluto, are to be left behind.

*11th.*—Our party numbered ten persons, 36 horses, both pack and saddle, and three tents, as well as provisions, estimated to last us, with care, four months. We travelled about 19 miles, our general course being N.W. by N.: the first four miles of our journey being over basaltic flats, timbered with box and apple-gum; the remainder ridges, both sandy and stony, tolerably well grassed, and timbered with ironbark. Encamped near the river in latitude  $18^{\circ} 23' 59''$ .

About a mile up the river from this camp it is joined by a large creek from the south-east, and 5 miles beyond its mouth the river is shut in by a long rocky range trending south-west. The river is here about 250 yards wide, and its bed filled with huge masses of granite and basalt, its banks sloping and rocky. Water good and plentiful, but not running.

*12th.*—Shifted our camp one mile to the N.N.E. to the bank

of a small lagoon, within a quarter of a mile of the river. The horses enjoyed good grass, fresh and green, for the rest of the day.

Box, barringtonia, flooded gum, and pandanus were the prevailing varieties found here.

13th.—Travelled about 10 miles N.N.W., 5 miles sandy ridges, timbered chiefly with box-trees of small girth; the remaining distance the ridges became stony. Seven miles from camp we passed a fine reach of water in the river, which is there about 500 yards wide and filled with masses of basalt. Some prominent peaks rise from broken country to the east; to the westward the rocky range, before mentioned, continues to run nearly parallel with the river, having a steep rocky bluff nearly opposite our camp. I have named this Startwell Bluff. Encamped on the bank of the river, which is here broad and shallow; its bed is filled with melaleuca, and some excellent water in rocky holes. Grass very dry.

14th.—Travelled about 11 miles north-west; irregular ridges, very rocky and difficult for the horses and cattle, quartz, basalt, and a rock full of large leaflets of mica. Across the river the country is mountainous and broken, and on this side the grass has been recently burned by the natives. The river-bed is broad, shallow, and more sandy, and is joined by a deep, sandy, dry creek, 80 yards wide, coming from E.N.E., its banks steep and lined with immense melaleuca-trees. We encamped on its north bank near the river, and found water in the creek by digging. Noticed bloodwood and the Leichhardt-tree and ironbark.

15th.—Travelled to-day about 8 miles N.W. by N.; at first ironbark forest and sandy ridges, basalt cropping up in places; afterwards basalt became more plentiful, and made travelling difficult. The river-bank was intersected by deep gullies, and at 4 miles from last camp its bed narrowed to 150 yards, one deep sandy channel, banks lined with melaleuca. At about 7 miles from last camp we were compelled to leave the river, whose bed is there filled with masses of rock, it is also shut in on both sides by abrupt rocky ranges. We then crossed a low basaltic ridge and flat, and encamped near a large swamp, on its western side, not deep. I ascended the range to the north of our camp, and had a capital view of the surrounding country. The rocky range before mentioned, of which Startwell Bluff is a prominent point, from thence makes a great bend to the west, and then north, running into the river a mile or two to the north of our present camp. The country enclosed by the range and river appears to be level. To the east I saw nothing but rocky ranges quite near us, but to the S.E. by W. my view extended for at least 25 miles, enabling me to note the bearing of a prominent peak at that distance (Carl's Peak).

Latitude  $18^{\circ} 2' 7''$ . The mean of a north and south observation.

16th.—Travelled to-day about 11 miles, our general course being N.N.W., passing through a gap in the range about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the north-east of our camp. The remaining part of our journey was difficult travelling; basaltic flats and ridges openly timbered, and all the grass burnt. We encamped on the eastern bank of a creek which took its rise near the range. The creek is connected with the river by a channel near our present camp; it was named Parallel Creek by Mr. A. Jardine, on his previous exploration-trip down this river, although from this point it becomes an ana-branch. We enjoy fine strong breezes from the eastward, with fine clear weather. The thermometer reading  $73^{\circ}$  at sunrise this morning.

17th.—To-day our journey was much shorter than usual, in consequence of the difficult nature of the country. We continued our course for  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west down Parallel Creek, being frequently compelled to travel in its bed, and as often obliged to leave it. It is separated from the river by a high ridge of basalt, and its bed, when not filled with masses of rock, is sandy and timbered with melaleuca, its north-east bank is frequently very abrupt and rocky; some good grass grows amongst the basalt, but much of it has been burned by the natives. We encamped on the north-east bank of the creek, where it is not rocky, and where its slope towards the creek is gradual. The basaltic ridge immediately opposite our camp is abrupt, and from 60 to 70 feet high. About a quarter of a mile up the creek from camp the rocky bank on the north-east side ends in a sandstone cliff, worn into caves and hollows by weather and time.

Latitude  $17^{\circ} 51' 5''$ .

18th.—Our journey to-day of about  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles, a little to the north of W.N.W., was performed over country similar to that yesterday described, but more rocky and difficult. Water was more frequently found in the bed of the creek, although near our camp it was not plentiful. To the eastward broken country is still apparent, but ranges and hills are becoming less frequent. The ana-branch is here about 300 yards wide, and filled with tall melaleuca.

19th.—At about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from last camp the ana-branch joins the river, which is there 500 yards wide, and an immense sand-bed, having in it large masses of granite, porphyry and sandstone. Our general course to-day has been w. by N. about 8 miles. From the junction downwards it is stiff sandy bank, openly timbered with box and bloodwood, and travelling is much easier. Quartz ridges, densely clothed with scrub, are seen from the river-bank in a north-east direction.

Latitude  $17^{\circ} 45' 40''$ .

20th.—Continued our journey down the north-eastern bank of the river for about 11 miles in a north-westerly direction. The first 7 miles exceedingly rocky ridges, in many places running abruptly into the river, and intersected by very deep gullies. We avoided some of these by travelling at about a mile from the river; beyond that distance there is much scrub. The last 4 miles, low sandstone ridges, open forest on the river frontage, and timbered with larger trees, box, bloodwood, and gum. Soil very light and rotten, and grasses very coarse.

At about 4 miles from last camp the bed of the river is divided into channels by a high rock, three-quarters of a mile in length. A fine sheet of water is contained between this rock and the north-east bank; in this gorge I noticed flood-marks 30 feet above the bed of the river. Could not get a good view of the neighbouring country, but caught a glimpse of some low ranges to the westward. At our camp the river-bank is low, and the bed densely timbered with melaleuca, and occasional Leichhardt-trees.

Encamped near a good but shallow water-hole in the river.

21st.—Continued our course down the north bank of the river for about 11 miles W.N.W., the country becoming more open as we proceeded. To our right low sandstone ranges, partly covered with scrub and having abrupt sides, terminated at 200 or 300 yards from the river, between the spurs and along the frontage of the river. Box-flats, openly timbered, firm soil, and good grasses. Encamped near a fine long water-hole in the river, which furnished us with some excellent cod, bream, and catfish.

22nd.—Travelled to-day about 10 miles west; the country becoming still more open and the box-flats more extensive, as well as better grassed; gullies less numerous and the banks of the river low, the bed still wide, well watered, and sandy. Encamped on the north-west side of a small creek, plenty of water in water-holes in its bed, about half-a-mile from the river, which is here three-quarters of a mile wide, sandy bed, filled with small melaleuca trees, and having low banks.

Latitude  $17^{\circ} 34' 32''$ .

It was the wish of our leader, Mr. F. Jardine, to get on to the River Lynd, and to follow it to its junction with the River Mitchell, continuing our course down that river as far as would be thought necessary to avoid any difficulty in finding water. Mr. A. Jardine had previously mentioned this good camping-ground as a suitable place for the horses and cattle, pending another advance exploration trip they (Messrs. F. and A. Jardine) had in view, to the northward.

I plotted up my courses, and said that 18 to 20 miles N.N.E. from camp they ought to strike the River Lynd.

24th.—The brothers, taking with them Euler and the necessary provisions, left us to-day.

27th.—They returned to-day, and their report was unsatisfactory. Following a N.N.E. course, they came upon a creek, which I take to be Turning Creek, running in the same direction, and afterwards a large creek, which should be the Lynd River. At the distance above mentioned, Leichhardt's description of the neighbouring country does not at all coincide with the sort of country on the creek. Our leader and his brother say they were down the creek for about 50 miles. The country either densely timbered or clothed with tea-tree scrub, little or no grass, and water only to be found in lagoons near the creek. Mr. A. Jardine does not think it is the Lynd River of Leichhardt. I do, for two reasons:—1st. Its distance from our camp is what I expected it would be; and 2nd. Its general course is the same.

I know my starting point to be correct as regards latitude, and I think I have its position east from Greenwich nearly right. We have with us two maps, one a tracing furnished me by the Surveyor-General and the other 'Buxton's map of Queensland.' One places the River Lynd about 30 miles east of the place assigned to it in the other. I have assumed the former to be correct—that is the tracing.

While at this, our 13th camp, I ascended a low range to the north-east, three-quarters of a mile distant. To the north-west and west low sandstone ranges, and one to the south, distant about 15 miles. A low range also to the E.N.E. 18 miles, elsewhere nearly level country. A lagoon across the river about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp in a box-forest, very open, and grasses very dry, and several on this side of the river 5 or 6 miles from camp; in one of these some very large catfish were caught, but the rocky bottom was a great annoyance to the fishermen. Near the camp there are box, bloodwood, acacia, apple-gum, and the Leichhardt-tree.

The black boys have been very successful in finding large quantities of the honey of the native bee, and I have named the creek near which we are encamped Cooroora Creek in consequence.

29th.—Mr. F. Jardine and his brother, with Euler, again leave us, intending to travel northward until they reach the River Mitchell. The remainder of the party are to follow a marked tree line, and to encamp near the supposed Lynd, on the bank of a small lagoon, there to await their return. Mr. Jardine has requested me to name the river we are about to leave "The Einmasleigh."

31st.—Leave our 13th camp. Horses in good condition and cattle doing well, and travel about 4 miles generally N. by E., encamping on a creek or water-course, running south-east, and holding

a little dirty but drinkable water in small holes. Flat box-forest, and very little grass.

*Nov. 1.*—Travelled to-day about 14 miles N.N.E., encamping on the south-west side of a small lagoon, about 200 yards from the supposed River Lynd. The first mile box-forest, and remainder of the journey gently undulating sandy ridges, poorly grassed, but densely timbered with tea-tree, rusty gum, bloodwood, stringy bark, acacia, and occasionally pandanus. At about 8 miles from last camp we came to a small creek, dry sandy bed; a little water was found in it where sandstone was cropping up. The bed was 4 or 5 feet deep. About 1 mile further on we passed a spring, covering a small flat near the creek. From this point into camp we passed some enormous ant-hills, 8 to 10 feet high and 20 to 30 feet in circumference. Near the camp grows a fine shady tree, about 30 feet in height, branches slightly drooping, and bearing an oval yellow fruit, pulpy when ripe, with a rough stone inside.

Latitude  $17^{\circ} 23' 24''$ .

*3rd.*—Our leader and his brother returned to-day; they report having been as far north as 56 miles from this camp, through wretched country, with a further prospect anything but favourable.

*4th.*—Travelled to-day about 5 miles north, crossing the River Lynd at about half-a-mile from last camp, and at three-quarters of a mile passing a small lagoon. Low sandy ridges, little or no grass, and densely timbered with tea-tree, some bloodwood, stringy-bark, and a little box. The river, where we crossed it, was about 100 yards wide, several channels, and bed scrubby, 8 to 12 feet deep. We afterwards found that the river here mentioned as the River Lynd was a branch of the River Staaten. We have named it "Byerley Creek."

*5th.*—Mr. F. and A. Jardine, with Binney, Euler, and Barney, go forward, taking the cattle with them.

This afternoon the long dry grass in which we had unpacked caught fire, and defied our efforts to put it out. We saw that no time was to be lost, and by great exertion removed the packs and saddles, and sundry scattered articles, to a large ant-hill to windward of the fire, where the grass was much shorter. There were only Scrutton, Conderoy, and I in camp, and we worked like horses, beating the fire down with blankets all round the ant-hill, Scrutton even rushing to one of two packs burning furiously and rescuing some flasks of gunpowder, the solder of the flasks running off at the time. The heat was suffocating, and we were all nearly leaving everything to its fate several times, when finally a few billies full of water prevented further danger. On examining the things that were saved, we found that every pack had been singed somewhere, and many straps and surcingles spoiled.

6th and 7th.—Some horses still absent.

8th.—Found all our horses and travelled about 15 miles N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W.; either barren or very poorly grassed low sandy ridges, clothed with tea-tree scrub and a kind of brigalow, some stringy bark, acacia, and bloodwood. Another horse—one of those purchased for my use—unable to travel, poisoned, we think. We were obliged to leave him behind. Encamped near a small water-hole, in a sandy dry creek, having sandstone in its bed.

9th.—Similar country to that of yesterday, very little or no grass, and no water in the dry sandy creeks, although some was found by digging in their beds; many pandanus palms grew on their banks. Our general course to-day was N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., 16 miles, when we joined the advance party.

We encamped on the north-east bank of a creek (Cockburn Creek, a branch of Byerly Creek), 50 yards wide, coming from the E.S.E., after running it down for half-a-mile from the crossing place. Its bed is much filled with sandstone and plenty of water. On its banks grow melaleuca and flooded gum. Floodmarks 8 to 10 feet above the level of the bed.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 56' 6''$ .

10th.—Messrs. F. and A. Jardine, with Euler, again leave us, with instructions to continue our course down the creek for three or four days, should we find water, and there to encamp and await their return. It would be impossible to continue travelling northward through this country, and we think there is a possibility of finding more open travelling near the creek, as well as grass and water; in fact, this is the only course open to us. Travelled to-day about 7 miles north-west, crossing the creek near our last camp, and again near our present one. It contains some fine water-holes and a good deal of sandstone. Both sides are densely timbered and poorly grassed. Encamped on the north-west bank of the creek.

11th.—Continued our course down the creek for about 7 miles in a westerly direction, similar to that of yesterday; water still plentiful in the creek. Encamped on the south-west bank of the creek, with a forest of bloodwood saplings behind us, and a little fresh grass.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 51' 31''$ .

12th.—Continued our journey down the creek for about 6 miles N.W. by W. Its bed becomes more sandy and full of trees—melaleuca, nonda, and many others new to me. Water less plentiful. Encamped near a small water-hole in the creek. The appearance of the country does not change. We met with the green-tree ant here in large numbers, and the bite not so painful as we expected.

13th.—Travelled to-day about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. by W., encamping near some small lagoons within sight of the creek, where a little water was also to be found; half-a-mile from creek low sandy

ridges, timbered with tea-tree. In the neighbourhood of this camp there is a little fresh grass. Bloodwood, acacia, stringy-bark, and gum, and nonda.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 46' 5''$ .

14th.—Remained in camp.

15th.—Our leader returns, telling us he has seen the Mitchell River, but that the country is wretched, and to the northward worse, so that we must continue to travel near the river.

16th.—Continued our course down the creek for about 11 miles N.W. by W. The appearance of the country much the same—in some places so densely timbered, and so much undergrowth of trees and small saplings, that it is difficult to see more than 100 yards in any direction. Encamped in the sandy bed of the creek, which has two channels, banks not abrupt, 10 feet high, water plentiful, grass long, dry, and poor. Bloodwood, nonda, acacia, and stringy-bark; in creek, melaleuca and flooded gum.

17th.—Travelled to-day about 11 miles W.N.W., and at 5 miles from last camp the creek we have followed (Byerley Creek) joins the Lynd River (?) which comes from the south-east, bed 200 yards wide, two channels, sandy, dry, and banks low. We crossed it and continued our course down its south-west side, which is quite as densely timbered as the creek we have just left. (Mr. F. Jardine desires me to name it Cockburn Creek.) Encamped in the bed of the river, which there has several channels, and is 300 yards wide.

18th.—Travelled down the north-east bank of the River Staaten, about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles, N.W. by N.; at this point it joins a river coming from the E. by S., 300 yards wide, sandy bed, several channels, water in holes, banks low, sandstone cropping up in places. We encamped about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles further on, in a westerly direction, in the bed of the river, which is broad, and timbered all across with melaleuca; water only to be found in holes. A scrubby kind of brushwood grows on its banks, 200 yards from the river on either side. Flat country covered with tea-tree, scrub, and desert-grass, no kind of use whatever for pastoral purposes.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 32' 17''$ .

Although the latitude of the junction of the Lynd and Mitchell rivers differs slightly from the latitude of the junction we have just passed, the appearance of a broad river coming from the same direction confirms me in the opinion I held at the 15th camp that we were on the River Lynd. The description of country, however, differs widely from Leichhardt's accounts of the country he saw on the Lynd, and makes me doubtful, for I am not positively certain that my longitude at Macdonald's was correct, though I cannot think it was considerably in error. The only course open to us at present is to follow this river down to the coast, leaving it when the country opens sufficiently.

19th.—Travelled about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles w.  $\frac{1}{2}$  s., about one mile distant from and nearly parallel with the river on its northern side, encamping near one of the chain of lagoons on its north side. The horses and cattle get some picking near the edge of the water; elsewhere the grasses are dry and poor. The bed of the river is here free from fallen trees, and has some sheets of not deep water. The banks are scrubby, and in some parts are water-worn by floods. We saw a little triodia, many kinds of acacia, and handsome nondatrees, loaded with fruit. A shower of rain from the west.

20th.—Travelled about 9 miles due west through tea-tree forest, flat country. Encamping near the river-bank in sand, to avoid a shower of rain from the west.

In the evening we were startled by a shout from one of our black boys, who espied about twenty natives coming up from the river-bank. The sun was nearly down, and they took care to have him at their backs. They were fully armed and painted, danced and shouted a little while like maniacs, and began to throw their spears. Two shots from our rifles scattered without touching any of them. Fortunately none of the party were hit, although a spear passed between Conderoy's legs, quite near enough.

21st.—This morning thirteen of our horses were missing, so we packed all the available ones, and walking ourselves, shifted the camp to one of a fine chain of lagoons, about 3 miles w. by s., one mile from the river on its north side. At our last camp water was scarce. Here we have abundance, and a little feed for the horses and cattle. As far as we ourselves are concerned, this is the best camp we have had. The country is more open, and a decided improvement in the grasses. A little box, bloodwood, rusty-gum, and farther from the river tea-tree levels.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 32' 45''$ .

27th.—Up to this date we remained in camp, while the black boys were searching for the horses and some cattle that had also got away. Recovered our horses this morning and travelled about 8 miles w.n.w., following the chain of lagoons, which, lower down, form a creek, encamping near the last. Country on either side tea-tree levels, near the river scrubby, without a blade of grass excepting that found on the banks of the lagoons. The river is distant from camp about 3 miles due south, 150 yards wide, clear sandy bed, and some sheets of shallow water. The banks are not abrupt, but water-worn, in places laying bare the sandstone.

28th.—The chain of lagoons here breaks into a creek, running w.n.w.  $\frac{1}{2}$  w. This we followed for about 9 miles, and encamped near a small water-hole in creek; no grass for the horses and cattle, except that growing on the banks of the creek, and not much there. Soil sandy and exceedingly poor, sandstone cropping up in creek.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 26' 53''$ .

29th.—Cross the creek and travel about 9 miles s.w.  $\frac{1}{2}$  w. Level country densely timbered with tea-tree; no grass, and many conical ant-hills, about 3 feet high. Nearer the river the country opened, and finally after passing through a fringe of tea-tree saplings, bloodwood and stringy-bark, open forest fronting the river with plenty of grass and a prospect of improvement in the country. Stiff clay soil, sandstone cropping out here and there. Some box, acacias, and nondas. The banks of the river steep, water in many places.

30th.—Travelled about 11 miles w.n.w. along the north-east bank of the river, over narrow box-flats fronting the river with a background of tea-trees. The river-bed is 300 yards wide at 3 miles from last camp, and at about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles it is joined by the creek we left yesterday; plenty of water in the river. Encamped on its northern bank.

Dec. 1.—Continued travelling down the same side of the river, at a quarter of a mile from camp crossing a creek 150 yards wide; sandy bed, sandstone cropping up, two channels: it runs into the river from the n.e. by e. At 3 miles from last camp many lagoons have been filled by recent rains. At first the country presented the same desert-like and dry appearance that we have been accustomed to, but about the lagoons there was some short fresh grass. The banks of the river are in many places waterworn by floods, and spinifex grows on them. We encamped near the river, which is here one channel and one sheet of water 70 yards wide. Flood-marks 14 to 15 feet above the level of the water, or nearly to the top of the bank.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 27' 26''$ .

2nd.—Continued our course down the river about 10 miles w.  $\frac{1}{2}$  s. The country becomes scrubby, and spinifex plentiful. Encamped near the river, which is 300 yards wide, plentifully timbered with melaleuca, and some sheets of water, scarcely drinkable. In the vicinity of the camp are some fine bloodwood and acacias, barringtonia, and rusty-gum.

For some time since I have been much puzzled to account for the large amount of westing we have been making, and now think that the Lynd and Mitchell rivers of Leichhardt must have been much to the eastward of us. The latitude of last camp  $16^{\circ} 27' 26''$ , together with my dead reckoning for longitude, places it about 40 miles from the coast. There is a broad sandy creek described by Leichhardt, nearer to the coast, and a little further south. I believe the river we are on to be the same, named at its mouth by the Dutch "The Staaten." We saw many ducks to-day in some water-holes near the river, and a few native companions.

3rd.—Travelled down the River Staaten, our journey being shortened to 6 miles west by a heavy thunderstorm from the westward. The country we came through to-day gradually assumed a

more cheerful aspect, being tolerably well grassed, watered by some fine lagoons, slightly undulating and openly timbered with large bloodwood, tea-tree, acacia, and box. Encamped about a quarter of a mile from the river, which here widens to 500 yards, sandy bed, water 30 yards, 2 feet deep at low tide, which rises and falls from 1 foot to 18 inches, easily fordable. The banks are low.

Latitude,  $16^{\circ} 26' 38''$ .

4th.—We remained in camp to-day until 4 o'clock; everything then packing up. We shifted camp about 2 miles W.N.W.; at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile crossing an ana-branch, and another near camp. Plenty of grass at this as well as our last camp.

The river has many ana-branches, and triodia in its bed. I had not time to go down to its mouth. Acacia, bloodwood, fig-tree (loaded with unripe fruit), and many others unknown to me.

5th.—Leave the Staaten, and travel about 12 miles N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. Much of the country we passed through is subject to inundation. In a shallow watercourse about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from last camp, the flood-marks were as high as 6 feet. Encamped in a dry swamp—flood-marks 2 feet on the trees, no water, and very little grass. In the evening, one of the black boys came into camp, and reported having found water in a small lagoon about 2 miles distant.

6th.—One-half the horses missing. In the afternoon, packed up to shift the camp to the lagoon before mentioned. While packing, an accident occurred which at first sight would indicate great carelessness. We had with us a mule, a most useful animal—his pack one of the heaviest. Immediately on being packed he slipped off unperceived, which was the more easy, as the country was so densely timbered. He could not have been gone 10 minutes when his absence was discovered, and Sambo at once sent on his tracks; but the mule could travel faster than Sambo could track him, and we were obliged to give him up for that day. Our 38th camp was pitched in open box-forest, flat country, near a small lagoon, which held a little water quite green with vegetable matter. Two similar lagoons are in the same creek,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile up, and half-a-mile down, respectively. The soil is very hard and dry, but full of crab-holes; grasses poor and scanty.

12th.—All the horses but two (Lucifer and Deceiver)—the mule also—were found. Deceiver was found dead; Lucifer, mad, in consequence of excessive thirst, and drinking salt water. Sambo and Barny were out three days and nights tracking the mule, but were finally obliged to give him up. There are here box, bloodwood, acacia, sterculia, and nonda. Up to this time I have used  $6^{\circ}$  variation. Here the variation of the needle is  $4^{\circ}$  E.

Latitude  $16^{\circ} 13' 45''$ .

13th.—Left our 38th camp, and travelled about 12 miles north, over some small brackish plains, intersected by dry shallow watercourses, and changing with strips of tea-tree forest and scrub. At

8 miles from last camp we rested near a small creek running north-west, and holding a little water in holes, while Mr. F. Jardine, and his brother and Euler, went on a-head to seek water. Euler came back to us with the news and we continued our course, encamping on the north bank of Rocky Creek, which has much sandstone in its bed and plenty of water, and is no doubt a branch of the Rocky Creek mentioned by Leichhardt. The general appearance of the country seems to indicate that this has been a very dry season. We have strong westerly breezes during the day, falling off soon after sunset. Slight easterly winds spring up at midnight.

14th.—Travelled to-day about  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., slightly undulating country, timbered with tea-tree and occasional patches of box-forest or stringy-bark, bloodwood, and apple-gum; grasses slightly improving, but very dry. We were fortunate in finding a small lagoon directly in our course, in a small creek running w. by s. The floodmarks in this creek were nearly on a level with the adjacent country; but the bed is so irregular, no height above its level could be given.

Latitude  $15^{\circ} 56' 31''$ .

15th.—The country opened to-day immediately on leaving last camp, 3 miles of level, open, box-forest, grasses very dry, then passing through a narrow belt of scrub we came to broken sandstone ridges, and at about 4 miles from last camp crossed a deep creek nearly dry, 30 yards wide, running w. by n. The banks for several hundred yards on both sides much broken and rocky, with small ana-branches on its south side. Then came 17 miles of plains and patches of open forest-box, bloodwood, acacia, apple-gum, and baubinia; soil, hard clay, much cracked and dried up by heat, grasses on the plains very dry, in the patches of open forest sometimes fresh and green. This country is, I think, suitable for pastoral purposes, although we found the grass much dried and ground cracked by heat.

The horses having had a very long day at 19 miles, we unpacked near a dry swamp, and sent Euler on a-head to find water, having seen none since leaving the deep creek, and then a very little. He returned in about an hour with the welcome news, when we packed up, and shifted 2 miles further on to a small creek plentifully watered running W.N.W. Our general course was N.E. 21 miles.

Latitude  $15^{\circ} 45' 30''$ .

16th.—From the 13th camp it has been customary for us to travel in the following order: Messrs. F. and A. Jardine immediately after breakfast rode on a-head and found a camping-ground; the cattle then followed under the care of Binney and one or two black boys; the horses were then packed, and followed the rest in charge of Scrutton, Conderoy, and one or two black boys, generally passing the cattle at 5 or 6 miles from camp. I generally rode last of all, finding I could keep the courses and

distances better there than elsewhere. We had scarcely left camp this morning when we heard the report of fire-arms in front, and on riding up to a creek about a mile from camp, found that our leader and his brother had been attacked by some natives, whom they soon put to flight. The creek just mentioned held at the point of attack a deep sheet of water 20 yards broad. A little higher up we crossed it where the bed was dry. We travelled 5 or  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east, flat country, open forest, many shallow water-holes quite dry, grasses dense and much better than we had seen lately. Encamped on a deep creek running N.N.W., its bed in some parts densely timbered, the foliage rich and luxuriant, in others there are fine sheets of excellent water. Leichhardt's mela-leuca, fan-leaved palm and fig-trees, some of the latter bearing ripe fruit, also vines and tropical trees unknown to me.

17th.—Crossed the ana-branch to-day, after cutting a passage through the vines, and travelled about 7 miles N.N.E., over box country much divided, and made very irregular by numerous small ana-branches all subject to inundation, drift in the trees and marks on the trunks of the box and flooded gum from 2 to 6 feet above the levels of the flats. At about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp we crossed the main stream of the Mitchell River, bed 500 yards wide, sandy, and two channels, some water not running, banks low, and flood-marks above them; the foliage of the trees on both sides is very dense, and rich in various shades of green. The latter part of our journey bore some resemblance to a deserted garden which had contained many choice plants and trees, acacia, baulhinia, Leichhardt, and fan-leaved palm, the latter numerous, also cedar.

Encamped on a flooded gum-flat, grasses plentiful, fresh, and green, but rather coarse.

This country seemed well furnished with game—black, whistling, and Burdekin duck, Torres Strait pigeons, native companions, and many wallabies.

18th.—Travelled about 7 miles over a continuation of country subject to inundation in consequence of the overflow of the water of the Mitchell River. Our general course about N. by W.

About 5 miles from camp our leader with his brother met us, saying that a number of natives, 70 or 80, had disputed their passage (they were following the course of an ana-branch holding a sheet of running water 40 to 50 yards wide, endeavouring to find a crossing-place), throwing spears at them, some of which came unpleasantly close.

Our rifles and ammunition were soon in readiness, we could hear the natives coming up around us, when we advanced to the attack. Many of them lost the numbers of their mess, but no one of our party was hit.

A short time afterwards a crossing-place was found higher up

the stream, and we encamped on the north-east bank of a fine sheet of deep water, 70 yards wide, crossing near its north-west end, where the bed was of sandstone and above the level of the water. These ana-branches are all distinguished by a narrow belt of dense foliage.

The grass at our camp is very poor and coarse.

19th.—Travelled about 13 miles N.W. by N., leaving the river, and coming on to it again about an hour and a half before camping. Flood-marks 3 or 4 feet over most of the country we passed through, which is clothed with box, tea-tree, and mixed grasses, and has a slight inclination towards the river, whose banks are worn into perpendicular walls by floods. No water except in the river for 3 miles out.

20th.—Travelled to-day about 11 miles, for about 7 miles N.N.W., the surface of the land was much worn into hollows by floods, as the river here overflows its banks. The north-east bank is 20 feet high and precipitous. At about 7 miles from last camp we crossed a deep creek coming from the E.S.E., 70 yards wide; water 2 feet wide and running; the banks on both sides were a little scrubby. After leaving the creek, we travelled through box and bloodwood open forest, with occasional patches of tea-tree scrub and spinifex in sandstone washes. Wherever we find tea-tree, there the grasses become very poor and water scarce, except in large watersheds. Before reaching camp we were drenched by a thunderstorm from the north-west. The camping-ground is a bloodwood and stringy-bark ridge, not within sight of the river, some grass, not dense, and a little water in a gully to our left.

21st.—Heavy rains and much thunder and lightning during the night from the north-west. To-day the heat was very oppressive. Travelled about 10 miles W.N.W.; undulating open box-forest with small patches of tea-tree scrub; tea-tree away to the N.N.E. The grasses are fresh and green and tolerably good, and the country is suitable for pastoral purposes—should there be any extent of it. It appears to me, however, to end in tea-tree forest, and is possibly confined to the vicinity of the river. At about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from last camp, crossed a shallow creek, 100 yards wide, sandstone cropping up in its bed; not running. Encamped near a lagoon, the river being distant from us about 1 mile W.S.W. The bed is sandy, a quarter of a mile wide, shallow water nearly all across, banks low; it comes from the S.E. by E., and runs W.N.W. From its appearance I should think that the bed extends still further to the southward.

Could not ascertain the rise and fall of the tide. Some small fan-leaved palms and mangrove-myrtle grow near its banks.

22nd.—Just before sundown last night, our black boys reported that some natives were hovering about not far away, armed with

spears and watching our movements. In this instance it was thought better to carry the war into the enemy's camp than to have them throwing spears at us in the night. Most of our party went after them, and an exciting chase commenced, so close, that the natives were obliged to throw away their spears, two dozen of which were brought into camp. Some are made of reed, and others of hardwood, and most of them pointed with fish-bones. No one was hurt on either side.

To-day we left the River Mitchell, and travelled about 16 miles N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. Marine plains, poorly grassed and divided by patches of tea-tree forest, sometimes bloodwood, barringtonia, and acacia, or groves of the pandanus palm. Many melon-holes. We encamped on the north side of a small creek, which holds a little water; its course is N.W. by W.

As there was no grass, watches were set to keep the horses.

Latitude  $15^{\circ} 2' 30''$ .

23rd.—Travelled to day about 12 miles N.N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N. Slightly undulating tea-tree forest, nothing but desert-grass. At about 7 miles from our last camp found a little water in a small creek running W.N.W. Encamped without water, and where the country was densely timbered with very little grass. Again watched the horses.

24th.—Travelled about 6 miles N.N.W., encamping on a bloodwood, stringy-bark low ridge, sandy, but fortunately a little grass. The poor horses are looking very thin and hungry.

25th.—Christmas Day.—Travelled N.N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., about 13 miles; country slightly undulating. Tea-tree forest, in some parts a little scrubby, in no part very open. Occasional patches of bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, in which we found a little grass. At  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles from last camp crossed a creek, dry bed, running west, 150 yards wide. We have called it Balourgah Creek, that, I understand, being the native name for mahogany, its banks being lined with those trees. Encamped on the south side of a creek holding plenty of water in rocky holes; much ironstone in its bed. This we have named Christmas Creek.

26th.—Travelled to-day about 12 miles N.N.W.; country slightly undulating and a little improved. Bloodwood and stringy-bark on the ridges. Tea-tree in the hollows, sometimes scrubby and sometimes swampy, though now dry; a species of swamp-oak grows there. The soil is becoming more sandy. Encamped on the south-east side of a fine sheet of excellent water, 80 yards wide, in a creek running W.S.W. Mr. A. Jardine wishes it to be named Hersey Creek. Near the camp are acacia, bloodwood, stringy-bark, sterculia, banksia. We have rain now every day; not enough, however, to prevent our travelling. Indeed the rainy season seems to have set in.

27th.—Travelled to-day about 10 miles north. Bloodwood and stringy-bark more and tea-tree less frequent. Country slightly undulating. In the Bloodwood Forest there is some good grass—not much. Much underwood, and vines and creepers, nonda, and acacia. In the tea-tree country are some gigantic ant-hills, chiefly of a conical shape, many of them like sections of old mud-walls, from 10 to 20 feet high. Encamped in a tea-tree open flat, having found a little water in a small sandy creek near us.

28th.—Travelled to-day about 11 miles north, the first 5 miles slightly undulating. Bloodwood and stringy-bark on the rises, and tea-tree in the hollows; then crossing a dry creek 160 yards wide, sandstone in its bed, which was of several channels. The remaining 7 miles box-flats, which are more or less subject to inundation, and are also much divided by small watercourses and swamps. Crab and turtle shells strewed the ground. Pandanus, acacia, and rusty-gum. Encamped on a box-flat, the water in a small creek near us being brackish.

29th.—We had scarcely encamped yesterday before a heavy thunderstorm passed over us. The rain was a great boon, enabling us to fill our billies and cans with good water. It poured in torrents until midnight, and our tents not being waterproof we all passed an uncomfortable night.

We have hitherto been obliged to seek water near the coast, but as it is now to be found everywhere, we think of trying the interior. We accordingly travelled about 11 miles E.N.E.; at about 4 miles from camp came to a stream 40 yards wide, apparently deep water—tide rising—followed it up for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile where it rapidly diminished, and where we crossed it without difficulty. Box-flats along its southern bank on which were flood-marks 6 to 8 feet high, the grass being very rank and sedgy. The remaining  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles undulating, poor, sandy soil at first, timbered with bloodwood and stringy-bark on the rises, and tea-tree in the hollows. The grasses on the low bloodwood ridges much improved. Encamped near a tea-tree swamp.

30th.—Remained in camp. Heavy rain again last night. I should have mentioned that while at our 54th camp, and during the rain, some natives were observed by our black boys who came running into camp with the news that they were frightening and driving the horses. As at our 47th camp a chase had answered our wishes in sending them away, it was thought best to do the same here, and the same result followed. The natives, however, did not go quite so readily in this instance.

31st.—Our general course to-day was about E.N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., 13 miles. At the distance of nearly 2 miles N.E. from camp—ridges tolerably well grassed, timbered with bloodwood and stringy-bark, we came to a creek—Kendall Creek—50 yards wide, steep banks,

and deep water all across. We saw it up for about 3 miles, and then crossed without unpacking. Continued our course through bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, alternating with tea-tree. When about 12 miles from camp, came to another creek—Sinclair Creek—25 yards wide, deep, and apparently permanent water, waterlilies; it was running W.N.W. We followed it up one mile, and encamped on the site of an old native camp. The tea-tree hollows we pass through are now, owing to the recent rains, becoming swamps, and also very boggy. The grass in them is always poor; occasionally honeysuckle is to be met with. The first creek mentioned to-day I have named “Kendall Creek;” where we crossed, the water was 3 feet deep, running. The second, whose bed is sandstone, and banks abrupt, but not deep, I have named “Sinclair Creek.”

*January 1st, 1865.*—We were fortunate to find a crossing on Sinclair Creek, about one mile N.E. from camp, the water was there 3 feet deep, running, flood-marks 10 feet above the surface of the stream, which is beautifully clear. Our course was then N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., about 13 miles in all, undulating bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, commencing with a little tea-tree. At 2 miles from camp, near the top of the ridge, noticed grass-tree, at that point the grasses were rather poor. Finally, encamped on a small creek, only a few yards wide, very much like a cut channel, coming from the north-east, and running S by E.

The appearance of the country has totally changed, very much for the better, the grasses are good, though not very dense, leaving, we think, room for improvement, and the timber is finer. More than all, however, we are glad to be out of that tea-tree country, which has been as sore eyes to us ever since we left the River Einnasleigh. Near the camp are banksia, grevillea, bloodwood, and stringy-bark.

*2nd.*—Soon after arriving in camp a heavy thunderstorm passed over us from the north-east, which, towards evening, settled down into a steady rain, lasting until midnight.

Travelled to-day about 15 miles N.N.E., undulating country, the ridges being very wide and gently swelling: the soil firm, chocolate colour; the grasses good, and often dense; the timber chiefly bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, with much underwood and vines, sandstone cropping up in places. At about 11 miles from last camp the forest becomes dense, with a multitude of small bloodwood and stringy-bark saplings; and at 12 miles the ridge ended in a valley running north. A little further on came to a small creek near its head; here were banksia, pandanus, some young fan-leaved palms, and, round the edge of a small water-hole in the creek, ferns, the first we have met with. Following the creek down for about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile, we camped on the stony rising ground to the westward near a water-hole in the creek, which is elsewhere dry.

Near the camp are apple-gum, acacia, bloodwood, stringy-bark, and mahogany.

Latitude  $13^{\circ} 46' 46''$ .

3rd.—Travelled to-day about 16 miles, N.N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N., undulating country, the soil changing several times soon after leaving camp, becoming light sandy, heavy travelling; and again before reaching the next camp, firm. The grasses varied both in density and quality.

At about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp crossed a deep creek, running to the w.s.w., bed sandy, steep banks, small stream of good water running; dense foliage and vines on the banks. We have named this "Kinloch Creek." At about 7 and 12 miles respectively, we crossed two small creeks similar to cut channels, the immediate banks of which were boggy, in each a clear stream of good water. These small creeks, which probably have their source in springs, have a fringe more or less wide of banksia, and in them mahogany. The forest is chiefly bloodwood and stringy-bark, although at intervals we noticed a little iron-bark, zamia, pines, and grass-tree.

Latitude  $13^{\circ} 35' 54''$ .

4th.—We made a shorter stage to-day than usual—only 6 miles—N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W., crossing a deep creek, 100 yards wide, and several ana-branches; bed sandy, with sandstone cropping up, water not running, but plentiful; dense foliage, and vines on the banks. Undulating bloodwood and stringy-bark as far as the creek, which is 5 miles from last camp; then box, rusty-gum, bloodwood; all open forest. Encamped, just in time to avoid a heavy shower of rain, near a small creek, or ana-branch of the last creek.

5th.—Travelled to-day about 14 miles, N. by E. The first 4 miles, stony ridges, tolerably well grassed; timbered with bloodwood and stringy bark; then, descending rather abruptly into a valley, at 5 miles crossed a river running, at that point, w. by s., 200 yards wide; dry, sandy bed, the banks from 7 to 10 feet above the level of the bed, and flood-marks 8 feet above the banks. I believe this river to be the same as that one named at its mouth the Coen by the Dutch. The banks are distinguished by a line of rich foliage. Mahogany, very fine; some large melaleuca also growing in the bed, the Leichhardt, and many other fine trees unknown to me. A box-flat, about one mile in width, with ana-branches, extended along the north side of the river; the intervening spaces covered with long, coarse, dense grasses and sweet-smelling herbs. Continuing our journey, at one mile from the river passed a fine sheet of water, deep and apparently permanent, in an ana-branch. The remaining part of the journey was performed over undulating gradually-ascending country, timbered chiefly with bloodwood and stringy-bark, not of large size, sometimes box, acacia, and rusty-gum.

At about 12½ miles from last camp I obtained a peep at the surrounding country, which is to the westward level, to the south-west a short, low range, or rather high ridge, runs north and south, to the north and north-east high ridges; but the general view gives an idea of flat country, not a prominent hill to be seen. Encamped near a small water-hole, in a creek or watercourse running S.S.E.

6th.—Travelled to-day about 16 miles due north. Undulating, open box-forest: some iron-bark, bloodwood, acacia, and sterculia. Pandanus everywhere common. Small deep creeks and heads of watercourses running to the north-west and W.N.W. At about 5 miles from camp saw a short range to the eastward, trending north and south, distant 6 or 7 miles. The grasses are excellent; indeed, all the undulating country we have passed through since leaving our 56th camp, should it be found to be well watered, may be said to be well adapted for pastoral purposes. It is to be noticed, however, that *we* see the country under its most favourable aspect. Encamped near the head of a watercourse, holding in a small water-hole a little water; the edges of the hole distinctly show a stiff yellow clay.

7th.—Travelled to-day about 14½ or 15 miles N. ½ E.; at 1½ mile from camp crossing a creek about 15 yards wide and 25 feet deep; clay bed, nearly dry, and not running. It comes from the south-east, and half a mile lower down is joined by a similar deep creek coming from the N.E. by E., which we also crossed, the banks of both being very steep and covered with dense luxuriant foliage. Mahogany, Leichhardt, melaleuca, and many vines and dense long grasses. The north bank of the latter creek was a high sandstone ridge. Then about 5 miles of level country, box and apple-gum; many hollows and melon-holes. The remaining portion of the day's journey was over slightly-undulating country: bloodwood and acacia, open forest occasionally, a little tea-tree, and once banksia, fan-leaved palm, not frequent, pandanus and box, grasses dense and good, ferns, wild flowers, and creepers and vines along the ground. Encamped on a small deep creek coming from the S.S.E. and running N.N.W.; not much water.

8th.—The rains continue every day, and the nights too cloudy to obtain the latitude. Fortunately, we seldom meet with very heavy travelling, the soil being firm, except in gum-flats. We are pushing very hard to reach the settlements before the floods. We travelled to-day about 18 miles, a little to the east of north. The first 6 miles undulating, open box and bloodwood forest, very pretty country; then one mile gum-flat. In these 7 miles there were many hollows and melon-holes. We then passed over some higher ridges, on which grow some fine iron-bark and bloodwood trees; here sandstone was cropping out. Latterly, undulating

open bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, changing with tea-tree and banksia, all tolerably well grassed. Encamped on a low ridge (near a tea-tree swamp), timbered with rusty and apple-gum, bloodwood, and acacia. It rains while I am writing.

Latitude  $12^{\circ} 38' 2''$ .

9th.—Travelled to-day about  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles north, through undulating open bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, changing with tea-tree and banksia-swamps. At about 8 miles from camp crossed a large deep creek—"River Batavia"—coming from the S.E. by E., and running N.W. by W., 120 yards broad, sandy bed, 30 feet deep; water very clear and good, running about 2 feet deep.

The banks were covered with dense foliage and vine-scrub, in which grow some fine trees. The remaining distance bloodwood and stringy-bark, changing with tea-tree and banksia. Encamped near Tea-Tree Swamp.

10th.—Leave our 65th camp and travel about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.E.; soil very boggy after the heavy fall of rain. Ridges timbered with bloodwood and stringy-bark, hollows with bloodwood and gum. The cattle had preceded us, but many of them bogged when crossing a shallow watercourse—the gently sloping banks of which were very boggy—the water knee-deep, running N.N.W. After unpacking the horses we crossed them with some difficulty, and succeeded in getting all the cattle out but two—one a very fine fat bullock. These were killed, the former serving us with meat, and encamped on fine ground near the creek to cure what was not eaten, which was done by jerking it.

11th.—Continued our journey to-day in a N.N.E. direction; very heavy travelling. At about 2 miles from camp we came to a creek about 15 yards wide; water nearly bank and bank; current very strong, running to the N.W. by W. Crossed our packs and saddles and other things by felling a tree, which did not quite reach across, and obliged us to be very quick as the water was rising rapidly.

We then packed up and endeavoured to continue our course, but we had scarcely left the ridge forming the north-east bank of the creek when a heavy storm broke over us. We were now in a gum and bloodwood flat, and the ground soon ankle-deep in water; the clayey soil became boggy, and many of the horses sunk under their burdens and were unable to rise: one we were compelled to leave, as, after lifting her out of the bog, she was too weak to stand.

Returned to the ridge near the creek, and encamped about half a mile above the crossing-place.

Poisonous grass or herbs at this camp; cattle were not affected by it. We did not see the Flinders poisonous plant at any part of our journey.

12th.—Remained in camp to-day to dry everything. This morning two of our horses were found dead, Rasper and Marion, occasioned, we think, by poisonous grass or herb; and in the course of the day several other horses showed symptoms of being attacked by a similar disorder. Excessive sweat, blindness, and contraction of the stomach, and, I think, thirst, as all endeavoured to reach the water,

13th.—This morning discovered four more horses dead. Our horses were now twenty in number, so that we were reduced to the necessity of walking. So, ridding the packs of as much useless lumber as possible, we packed all the horses and proceeded on foot. It was found necessary that one should ride with the cattle, that being Binney's duty. We walked through bloodwood and stringy-bark forests, intersected by tea-tree and pandanus watercourses: in these the horses frequently bogged; so much was this the case on coming to a gum-flat that we were compelled to unpack everything and carry the packs and saddles to a low ridge, having travelled about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  N.E. by N. While travelling another good packhorse died, and shortly after reaching camp another.

14th.—Walked to-day about 7 miles N.E. by N.; undulating country, intersected by small watercourses full of water, and running generally about south-east. Sandstone cropped up on the ridges, which are timbered with bloodwood, iron-bark, apple-gum, and pomegranate. Some zyamia, and the ground is everywhere covered with ferns, and, near the watercourses, mosses. The grasses are good, but not dense. The grasses in this country are generally known as blue and Isaac's grass. The hollows are boggy, and the timber generally met with in them is bloodwood, tea-tree, gum, and pandanus.

15th.—We had a very heavy storm yesterday afternoon, commencing a little after midday and raining for three hours. The hardest rain we have had. Remained in camp to-day to dry our belongings. The rain had scarcely ceased when some fifteen or twenty natives came near the camp. They were unarmed, made a great noise, and talked, gesticulating vehemently. They would not allow us to come near,—that is, on our approach they retreated, and finally, getting their spears, came up with the intention of attacking us. Two shots only were fired; some of our party then chased them, the natives, however, soon outrunning everybody. They use the wonmerah to throw their spears, which are pointed with fishbone; the shaft being made of hardwood.

16th.—Leave our 69th camp and walk about  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles N. by E., walking over some high ridges, or one might almost say low ranges; there does not appear to be a distinct range, merely a succession of gradually-ascending ridges, which are not well grassed. The forest is not open: bloodwood and stringy-bark,

apple-gum, grevillea, young pandanus, and zamia. At about 5 miles from camp we descended gradually into a valley and crossed, the horses bogging a little; a smaller stream of excellent water running to the west. A little further on a deeper creek, bed sandy and firm, water also running knee-deep in the same direction. On the north bank of this creek, which formed the slope of a high ridge, were growing box, stringy-bark, apple-gum, bloodwood, and acacia. The creek itself is probably one of the heads of the River Batavia.

About  $5\frac{1}{2}$  or 6 miles beyond this point we came to a deep creek with steep banks, the water running slowly to the w. by n. We found a shallow crossing, and passed over without difficulty; flood-marks 20 feet above the bed. On the banks grow vines, melaleuca, and mahogany.

Next passing over a bloodwood and stringy-bark ridge; many vines, much underwood, and little grass: We encamped on the north side of a deep creek, 10 yards wide, water knee-deep, and running slowly to the westward; banks steep, and timbered with gigantic melaleuca, mahogany, seaforthia, palm, fruit, and other trees unknown to me.

17th.—Walked to-day about  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles north; at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp crossing a deep creek, banks steep, water knee-deep, running south-west, sandstone in its bed. At  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp reached the top of a low range, heading s.w. by w. Our ascent commenced with the day's journey. Some of these ridges are stony, with poor grass; and some sandy, with much underwood and vines, making walking laborious; passed some gigantic ant-hills of bright red earth, the colour sometimes approaching vermilion, 25 to 30 feet high. The timber chiefly bloodwood and stringy-bark, with grevillea, and occasionally apple-gum. At about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp crossed a small creek running to the westward, flood-marks not high; and at  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles descended into a valley. From this point we saw a low range to the north-east, distant about 5 or 6 miles, heading apparently south-east and north-west. Encamped on the north-east bank of a shallow creek; clear excellent water running to the north-west. During the latter part of our walk the soil became more loose and sandy, ending at the descent into the valley in white sand, poor grass, banksia; near the creek, pandanus, and a palm-tree, whose leaf is like a star, radiating naturally from the stem, and not split by the wind. While travelling, another horse died.

18th.—We found two other horses had died this morning from the effects of the poison—whatever it may be—which they had taken at the 67th camp. These poor brutes foamed very much at the mouth, and were continually walking round until they dropped. Our horses now numbered fifteen, and we were obliged to throw

away two empty saddles. Walked to-day about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.E., crossing several high ridges, trending generally N.W. by W., the creeks and watercourses between them being deep and narrow; some of the ridges were scrubby, all densely clothed with underwood and vines wherever stringy-bark was seen; all also either very poorly grassed or barren. Eleven miles from camp the top of the ridge was free from trees, and for ten miles to the northward nothing but brushwood to be seen. Encamped near a deep creek in a ravine running generally W.S.W.; water excellent. We passed to-day a great deal of banksia and grass-tree; in the creeks, were mahogany, pandanus, tea-tree, and the star-leaved palm.

Latitude  $11^{\circ} 46' 36''$ .

19th.—Walked to-day about 8 miles N.N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., crossing many gullies, in every one of them a stream of clear sparkling water, cool and excellent. No trees, with the exception of stunted banksia, except in the ravines; brushwood in white sand, no grass. At about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp entered a bloodwood and stringy-bark forest, very dense underwood, and vines; a mile further on more open. Encamped near a rivulet running N.E. By climbing a tree to the eastward, on the top of the ridge, I saw the coast-line to the east and south-east, distant about 10 miles. The country lying between us and the sea appears to be flat and covered with brushwood. The coast-line is marked by white sand-hills. There is some grass, not by any means dense, in the neighbourhood of the camp. With regard to the small streams of running water near the top of the range, their banks were in all instances boggy and covered with mosses and ferns.

20th.—On leaving camp to-day we endeavoured to travel north, but were foiled at 2 miles from camp by a dense impenetrable scrub; returning towards our yesterday's camp about half a mile, then about half a mile east, to the eastern slope of the range. At this point the sea was distinctly visible: a bay to the south-east, the projecting point of land bearing S.S.E.—Cape Grenville, probably. It is difficult to tell the trending of the Richardson Range. To the northward it appears to be N.N.E.; to the southward its outline cannot be seen. Continuing our course down a spur of the range, which is very stony (ironstone), we encamped near a small creek, running water, to the eastward. The course of the stream is marked by a line of small trees and dense foliage. From a point on the spur of the range, near the camp, I got the prismatic bearing of Cape Grenville,  $117^{\circ}$ .

21st.—The grass was good at the camp we left to-day, and was much needed by the horses and cattle. We walked to-day  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.E. in about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hours, crossing four deep and narrow creeks running generally east, and between them spurs of the coast

range, or rather dividing range. Every one of these creeks is full of dense vine-scrub, and through which we were obliged to cut a path. The scrub in some places quite impenetrable. One vine in particular, the long fine tendrils of which were covered with hooked thorns, was most annoying. The foliage of the trees, which are tall, has a very tropical appearance; some fruit-trees, scaforthia, and star-leaved palm. The spurs of the range are either stony or of white sand: in the former instance not badly grassed, in the latter without grass and covered with brushwood, mahogany, banksia, pandanus frequent, tea-tree occasionally.

22nd.—Walked to-day about 10 miles north. About 2 miles from camp, I ascended a bluff spur of the range, and saw the sea quite plainly at about 8 miles distant; to the north a short range trending east and west, distant from 14 to 18 miles. All the country we can see from this point, included between the north and south-east points, appears to be either scrubby or covered with brushwood.

We had only to cut paths through four or five creeks to-day, and at about 4 miles were off the range, which tails out towards the north-west very gradually. The soil is white sand, and grass rare; forest country, with dense underwood alternating with more open ridges, covered with brushwood or grass-tree, banksia, pandanus. We were twice pushed out of our course to the westward by dense pine-scrubs. Water is plentiful; every creek on this side of the range has a stream of cool, clear, running water in it. Encamped amidst some open brushwood near a small creek running east; rocky bed; not in time to avoid a heavy shower of rain from the eastward.

23rd.—Walked to-day about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. by N.; fewer creeks, otherwise the country is similar to that of yesterday. Some of the underwood very dense and difficult to walk through; grass-trees very plentiful. Pine-scrub to our right, at about 5 miles from camp, stretching away to the eastward. At about 9 miles from last camp emerged out of some very dense brushwood into undulating forest, with grass enough for a camp. We therefore pitched our tents near a tea-tree watercourse, similar to those we saw on the western watershed. We passed to-day pines, mahogany, a species of oak, rough-leaved fig, and other tropical trees. Many ferns and mosses in the creeks.

24th.—Walked to-day about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles north. At  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from camp came to a creek 10 yards wide, 8 to 10 feet deep, banks abrupt, bed of white sand, water 2 feet deep, running. Soon after skirting this creek, which runs N. by W., the country—which had previously been scrubby or covered with brushwood—improved. The soil—before white sand—became richer, and of a chocolate colour; the grass dense and good. While travelling a

very heavy thunderstorm caused the creeks to rise very rapidly, preventing us from continuing our journey.

25th.—Walked about 10 miles N.  $16^{\circ}$  W., crossing several deep and narrow creeks, each distinguished by a dense vine-scrub. At 3 miles from camp the soil again changed to white sand; and again we walked through heath, brushwood, and scrub, the latter part of the day's journey being performed in heavy rain. Encamped on a gently-sloping sandy ridge, timbered by a few stunted trees—banksia, grass-tree, and pandanus; not much grass either for horses or cattle. A small watercourse to the southward, and near the camp, runs eastward.

26th.—Leave our 79th camp and travel about  $10\frac{1}{2}$  or 11 miles N.W. by W., at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile from camp, coming to and following the course of the River Jardine, which, I think, is the Escape. It enlarges very rapidly, many creeks coming into it from the southward; the north-east bank is lined for several miles by a dense scrub, the south-west bank being densely timbered—oaks, tea-tree, heath and brushwood; in some places much underwood and pandanus. Walking is tedious and difficult. We all suffer from sore feet. Various methods are tried to walk comfortably; some have boots, some are barefooted, others use pieces of blanket; then again a kind of sandal was invented, and found to answer very well. Although much hindered by the scrubby creeks, we endeavour to push on, in rain or sunshine. Encamped on a large stream, 40 to 50 yards wide, coming from the S.W. by S., and joining the river half a mile below our camp. The river is here 60 yards wide, swollen by the recent rains, although yet 8 feet below the top of the banks, which are very irregular, and broken by small tea-tree creeks coming in from the S.S.W.

27th.—Found a shallow crossing-place of the creek, near which we encamped, and were able to carry everything over safely, swimming the horses and cattle. We then continued our course about 5 miles north-west, through country partly scrubby, partly forest, tolerably well grassed. The ground everywhere much covered by vines, shrubs, and herbs. Crossed two scrubby creeks near their junction with the river. Higher up the scrub continued for a mile beyond these creeks. Encamped near the river on the south bank of a narrow deep creek coming from the N.W. by W. The river widens rapidly, being here 100 yards wide, banks abrupt, and not heavily timbered. The vine creeks we have crossed have in their scrubs many wild and some luscious-looking fruits, many eatable and good. These would no doubt improve with cultivation. More game is to be found here than we have seen for a long time; kangaroo, wallaby, scrub and plain turkeys, pheasants, black cockatoos, parrots, and many pigeons.

28th.—Our course to-day was very winding, generally about

n.w. by w., distance about 12 miles. The river ran very much to the eastward, and had a very scrubby frontage to its north-west bank. About 3 miles from camp we came to an open heath extending to the north-east, the country being still a succession of ridges, some of which are tolerably well grassed; on others there is much underwood, sometimes heath and brushwood. It may be said in a general way of the country we have seen on the east coast, that it is composed of sandy ridges, not often grassed, but clothed with heath and brushwood, or scrubby.

The rains are heavy, and commenced always about mid-day, the nights being now fine and clear. This day's journey seemed to be very heavy for the horses, several of them knocked up on the road and were left behind.

Encamped near the river, the last  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the journey being more open. It is the stated intention of the leader to wait here a week to rest ourselves, as well as the cattle and horses.

30th.—Mr. Frank Jardine, his brother, and Euler leave us, and go on ahead to find the settlement. My dead reckoning places our present camp about 19 miles south from Somerset, and 8 miles from the mouth of the Escape River, as shown in the tracing.

Feb. 2nd.—Our leader returns. His report is as follows:—“He followed the river down, having travelled 30 miles west and 20 miles north. He then turned back, believing it to be the western waters. The river, whose width is here 100 yards, he tells us is 300 yards wide; 30 miles lower down another branch coming in from the southward, that the main stream makes a great bend to the west and south-west, in one place running s.s.e. He would not be surprised if it is the Batavia.” This proves at any rate that my estimated distances are incorrect, that is, since we have been obliged to walk.\* This is not to be wondered at when it is remembered that we have had a difficult country to walk through, that our stoppages were frequent in consequence of the horses bogging and being dragged out, having also to cut roads through most of the scrubby creeks in our way. I do not think the error in latitude more than 15 miles. For many camps I have been unable to obtain the latitude. The sextant has been shaken out of adjustment or the run injured, and no opportunity has yet offered of putting it into order. We do not see the sun, both days and nights being now rainy—not heavy rain, but continuous. The river has not risen more than 1 foot since we have been encamped here; at its lowest, the depth of water above the level of the bed was about 5 feet. It is now rising rapidly.

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\* I afterwards found that these distances were incorrect, the true distances west and north respectively from the 82nd camp to the point in our track, where the leader turned back, are about 24 w. and 7 n.

5th.—On the night of the 4th I was enabled to obtain the true latitude of this camp, having previously adjusted the sextant as well as possible. I found the plate at the back of the horizon-glass broken. Latitude 82nd camp,  $11^{\circ} 11' 39''$ , or about 33 miles south of Cape York—probably 26 miles south of the settlement. Mr. F. Jardine, his brother, and Euler cross the river, and again leave us to seek the settlement. We expect to see them on Saturday or Sunday next.

6th.—A most lovely, clear, fine day. We hope the weather is breaking.

7th.—Heavy thunderstorm from the N.W.

8th, 9th, and 10th.—Fine days, thundering a little in the afternoon; the river going down rapidly; the bed is sandy, many snags, and the banks abrupt, not deeper than 15 to 20 feet, lined with melaleuca and mahogany. The immediate frontage to the river, say 200 to 300 yards, is more or less well grassed and timbered, with nonda, bloodwood, and tea-tree. To the westward, beyond that distance, the country is undulating, white sandy soil, no grass, partly open heath, with banksia, brushwood, and pandanus, partly scrubby, and appears to be the same as far as one can see. I am told by one of the party, a native of Sydney, that this country and that in the neighbourhood of Sydney are exactly similar.

11th.—Our leader returns a second time unsuccessful; he tells me that he proceeded in a direct line N.N.E., intending to strike the coast and follow its bends until he reached the settlement. He was on the coast near the mouth of the Escape River; saw Newcastle Bay and Mount Bemer; could not cross the river, so many mangroves—so much mud and other disagreeable things. He further says that the river is more than one mile wide at the mouth, from which point he followed it up towards its source for 53 miles,\* it was there 300 yards wide, unapproachable by reason of mangroves and mud. Their horses knocked up the second day after they left us, and they were obliged, they tell us, to walk back, after being almost within sight of the place of our destination. They describe the country as wretched, compared with which that we have passed through was a paradise—that we know was bad enough. They found nothing but scrub and brushwood—no grass whatever—near the coast mangroves *ad libitum*.

Our opinions are now changed; there is no doubt that the river, near which we are encamped, is the Escape, and our best plan is to follow it until it bends to the eastward.

All our provisions are now gone with the exception of 10 lbs. of

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\* I see in the account of Mr. Kennedy's expedition the Escape River is about 16 or 17 miles long.

flour. The sugar lasted up to this camp. Most of the tea was burnt at the 16th camp, the remnant that was saved there would have lasted some time with care, but even that was lost with the mule at the 37th camp; from that point we boiled the sugar and water together and drank it instead of tea. Now we are reduced to jerked meat and water.

14th.—It was finally resolved to continue our journey down the river as far as the head of the tide. The horses are looking wretched, and are evidently almost worn out, we are therefore obliged to leave several packsaddles and other rubbish. Walked about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  or 9 miles W.N.W. The course of the river is very tortuous, the banks from 10 to 12 feet average height above the surface of the stream, which is quite free from fallen trees, although an occasional snag is seen in the shallows. Tea-tree swamps run parallel with, and are only divided from, the river by its bank. The country is nowhere open nor well grassed, sometimes scrubby, often much underwood and brushwood. Floodmarks 10 to 12 feet above the water. Encamped on the river-bank.

15th.—Walked about 7 miles W. by N., leaving the river-bank at about one mile from camp to avoid a scrub, and travelling through country very poorly grassed—banksia, heath, and brushwood—undulating white sandy soil, not boggy, although recent heavy rains have made it very wet. Near the river the soil is sometimes much richer, and there are occasional patches of better grass. The river timber is melaleuca, and mahogany, white bloodwood, nonda, tea-tree, grow in its immediate neighbourhood. Encamped on the bank of a creek, 15 yards wide, immediately after crossing it near its junction with the river. It has a sandy bed, water running 2 feet deep—banks abrupt, but not deep.

16th.—Continued our journey from camp 84, walking about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles west. The whole river frontage is not by any means open; yet we were compelled to follow its windings—so many swamps run parallel with it, sometimes forming a permanent lagoon, and sometimes running into the river by a shallow gully. At 8 miles from camp, crossed a large creek 30 yards wide, sandy bed, sandstone cropping up. We unpacked, and carried everything over at the shallowest place we could find, where the water was running beautifully clear, five feet deep. At some points the ground is covered by dense grass and vines, bloodwood, nonda, mahogany, tree-tea, and banksia. Encamped on the river-bank.

17th.—Walked to-day about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles W.N.W., keeping close to the river for about 5 miles, when a boggy swamp obliged us to leave the river-bank. It was at this point that our leader and his brother turned back, concluding that this river ran into the west coast, without having seen anything definite. As before mentioned, they told me they had travelled 20 miles north, and 30

miles west—a glance at the map will show this to have been an error. The next three miles we walked through wretched country, heath and brushwood, banksia and scrub, pandanus frequent. Our path was about one mile from the river from which we were separated by a densely-timbered swamp. The last half-mile following a ridge which brought us down to the river, and better grass, this being a good camp for the horses and cattle.

The river here overflows its banks, more particularly the north-eastern one, during floods.

18th.—Walked to-day about 9 miles north, almost at starting we crossed a creek 15 yards wide, water running 6 feet deep; its bed is sandy, sandstone cropping up, and it comes apparently from the southward.

After crossing the creek, we continued travelling near the river, having a high ridge, timbered with bloodwood and stringy-bark, on our left hand; it was also clothed with many vines and much underwood, and extended for one mile due north. After this, the features of the country were similar to those previously mentioned—a mixture of swamp and scrub, brushwood and underwood. Encamped quite close to the river, whose waters appear to be affected by the tide—a slight rise and fall being perceptible at intervals. We have been expecting the river to turn to the eastward latterly, and are somewhat doubtful, now, where it will run. My dead reckoning places our present (the 87th) camp about 7 or 8 miles from the coast, and 32 miles, in a direct line s.w. by w., from the settlement.

20th.—After staying at the 87th camp to kill and jerk some beef, we continued our journey to-day, walking about 6 miles north-west. The swamps became less frequent, and the grass improved. We were much disappointed to find the river turning to the westward, being finally brought to a standstill by a creek 15 yards wide, coming apparently from the south. Here we see mangroves and a tidal mark, showing a rise and fall of 3 feet; here we encamped. From the top of a ridge on the other or western side of the creek, one of the Jardines, by climbing a tree, saw the mouth of the river, at the distance of 2 miles. He tells me he saw Prince of Wales Island quite distinctly, and that the river-mouth is one mile wide. This is conclusive, and we must now retrace our steps and cross the river. Had not our horses been in so low a condition—some of them being scarcely able to walk—some one would have gone a-head and prevented the whole party travelling so far out of its course.

Latitude  $10^{\circ} 56' 14''$ .

21st.—Returned to the 87th camp.

23rd.—Heavy rains; the river rising rapidly.

Mr. F. Jardine and his brother, with Euler, swam across the

river, taking with them 5 horses, and start on another excursion to find the settlement.

24th to 28th.—Heavy rains continuing night and day almost without intermission. River has risen to within one foot of the top of the bank at camp, having overflowed its banks in many places, both up and down the river.

March 1st.—Shifted camp on to a low ridge about one mile down the river. Rains cease. One of the weak horses, Lady Scott, died.

5th.—The Messrs. Jardine return with good news. They had no difficulty in finding Somerset, having met with two of the blacks, who guided them. They tell us they accomplished the distance in from 35 to 37 miles. Every one very glad to see them, as we were beginning to feel the effects of living on jerked meat and water.

7th.—Made a punt by covering a frame with bullock-hide, and crossed everything dry but the last load, which consisted of pack-saddles. Encamped on the east bank of the river, which had fallen 7 feet.

8th.—Leave our last camp in much better spirits than we have enjoyed latterly, walked about 10 miles N.E. by E. The first 3 miles a mixture of swamp, brushwood, and heath, white sandy soil, banksia, and tea-tree. Then 7 miles undulating country, the ridges of chocolate-coloured soil, grass tolerably good, vines and underwood, timbered with bloodwood and stringy-bark.

In the valleys the soil is white sand, grasses poor, banksia and tea-tree. About  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles from last camp we unpacked everything and crossed a creek 6 yards wide, running 5 feet deep, coming from the south; bed, level, of sandstone; banks low and abrupt. On crossing the creek, one of the weak horses could not stand, and we were obliged to leave him to his fate. Had not five horses in good condition been brought out from the settlement, we must have left most of our goods and chattels behind.

9th.—Walked to-day about 9 miles N.E. by E. High ridges tolerably well grassed, and crowded with dense vine-scrubs. Swamps in the hollows, sometimes hidden by dense brushwood. Water everywhere plentiful.

Encamped on the south-eastern slope of a well-grassed ridge, having a swamp beneath, and a small vine-scrub above us.

10th.—Some natives came to the camp during the morning, and were sent away to bring some fish in exchange for tobacco. Five of them returned in the evening, each bringing his supply of shell-fish, receiving some tobacco, of which they are all very fond, in return. They smoked the leaf by inhaling a long draught from a piece of bamboo, which is previously filled by means of a tube made of a large green leaf in which a leaf of the weed is rolled,

lit, and the smoke blown into the bamboo. This singular method of smoking had great effect on them, making them very stupid.

11th. — Walked  $7\frac{1}{2}$  or 8 miles N.E. by N. Undulating country, bloodwood and stringy-bark, moderately well grassed—sometimes vines, underwood, and ferns, occasionally scrubby. Encamped on the slope of a ridge overlooking a small lake to the southward, its native name is Chapegwynya, pronounced ass pelt. Alligators have been seen in the lake. Noticed nonda, Moreton Bay ash, tea-tree, and mahogany. Passed many old native camps, the ground being covered with shells.

12th.—Walked to-day about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-east; alternately scrubby and open forest, high ridges timbered chiefly with bloodwood, tolerably well grassed. In the valleys, white sandy soil, tea-tree and banksia, and poor grasses; water everywhere plentiful. At about 4 miles from camp we rested on the north bank of a larger lake than Chapegwynya, named Boronto. Here Mr. Jardine met us. He had just ridden out from Somerset. He had selected a good camp near the coast, about two miles from Somerset, at Vallack Point, which we reached in the evening.

The scrubs abound with turkeys and wallabies, and occasionally *megapodii* are met with.

The site of the town of Somerset seems to be admirably selected on the south-west side of a channel, averaging perhaps 800 yards width, which divides Albany Island from the main land. The coast-line is very irregular. Ridges, 100 to 150 feet above the sea-level, end abruptly in the channel, separating small sandy or muddy bays; the shore of Albany Island also presenting similar indentations and projections. The ridges are generally clothed with scrub, although on the south-east side of the town the slopes are bald. The land between the ridges slopes down gently to the beach of each bay, being in some instances more openly timbered. Small fresh-water streams or rivulets find their way slowly to the sea. Good water is also to be found by digging a few feet deep in the hollows. The soil is very poor white sand, although vines and shrubs grow very luxuriantly in the scrubs which cover much of the neighbouring country. On the ridges the soil is very thin, ironstone frequently cropping out. Sandstone, too, is laid bare, by the weather and time, immediately above high-water mark. The views are picturesque from any point, and are a great relief to the eye after travelling for five months through nothing but forest.

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