

MARY DURACK MILLER PAPERS:**MPD/MEM: MICHAEL PATRICK DURACK MEMOIRS**

A selection of MPD memoirs transcribed - the originals, also with transcript to be found in various files, as herein indicated. Many of the events described by MPD are to be found briefly mentioned in his diaries. The memoirs in letter form to his daughter Mary were written at her request for information on the early days and characters.

Cross-referencing, descriptions and comments by Patsy Millett (PMM)**MPD/MEM1****Letter from MPD to MDM circa 1944****Re Cobb & Co journey from Camooweal to Coree in 1898**

(Original document DLH 43A with typed transcript.)

Dear Mary,

Sorry we didn't have a longer talk this morning when you came into the office, looking over some of the records of 1908 (MDM Note - "He must mean 1898") - 46 years ago. I regret that I did not give more detail of some of the incidents of my stay on the tablelands and more particulars in respect to trip for Coree from Camooweal to the then terminus of the Q'land Railways at Hughenden.

I find that the night before I left Camooweal there was a dance at the Beaumont Hotel and a 'sendoff' to myself. Mr Morrison, the then postmaster, presided, I remember well, and in reply to many kind remarks tended to myself by the people of the town, am rather amused with record in my diary which reads as follows, "I do not flatter myself that I am worthy of this, being perhaps no better, and very little worse, than the rest of mankind". Looking at the pages of this old diary, many untold incidents are recalled, and my reading appears to have been pretty general and diversified. I find that I left Camooweal on the 3 July, and did not reach Hughenden, the then westerly terminus of the overland Railway from Townsville, until the 12th of July, a period of 10 days, which seems a long time compared with present days' travelling.

Recalling the incident of myself as one of Cobb & Co's coach drivers. We got into Richmond after dark. It was a very cold, black evening. Entering the bar of the hotel, some three or four persons were observed in merry carousel. After serving myself and two or three others, fellow passengers of the day, the somewhat attractive young girl behind the bar drew my attention to one of the members we noticed on entering and referred to him as our coach man, or driver, for the final run of 80 miles into Hughenden for the following day. I remarked that from present appearances, the trip for the morrow didn't look too assuring. Her reply, "Oh, he'll be all right in the morning", was accepted, though with some doubt. We were aroused for breakfast at 4.30am. A bitterly cold morning, and no fire. After considerable delay and trouble in getting the horses - a train of five, with three in the lead and two in the pole - harnessed to the coach - we got away about 7 o'clock. I secured a privileged seat in front, alongside the driver. We did not go very far before I found the driver swaying from side to side and nodding off to sleep. I suggested that he had better let me have the reins. He remarked, with some dissent, "Can you drive?". "Well I think I can manage this team all right". He then handed me over the reins, and after a few minutes, "Oh, you're all right", and then concealed himself in a large box of the

coach that was used for the carriage of sundry large parcels, from which he did not emerge until 3 or 4 in the afternoon.

At distances of 15 or 16 miles, a fresh team of horses was in readiness, and attended to by grooms, whose duty it was to release the incoming teams and harness up the fresh relay. Cobb & Co's new driver was questioned at the different stages regarding the former driver, but their inquiries thereto were satisfied when it was explained that he was temporarily indisposed, or suffering from a slight colic attack.

During the day's run, (there were) quite a few persons riding the road on horseback, and you were generally greeted with "Good day, how's things. Any mail for me?". Enquiring the individual's name, you looked under the seat, where loose letters were kept. "Thankyou, so long", and away again. A remarkable person met during the day, riding a fine looking, big, black, upstanding horse with bald face, the rider was a woman with red hair, tall and gaunt-looking, who went under the sobriquet of "Red Jack". Many stories were told of her. She sought employment and worked on many stations of the district. Was said to be quite an efficient stockman, or woman, and an expert with the stockwhip, which she very effectively used on some of her fellow stockmen, who ventured to make undue overtures to her.

Resuming the story of the coachman, whose name I now don't recall, beyond that I heard of him as "Bill". Well, about 3.30 in the afternoon, we called at a large flowing bore on Ishemon Station (?), and here some little time was lost in searching for a police officer escorting the coach. Eventually we found him, calmly sleeping close by under a bough shed. It was here that our coach man, Bill, came to light again, and took charge of the team. We had not gone many miles when crossing the road where very deep furrows were cut in the black soil, the horses in the pole floundered and fell. The coach was partly dragged over them by the three leaders. Eventually, by hooking the three horses onto the back of the coach, and with the assistance of the passengers, the coach was pulled back, thus relieving the two pole horses. very little damage was done, and we soon got going again. It was after dark when we got into Hughenden Post Office. The driver called for assistants. No-one appeared. I assisted in throwing onto the verandah the many large wicker baskets which held the mails. Next morning, I caught the train for Townsville, and heard no more of our coach man, except to learn a few months later, that the chap was hauled over the coals and sacked - the poor devil.

Letter from MPD from Argyle Station 16/6/44 to his daughter Mary Durack Miller, Perth. Includes first camp on Ord River.

(Original letter is in MDM/C/FAM/COR file 310 A 1944.)

My dear Mary;

Your two letters - one of the 3rd of the month June and the other 5th the month per Eric when he and Marjorie came out to Newry on the 11th inst.

Glad to know that you are all well and read your letter with much interest. I was very interested in what Bet had to say in her letters to you about the visit to say goodbye to Lady Gowrie and what Dr Wood had to say about 'The Magic Trumpet', most encouraging indeed. Also very interested in Capt Peters remarks in respect of 'They Found a Land.'¹ I don't know that you should be in any particular hurry about publication of this Mary, for there are more details that I would like sift out for you. You mention '**The Mountain Maid**' as referred to in my diary notes 28/11/80. This now becomes, as you

¹ MPD refers to 'They Reached a Land', the Durack family history first embarked upon by MDM - the later version named 'Kings in Grass Castles'.

say, of some historical importance after the lapse of so many years and seeing that she was the first white woman to pass thru' this particular area, though probably not the first one on the Ord, as you remark, as some women landed in Wyndham in June or July of 1886 and it is quite possible that some odd members may have wended their way on to Halls Creek during the early rush of 1886. I remember the occasion of her passing very well. We were then camped on the Ord River about 30 miles up from here. I don't know that I ever heard this woman's name. I recall their camp was some little distance above where the hut was then and that they passed on next day for Wyndham, or as it was then more commonly known, 'The Gulf' - not 'Wyndham' and I then came overland via Wave Hill or Ord River Station. I can't just recall any particular stories about her but she went on to Halls Creek and I don't know that I heard anything of her after that. I don't know of anyone who could enlighten us about her or that might know her real name except Charles Flinders or some one of the old prospectors that may yet be still alive around Halls Creek. I will write Gordon Buchanan, Halls Creek and ask him if he could find out anything around there. It would certainly be interesting to have her name. There was that much talked of character at the same time known as '**Mother Dead Finish**' about whom many stories are also told of her keeping a shanty somewhere on the Dunham River and her fights for protection with the natives. She claimed to have ridden or walked over the Carr-Boyd Ranges as far as the Big Lagoon over from Argyle in quest of her lost horses, but I very much doubt this story. How one regrets that one didn't keep a more detailed account of those passing around that have now become of some historical interest. Names referred to in your letter - **Bob Button** came over with Nat Buchanan with the first mob of cattle to the Ord - the first manager of the Ord River Station - he later took up Ruby Plains and stocked it. Died in Halls Creek.

CD Price, first magistrate Wyndham died and buried 90 Mile beach near La Grange a few years ago. Ranford came to Wyndham with John Forrest as surveyor in 1886 and selected the present site - remained Wyndham for a year or so. He surveyed a town site where the present Meat Works are now. The blocks were bought up principally by English and Perth investors at enhanced prices with the consequence that some of the business people of the (Westerly?) old town site left (remained? PMM) where they first landed. Foundations for somewhat palatial Gov't quarters were started at the newly surveyed site but finding later that none of the residents of the present old site prepared to leave, the idea was abandoned. **Duncan McCauley**² worked for my father on Thylungra - a young man then of 19 or 20 years - came out with the first arrivals Kimberley - worked on and off with different members of the family - married a Miss Cameron and for many years was on Ivanhoe - acquired some cattle of his own which he later sold to Capt. Bradshaw. Died at Ord River Stn. You may already know of the incident of his burial alongside Tudor Shadforth who was killed by the blacks about 25 miles north of the Ord near Negri Junction. **Earnest or Ernest Baynes**, as we knew him was a member of the well-known firm of Baynes Bros, Brisbane and owned big abattoirs and slaughtering houses outside Brisbane. He opened a store in partnership with a man called Kellaway - 'Baynes and Kellaway' near where the present post office stands, brought a supply of salt casked meat to Wyndham amongst the lines of general business - this was about June or July 1886. The casked salt meat was very soon disposed of in sale to the early diggers being then the only meat procurable. Sold out towards the end of 1886 when Ernest Baynes came and stayed with brother Jack and myself for some 2 or 3 weeks before again returning to Brisbane. There was a friendly relationship existing between us from our first meeting in Wyndham and JW and myself made their store or quarters in Wyndham a place to stay.

His nephew whom I met recently in Brisbane is now manager of Mooreheads - long established Stock and Station Agents of Queensland. (Baynes) no association with Baines River, the river I think called after a member of Gregory's party that were camped on the Victoria River in 1853/4. was it not? on Gregory's bottle tree as you know.

² Surname spelled McCaully.

M and J Byrnes. Both Michael and Jim Byrnes worked for my father on Thylungra before coming out here. Jim Byrne landed with us per SS Rajaputana³ at View Hill April 1886 and accompanied us to then 'home' at old station 30 miles up from here. Michael Byrne later - about the end of 1886 brought out about 100 head of selected horses from Thylungra Stn for father and delivered them at the old (Argyle) station. I became related to Kilfoyle in that Tom Kilfoyle, Jack's father, married Kattie Byrne, sister of M and J Byrne. The Byrne sisters having come from Wagga, NSW to stay with their brother M. Byrne who was the first to secure a license for a hotel at the present 6 Mile site early 1887. With the sisters from Wagga also came Will Byrne with his wife and entered into partnership with his brother at 6 Mile and ran in connection with the Hotel a dairying and slaughtering and butchering business. We supplied them with the milk cows. W Byrne died 1941 or 42 at his home Tipperary Stn, NT. The sons are now said to be very prosperous. Heard that son Harold died recently in Sydney.

Carr-Boyd - very well-known personage - man of commanding physique standing 6ft 3 in height - wrote for some of the Qld papers under the name of 'Potjostler' - many stories on record of him.

With McDonald in early 1886 he blazed the first track from Wyndham to Halls Creek for the first prospectors - quite a Maunchausen (?)⁴ and Bohemian in his way - was great company. I recall one or two of his visits to Wyndham when champagne flowed very freely and he gave musical entertainment on a gum leaf. He had a beautiful voice and his rendering of 'Queen of my Heart' received great applause and called for frequent encores - 'them were the days.' Was this not heard or read of Carr-Boyd - 'few such characters now to be found now in Australia.'

Brands. With the first arrival of our cattle on the Ord there were two different lots that my father was interested in - one lot of some 5/600 head in which John Durack, MJ's brother, had 1/3rd interest, the other lot which my father had on his own account. John Durack brought out the lot in which he was interested and when he left and returned to Brisbane he left a man in charge to look after them named Jim Barnes. In order that the two different lots might be distinguished one from the other, one lot was branded 7PD and the other lot DP - probably then the only brands then on hand. 7PD was the old original Thylungra brand but which lot bore the 7PD or which the PD I am not quite sure. Perhaps if I again review my diary I might know. John Durack as you know, was killed by blacks in Nov 1886 shortly after he returned from Brisbane. My brother JW was with him at the time. John Durack left his will in favour of his mother and following on this my father bought out from the mother John Durack's interest in it at a certain price somewhere around £3 per head I think it was. After this we then branded with the DP which continued as the Argyle Station brand until we registered D on the cheek which is now the cattle brand. The DP ring used only on the horses. Why we dropped the 7 I can't exactly say but I think it was due to the fact that under the WA Act only two letters were required for registration. Re killer 8/5/86 referred to by you. This was to record whether the beast killed was that in which John Durack was interested or whether one in which my father held first interest. Since referred to as a 'steer' in my diary, it must have been one of the original herd or most probably was calved on the way out for the cattle were 2 years and 8 months on the road from the time they left Thylungra to when they arrived on the Ord, August 1885.

'Home' referred to in my diary must necessarily mean the hut or old station 25 or 30 miles up from here, the then resting or halting stage after delivery or arrival of the cattle from Qld. To this place JWD, MJD, my uncle Michael, Tom Kilfoyle, Jim Byrnes, Jack Skeahan, Theo Wolfe,⁵ Tom Hays⁶ and a couple of 'boys' - natives - wended our way taking 10 days to get from View Hill where we first landed. On

³ The vessel was named 'The Rajputana.'

⁴ MPD means 'Munchhausen' with ref. to the eccentric Baron von.

⁵ MPD is here referring to Robert Tennant Stow Wolfe whom he called 'Theo' or 'Theodore' for reasons unknown. Perhaps it was so as not to confuse him with another Bob, like for example, Bob Parry?

⁶ Correct spelling is HAYES.

our arrival Jim Barnes was at this depot, left in charge of the cattle that belonged to Tom Kilfoyle, my father and John Durack and another young fellow named Bob Parry who represented the cattle then belonging to Lumley Hill and my Uncle Michael which were driven out by MJD. It was with the death of my Uncle Michael that MJD became associated with Hill on Lissadell Station. When we arrived the outcamp or quarters referred to by you consisted of a somewhat neatly constructed grass house or humpy with accommodation for three beds and a table in the centre for meals, about 7 ft high. The roof was (a high end?) well thatched with grass which rendered it impervious to rain, the side walls consisted also of grass neatly laced with green hide. The beds were of hide on a wooden frame. The kitchen a somewhat open fireplace with a shelter on one side as a shield against the south easterly winds. The store supply which in those days was meagre and scanty was stacked outside the hut and covered with a tarpaulin. Shortly after our arrival Jim Barnes left, lured by the gold reports. He was a comparatively young man of about 40, or perhaps younger, well-educated, good looking and of a very pleasing manner. For the little time he was with us I have very pleasant recollections of him and both JW and I were sorry when he left, (the reason for being) if I recollect rightly because he and MJD didn't quite agree with one another. He later carried on a store business on one of the gold fields of WA with some success, but died not many years after leaving the Kimberleys. Bob Parry who remained at the old depot with Barnes during the recess remained in the employ of MJD for some years after at Lissadell.

Kilfoyle and Hayes had their camp about 15 miles further up the river from us. Soon after our arrival they put their cattle together and shifted first to what you may remember as being sometimes called the 'Old Station' about 4 miles over East from Argyle. This at the time ran through to about the NT /WA border, but (when they) found out later that the WA/NT border was some 12 or 14 miles further East they moved on and established the Home at what is now Rosewood. My Uncle Jerry was originally one-half shareholder in Rosewood with Kilfoyle and Hayes as joint owners in the other half. Hayes broke away from the partnership and moved his portion or share of cattle and horses to about the bend of the Ord River and Goose Hill, naming his place 'Hayendale' which we (CD&D) afterwards bought. Soon after this my Uncle Jerry and Kilfoyle dissolved their partnership - my Uncle taking his portion of cattle and horses on to the Dunham which he had previously taken up. This for my Uncle in the light of after events proved a most unfortunate move. MJ Durack soon after our arrival at the old station or hut referred to, started putting his cattle together and moved over to the present homestead Lissadell. My brother JW, and myself remained at the old hut until the end of November or December when we moved protem to Lissadell. We did not have to remove any of our stock - cattle or horses - for we were on our own side. Previous to going to stay for the while at Lissadell we had already selected the present Argyle site for a homestead with the idea of establishing ourselves here as soon as possible after the wet season. My memory of our short stay at Lissadell was not a pleasant one and we were very pleased to get away.

Well Mary my dear girl I think that about answers most of the queries you asked for. What I have already stated may recall something further that you would like to have - if so let me know. I understand you saw a good deal of Mrs Ernestine Hill on her recent visit to Perth. I read an interesting article she had written for 'The Western Mail', dealing with the material of historical interest that is available in WA and that she had collected for preservation in the archives of Perth. I am sorry I missed seeing her and if you are writing please kindly remember me to her. I must really try to write her some one of these days. Your Uncle Dermot with Sir John⁷ would I am sure be entertaining and that old Sir John would have been at his best after a few glasses. I was sorry to hear of the sudden death of poor old Booty⁸ so soon after I went along to the Weld Club to say goodbye to him the day before I left Perth, little dreaming that it would be our last meeting on this sphere.

⁷ Sir John Kirwan was in Ireland visiting MP's brother Dermot Durack.

⁸ Pioneer Fred Booty.

Lady Gowrie and Ivie price must have had a very kindly feeling for Bet which I think she never quite realised or appreciated (their little present to her and Perpetua.) Lady Gowrie apparently much appreciated 'The Magic Trumpet', judging from her remarks thereon. What did she really mean when she referred to it as 'an escape'? Was it an escape or certain get away from her grief or troubled mind? Her son's death must indeed have been a very tragic blow.

Mother has no doubt kept you in touch with most of my movements since I came north. Reg and myself rode in from the camp 'Police Hole' about 30 miles only last Tuesday week. I came in response to wire from Bob Smith from Halls Creek to say he would like to met in Wyndham re leasing the Wyndham Hotel. Tried to book a passage from Newry to Wyndham and wired Eddie Conellan Alice, but he could not guarantee me a passage - said it was dependent upon the amount of mail he had to lift from Katherine. I thereupon cancelled passage and wrote fully to Bob Smith Wyndham per post. I got a reply yesterday from Bob Smith then back in Halls Creek to say he rec. my letter and would write me fully re the matter per first plane. Eric and his Marjorie out to Newry per car last Sunday - stayed for the night. I came on here next day with them. As I stepped out of the car and walked down the verandah, memories or reflections crowded upon one, muted with a certain sadness. Imagination pictures it to some degree but I feel that I can't write or express in words the feeling. Here is a new generation entering upon the scene. It is not a feeling of sadness on that account but a sadness in reflecting upon the experiences of my own early life in our entry on the stage - so different to that of the young couple now appearing - with the memory and thoughts of all those that have disappeared from the stage since those early years. Aunty Marie and Bird still remain. Later after they left, Uncle Pat's wife Aunty Eva arrived upon the scene, a young woman, full of joy and life - now I understand very frail and weak and very depressed in spirits. Aunty Eva disappeared from Argyle and Mother soon entered, making my life much happier - she enjoyed the life for some years when educational responsibilities called her south - yourself and Reg having reached that stage. It is pleasing to us to know that Mother still preserves that vivacity and brightness of the spirit as well as the beauty and charm of her early years, whilst your Dad, advanced in years as he is, can still 'Travel Hopefully', despite that he might get knocked down occasionally on his journey.

I leave you to imagine how I really feel, for I cannot really express it in words. The feeling for Argyle as a 'home' seems to have gone, leaving more in mind memory of the place now as a money-making proposition. Rather a pity that this should be so, don't you think? I think Reg has a very good, well-balanced wife in Enid and one who will help to stabilise his life. She appears to be very fond of Reg and expresses her loneliness during his absences over the last 3 weeks. I mentioned earlier in this letter that Reg rode in with me from 'Police Hole' to see his Enid. He could only stay for the one night and rode back next day after lunch. Eric brought Tom Ronan over the other day to Newry and I fitted him up with horses from there from whence he would go on to the Auvergne mustering camp. Reg will be very glad to get him for it will now enable him to spend more time at the homestead. When Reg went out about 3 weeks ago Enid flew over to Newry per Eddie's plane. She and Irene Fuller are somewhat of the same disposition and appear to get along very well together. Nevertheless, she is longing to get back to Auvergne again and hopes to get across with Gugeru on his return trip with Auvergne loading about 21st or 22nd inst. Eric and his Marjorie passing through that early stage of matrimony which is more or less the experience of all such 'love sick swains'. Not as I envy them in their joys, for no doubt most of us have experienced the same and are always thrilled with the memory of it. What a contrast between the two girls - I won't attempt to describe the contrast, for you could do it much better.

I am glad to learn from your letter that the bairns are well and that Patsy and Robin are interested in their kindergarten work, having reached the age of must I say, the development (not quite the word 'desire to know' better) of the young mind and certainly a most interesting study. Tell them that

Grandad was asking after them and sent love. I will be very interested in hearing later from in respect of how the books are going and as to publications.

Had a wire today to say that Auvergne delivery now fixed for 12th July instead of 1st as previously arranged - looks for all others likewise altered. This may hold me up a bit longer than expected. Well, I think I had better bring this hurried scribble to a close for it is now just on dark as I write in my mosquito (proof) room and hope you will be able to read it. I could perhaps have given you some of my recent camp experiences and of Paddy Reid the Irish Revolutionist, Reg's camp cook - but that must await another time. Eric is running me over to Newry tomorrow from whence per horse again for Reg's camp.

Last 2 or 3 days and nights exceptionally cold with strong south easterly during the day.
Trusting you are all very well and with fond love my dear girl,
From your affectionate Dad.

(Original document to be found in DLH 1 No 62 with typed transcript. This is a typical letter from MPD with concerns of the day mostly involving poor rainfall, horse and cattle losses and numbers for shipment south. Regrettably, he mentions a great 'clean sweep' of many letters and documents going back to 1874 that had accumulated with the belongings of his father mother at Argyle. PMM)

From MPD Argyle Station 20th Nov 1902 to JW Durack, Kalgoorlie.

My dear Jack,

Here I am again back at the scenes of our earlier days which were brought more vividly before me yesterday as I went through piles of old letters and newspapers, scraps of old diaries belonging to both you and myself reminding me of when we were battling about together. In one place I read where you and I started over for Kilfoyles (Rosewood) from MJ's (Durack, Lissadell) and made three attempts to cross the river and you got all sunburnt. Another place you and I mustering bullocks for Will Byrnes and you shot a great big barramundi. Various other notes about your movements on the fields and letters and monies sent to me here. There was such an accumulation of rubbish that has been piled up here from years that I made pretty well a clean sweep of the lot. Talk about medals, Agnus Deis, religious pictures, books etc - enough to start half a dozen mission stations - some half-eaten with whiteants and others gone quite mouldy. I got old letters dated away back to 1874. I suppose you often remember on Thylungra what we used to call 'Mr Healy's old boco mare,' - well I saw even the receipts for her amongst some of the papers. I remember it used to be a great event when we were boys accompanying the old man up to the yard when any fresh horses used to come in and have a look at his mare.

You know it is a bit quiet here alright. To a man after coming back you feel a sort of restlessness - though in one way not having enough to do and in another way so much to be done in a new place as it were without the facilities or the means to get done what you would like to see done.

You will be surprised to hear that this is the driest year I have yet seen in this country - just fancy, the hole at the station here almost dry and I have had to remove on to the Behn River nearly 200 head of horses out of (Inverary's?) paddock, being poor mares and foals and if there is no rain within a couple of weeks, everything in the shape of cattle and horses will have to be shifted from here. There is plenty of water in the well for the goats and household purposes. You remember what we used to consider a good permanent waterhole down from here at the old Surveyor's Stockade - (Place originally surveyed by FH Johnston who was besieged there by Aborigines in 1885, known as Stockade Creek. PMM) well it is dry (for) some time. The Behn therefore you can say is practically dry from Octo Camp down to about 3 miles below the junction of the Stockade and Behn - that is a stretch of 11 or 12 miles. The old station (Kilfoyle's) is dry and I had the cattle removed up to Soda Spring the other day.

There was a splendid young stud bull perished the other day on the outside of the fence. There were bogged and dead about the big lagoon - from examination yesterday about 150 head - that is counting both lagoons, the big and the little one further up. Any further loss in this direction I am glad to say will be minimised for a time anyhow, for over at Pig Hill around the four mile along Lissadell Road there has been a heavy storm giving enough water for about 3 or 4 weeks. This allows the cattle to get off the frontages. I was only at the Keep the other day to have a look at the Dawn Hill bullocks brought in by (Alf) Martin - they are a splendid lot, as good as any I have yet seen come in. There were a few sick of the balance that were left behind after this shipment. Do not go off too much, there should be a very good lot for the December shipment. There should be at least 2/300 good bullocks fit for shipment in Cambell's lot: I expect word any day to say that Campbell is at the Keep upon which I will go out to see him. Jack Martin is going up for the Ord River bullocks. I anticipated having them away by now only that by postponing for a few days I will shortly be able to dispense with a few hands and perhaps allow time for the horses to recover on some good feed that I have put them onto. J. Patterson, one of Copley's men and part owner (Ord River Station) passed here the other day. I did interview him but I learn from Ambrose (Durack, son of Stumpy Michael) that they knew nothing on the Ord about our purchase and beyond that they would not or could not muster for us; in any case I am sending our men up. The situation may not be so bad as they make out with respect to the want of horses to muster and the very weak condition of the herd in general.

I have heard nothing of the South African business since I left Wyndham. I suppose it is all settled up by this; great pity if we get nothing out of the business for they would have been a good asset in our market at present.

Oh, I meant to look up or make enquires down with the firm in Fremantle if they have given us the grazing rights of Goose Hill Reserve. I applied for it when in Perth and they said it would be granted subject to magistrate's approval in Wyndham. It had not come up for approval when I came up last on the Tangier but I spoke to Gibbons and he said he would approve it as soon as it came along. It is most necessary that we should secure this right for next year. We will have our whole haycutting plant somewhere in on the river on this reserve. Gibbons I hear goes down on the Bullara - will you make a point of having this fixed up. Blatchford (Government geologist) I got to give me a report the other day after taking him out to look at the 3 Mile Gorge. He reports favourably and I sent the report on to Gibbons who will be able to show it to you. I fitted both Blatchford and Black with horses from Wyndham for Halls Creek. They appear both good practical fellows and may do something with the Ruby (Ruby Queen gold mine near Halls Creek owned by Patrick Durack and languishing since his death. PMM)

We haven't got a scrap of vegetables on the place owing to breakdown of pump some time ago. I am sending on for new pump in Wyndham tomorrow. I hear that Charlie Lincoln who was to be be shortly up is not likely to be along for some time - a most unsatisfactory man - I will get rid of him at once. (C Lincoln, a fencer, nevertheless continued to be mentioned as an employee of CD&D up to 1921. PMM) I am sorry to see the salt bush that I had under cultivation last year up in the paddocks is all perished - it had fully 12 months growth. I fancy horses or goats must have been allowed to get at it.

Trusting you are well and with kindest love

I am dear Jack your good frere Michael.

MPD/MEM2**MPD DIARY EXTRACTS**

MPD Memories of dates and events taken from his diaries between 1894-1907. ODH with typed transcription. (Original in DLH 1. No 56A - transcript 56B.)

Cummins in 1898, suicide.

S(L)ing? speared by blacks, Nov 1898.

1898 Deacon of Rosewood

McCauley left Argyle with 398 bullocks, very fair lot, on Dec 26 1898. 200 of the bullocks splendid. PB finished the main preparing to get away by the next Tangier. Dec 29, Bailey took the boy Joe and starts for Wyndham. Caught bullocks blocked at Ord on flood Dec 30. PB holding cows opposite to get bullocks over, but failed on 31 Dec. O'Keefe finds cattle speared, took spears out of others. Crossed bullocks Jan 2, except 65, which get across July 3. Boat due 5th, Cassidy brings out word.

1895 (??? does he mean 1898?), Mr Duff arrives Feb 25, goes to Newry 28th. Tagliaferro takes bullocks April 4.

May 1 Tagliaferro returns, J Skeahan takes bullocks through town as before. 270 head. 1896 sold CD&D bullocks at @ 4/16/-d. Nov 23 1898, PB sends young Tommy back to Rosewood to get a small pony belonging to Deacon. Tommy returns, can't find the pony, on the 24th.

Met Deacon 13 Oct 1895 at Rosewood on his way to Wyndham. PB and uncle over ... before going to Rosewood on 12 Oct. PB returns to Argyle 13 Oct. PB came up from Wyndham with Mary (Marie). Returns on 'Fremantle' 10 Oct 1895. Ambrose over from Lissadell with Uncle (Jerry) and MJ very sick. Oct 16 to Auvergne with Boxer. Oct 23 PB up the river Behn after a bull for Nelson. Mr & Mrs Deacon arrive from Rosewood with their wagonette. Patsy (PM), from Newry, where he was to meet Deacon dray, but disappointed. Said goodbye to Aunt (Fan) and children at Argyle Oct 26. Going south, Bird & Mary also.

1894 Uncle Michael at Argyle very ill.

Jan 5, JW from Wyndham, brings news that material for Wyndham yards arrived by boat on 26 Jan. 8 Feb, drove Uncle Michael over to Lissadell. Jim Clarke got heavy fall of grey mare, Dinah, and put in buggy, but held up for days with wet. Uncle Jerry, from Wyndham, reports boat due from Darwin week or two. Uncle Michael therefore decided to get away, and I drive him over. Caught after crossing Cor??? Creek in rain. Next day, tried to go on, but couldn't. Bill Honis goes on to station, and brings assistants. Feb 16, with PB, bringing extra horses, 'Flower' in lead of other two. Feb 20, PB and self left with Uncle Michael for Wyndham via Newry. Last 7 miles very boggy. 'Nellie', chestnut mare in buggy for the first time, could not cross river. PB and self go on with Joe Hart to Carlton, return next day with Jim Durack, who assists us cross.

Dehorner used for first time by us Apr 1894.

17 Apr 1894, Pater, JW, self and boy Alex start for Wyndham to celebrate opening Wyndham Yards. In buggy, father, who drove uncle on to town, Apr 21. Apr 23, Victoria Mail boat is sighted. That day, I drive the last peg, or spike, in Wyndham Cattle Yards. Then to Cable's (residence), where toasts are made (to the day). I represented East Kimberley as spokesman. Present Warden Geffton (??) Doherty, self, Tobin and others. Boat takes Uncle Michael. Apr 27 MJ's cattle at 12 mile. Uncle Michael died in August. Clifton and O'Donnell to Argyle on the way to (gold) fields 10 May 1894. Started with 200 bullocks for Wyndham 18 May, met Wynne, mailman. Joe Ross dies Wyndham. Met MJ on way to

Wyndham with 64 bullocks. Overtaken at Emu by PBD and Pumpkin. JW, PB, Pumpkin remain with cows cut out, 18 May at stud. Boxer, myself with bullocks boxed?? with MJ. May 23, started in with bullocks. No difficulty yarding. Drove all night, boat away 25 May.

Ivanhoe formed May 1894.

July 31, 190 bullocks for Wyndham. Durack Bros shipped Aug 15 largest mob yet shipped, 277 in 5.5 hours. Strom, captain. Contract fulfilled for year 1894. Ina McCaully born Aug 1894 at Goose Hill about 12 Aug. JW, self and Boxer return after shipping to Argyle. Oct 6, Red Gauntlet, with Kilfoyle and Wife, Wyndham from Darwin. Albany, from Fremantle.

Tagliaferro Oct 10 for cattle. JW and MJ and Hoins go south. Mr Duff at Newry Oct 17. Dec 15, Cables left Wyndham.

1898 Apr in the NT, 1889, 91, 92, 1896, 1897, 1890, 1902,3,4,5,6. 1903, Dec 19, Sheila Durack christened. Present, Marie, Mr and Mrs Frank Connor, Mrs Connor holds baby, Nurse Barnes.

Mar 1910, on the India Valli? to Singapore, after arranging to start Manila business. Jan 12 1902 at Albany, Father Clune preached, "Serve the Lord and He will give all the desires of thy heart." Jul 1 1907, bought all Mr Deacon's bullocks from 1907 and 1908 for 5 pounds. Bullita formed in 1907.

MPD/MEM3

**MPD Recollections re a character calling himself 'Derougement'
(Original in NIP file 1. No 52B)**

Apparently Mr De Rougement claimed he rode the backs of turtles in the bush, which caused a stir in Perth in the early 30's.

Telegram from Mr Birtwhistle to MP Durack 3.10pm 12/3/31:

'Controversy daily regarding De Rougement bona fides stop appreciate your reflection of him"

Birtwhistle, 6.20p

Reply from MPD attached:

Mr Birtwhistle
West Australian
Perth

Some 37 or 40 years ago, exact date not available at present, since man afterwards appearing before the public as De Rougement visited Kimberleys. Cattle boats on way to Wyndham then occasionally called at Goose Island entrance Cambridge Gulf, where turtles abound. De Rougement would no doubt have there seen the turtles ridden over the beach. He remained Wyndham, short while later temporarily engaged out at station border NT, where I met him. Claimed to be Swiss or French origin, tall, thin, neglected attire, military bearing, reserved, probably 50 odd years age. Solitude of the bush and wanted reading matter. Mentioned had two schoolbooks, Telemachus and Fontaine Fables in the Original, which he expressed desire again read. Returning head station, forwarded books and papers, which he duly returned with thanks. Heard no more of him until appearance some years after, lecturing on turtles.

MPD/MEM4**MPD's notes on establishment of Bradshaw's Run, 1894-1901
(Original in DLH 52A)**

Information from this source included in appendix to Chapter 14 of "Sons in the Saddle"

Mr Joe Bradshaw took up 4800 square miles country on Victoria and Fitzmaurice Rivers, NT (of SA), January 1894, under pastoral lease of 42 years dating from January 1 1894.

He also purchased all the sheep from Goldsbrough Mort & Co, then running on their Wickham River Station. Messrs Gunn and Young inspected and took delivery of the sheep January 20. Mr Gunn then returned to Port Darwin, while John Young remained in charge of the sheep. Mr Bradshaw purchased the steamerette 'Red Gauntlet' in Melbourne, filled her with necessary supply of stores and despatched her for Pt Darwin in charge of Captain Lindsay.

Mr Bradshaw also purchased a thoroughbred colt named Associance from Mr AF Bradshaw. The colt is out of a fireworks mare.

April 18 1894

The steamer 'Red Gauntlet' and schooner Twins, left Pt Darwin for the Victoria River. The complement of the Red Gauntlet was; J Bradshaw, owner; R Lindsay, master; R Woolhouse, Engineer; D Daroch, mate; Ah Pan, cook; Sales, deckhand and Johnson, fireman. Schooner Twins was manned; AE Gunn, master; J Larien, mate, Ivan and D Buchanan. Vessels anchored in Blunder Bay.

The Red Gauntlet grounded in Shoal Reach and the Twins collided with her, causing considerable damage.

17

Some weeks were spent in viewing the country along the River and the plains of the Shaw were considered to be the most suitable for settlement, but owing to the number of shoals, the vessels could not be taken their with their heavy cargo, so temporary station was formed at the base of the Dome.

26th

Mr Bradshaw, with horses purchased from Auvergne and accompanied by Larien and black boy named Nim, proceeded to travel up the Victoria Dome and Gregory Rivers to the sheep.

29th

At the Gregory Crossing, they were attacked by blacks, Nim was killed and Bradshaw narrowly escaped.

1894, June 2

Mr Bradshaw reached the sheep and found Mr Young and party and sheep were alright, except that several of the sheep had died from poison. As Gregory River Route was considered quite unpredictable, it was decided to send them round via Price's Creek and Flora & F Fitzmaurice Rivers to the new station.

Mulligan had carted the year's wool to the navigable head of the Victoria River. The Depot, where it was taken by boat to the SS Gauntlet at the Dome and thence to Pt Darwin.

August 8

Mr Bradshaw took geologist HYL Brown and party to the Victoria River to make an exploration for the govt.

Communication now opened between the sheep party, now on the Fitzmaurice, and the station at the Dome by a man named Carew. Supplies were forwarded.

Sept 4th - Oct 4th

Mr Bradshaw, with Captain Lindsay, explored the Fitzmaurice River. Mr Young came to the Dome, and after spelling a day, returned to the sheep in which death still continues.

Sept 24

The Twins proceeded up the Shaw or, as geologist Brown renamed it, the Bradshaw, and anchored, at a place called by the Natives, Kumallay, but christened Youngford by us as Mr Young rode his horse across. Here all the material and stores bought from the Dome were landed.

The sheep had reached a large billabong 4 miles beyond Kumallay, where they were shorn, and the wool brought in boats to the Twins and taken by Mr Gunn to Darwin.

1895, May 27

Messrs Mulligan and Ligar were brought in the whale boat to the station in a half dead condition, having been attacked by a horde of natives some days before, and were badly speared, but managed to reach Auvergne Station. But as there were no appliances there, they came down the Baines in a boat, and then the station to await an opportunity to get to Pt Darwin.

May 30

Young, with an armed party, proceeded to "TIL"? camp to ascertain the fate of Mulligan's waggons and loading, found a large number of white men assembled, and so returned in a day or so to the station.

1895, June 5

Took Mulligan and Ligar to the SS Victoria in Blunder Bay. Mr Bradshaw in Melbourne purchased all herd cattle and horses on Willeroo Station from Mr RC Cooper.

Sept 2

Took delivery from GE Scott of 880 cattle and 27 horses.

Oct 25

The cattle arrive at the station in the charge of J McPhee.

Dec2

McPhee returned from Willeroo with another 285 cattle.

Nov 8 - Jan 1896

The Govt Resident and party visited the station. During this month, the station was shifted from Kisinalate? to a high bank on the other side of the Bradshaw River, the nearest point to Dust Pan Springs?.

A shepherd named Antonie Bolan died while out with his sheep and was buried out the back of the horse paddock.

Mr Bradshaw sold the Red Gauntlet to Burns-Philip & Co Thursday Island.

1896, Jul 22

James Eakins, who had been employed as a cook, shepherd and gardener died and was buried near Bolan.

Sept 15

For 1896 shearing, 1553 sheep were shorn, yielding 18 bales of wool.

Oct 16

The Twins arrived at Holdfast Bay with 17 rams for the station and a paraffin and coal prospector Aikens?. Got 20 bulls from Goldsborough Mort Station.

1897, Jan 8

Terrific storm struck Darwin damaging the Twins, which was anchored there.

March

Met Young spent a 7 weeks vacation at Pine Creek and Darwin.

Apr

The cutter 'Crayfish', with Messrs Stevens and Green, visited the station and stock camps.

Jun

Mr Bradshaw returned from Melbourne to the Station. Came to Blunder Bay on the RS Victoria, met the KL Wunulla at Malari Puriu, with Nasmith, Desmond and 8 others as passengers.

Jul

Shore 662 sheep for 9 bales wool.

1898, Jan

Mr Fred Bradshaw took up 2000 miles of country ?? terminus?? and the north boundary of Mr Joe Bradshaw's present run. It is proposed to work the two stations as one.

Apr

Messrs Joe and Fred Bradshaw, with about 50 tons of cargo for various stations arrived in the SP Cygnet at Holdfast Reach, where the Wunulla met them. A month was spent delivering the various cargos at their destinations with a launch and a barge purchased from Stevens.

May 11

Mr Bradshaw held a court at the Depot under a box tree.

May 20

Erected police station at Burmaione on Timber Creek, 4 miles from the Depot. Constable O'Keefe in charge.

June 25

Mrs Pound, the station housekeeper, dies. Was buried in the horse paddock. Mr Bradshaw discovered a fine spring called Witjemon about 40 miles from the station.

Aug 24

George Pound was paid off and went with Mr Young to the Katherine.

Sept 2

MP Durack managing owner of Auvergne and other stations visited here. Mr Bradshaw ill.

1899 March

The wet season culminated in an exceptional flood which drowned nearly half of the remaining sheep, although all hands were working up to their necks in water till midnight. The flood water was 2 feet deep in the dwelling house. The station staff vacated the house and camped for 10 days on a stony rise in the horse paddock.

April & May

Only 114 surviving sheep shorn today. Mr F Bradshaw and party went to Pt Darwin to bring out a blood stallion and mare, which Mr J Bradshaw purchased in Melbourne from N?uill & Co. The present delivery of the pipes (water supply) at the station is 1500 gallons per 24 hours.

Sept 29

Mr Durack arrived, fired a shot on the other side of the river. JB and 2 boys took the dinghy down and brought him to the station at 9pm. J Skeahan waiting on the other side. Negotiations re bullocks which Mr Skeahan to take delivery of. A plough and earth scoop are rented at 2/20/-d per month for 4 months for Auvergne from the Bradshaws.

Oct 25

Skeahan took delivery of cattle from Young. 94 bullocks at specified price.

1900 Jun

Messrs Durack and Skeahan arrived at the station and stayed the night. If necessary, Bradshaws agree charter launch to Auvergne for 3 pounds per day.

1901, Apr 8

Jimmy, one of the murderers of Jack Larson, was executed this morning about 7am. All the blacks at the place - were mustered as a warning to see the execution.

The body was left hanging until after breakfast when it was cut down and buried beneath the scaffold. Mr Little distributed tobacco among the blacks who were onlookers. The launch left for Pt Darwin, taking the sheriff, Mr Little, Corporal Waters, Capt Mugg and a number of visitors.

Deaths Bradshaw

Mrs Pound, McIntyre, Ballon and other young fellow killed by horse. Young?

MPD/MEM5**MPD's Recollections of Nat Buchanan****(Original in DLH NO 53A) Written in 1938**

I last met Nat Buchanan in June 1898 at Camooweal when present at a race meeting that was attended by members of the Ogilvy District. Buchanan was a man who liked a very frugal life, ate sparingly and neither drank or smoked. Whilst he refrained from spirits, he carried his abstemiousness to even water, limiting himself to, it is said, a pint a day, in order that he might more fully qualify himself, should the occasion arise during his many exploratory jaunts throughout the country. Rarely ever putting up at any hotel, but preferring always to camp out. This particular occasion, he was making his way on to Dalgonally Station from the west and pulled up for his lunch at the Georgina River Crossing, close to the township with his native assistant. Having packed up about 3.30pm, and hearing that myself and 2 or 3 other identities known to him were in town, he called in at quarters that myself and 5 or 6 other members had secured for the Racing Carnival. Intent on going on that afternoon, I finally persuaded him to put up or stay with us for the night. After dinner, conversation flowed freely with reminiscences of the life and doings in connection with long, daring treks into Qld and the NT, the finding of new pastures and the taking up of properties in the late 60's and early 70's.

The work of Nat Buchanan, the Gordon Bros and Tommy Cahill stood out most prominently in this respect.

About midnight, retirement was suggested, and whilst my fellow companions slept soundly, Buchanan and myself, who occupied a room close by, continued our talk up to 3am.

I had on 3 or 4 brief occasions, met Buchanan in the Kimberleys, as also his son Gordon, of Flora Valley, but never did I get to know him as I did that night. It may be that finding that I was so intensely interested in his many daring exploits and experiences, that he let himself go, as it were. I have often regretted that I had not made a detached record of the many little social incidents and experiences of his life.

One incident that stands out most vividly in my memory is when, on one occasion, when making his way north from Oodnadatta intent on striking across from Tennants Creek into Flora Valley or Halls Creek, across the then practically unknown section of partly desert and natureless tracts of country. Buchanan set out from Oodnadatta with 7 camels, 6 horses and 2 men whom he had engaged to accompany him through to Flora Valley or Halls Creek. On arrival at Tennants Creek, Buchanan spent 2 or 3 days preparing and getting together his outfit, but during this interval, his men, having realised the risk of the undertaking and the danger in facing this hitherto untraversed tract of natureless country, funk'd on it and refused to accompany him. Buchanan spent another day or two in further endeavour to get someone to accompany him across, but without avail. Buchanan, not to be balked in his undertaking, finally was put in touch with a fine stalwart native, Jack, who was said to know something about this tract of country and agreed to go with him.

The local residents tried to persuade Buchanan from setting out alone with a partly myall native, but he humorously turned their fears aside. Setting off with his native assistant riding a camel in the lead, whilst he himself driving the spare camels and horses directed the native Jack on his course, which was partly in a north-west direction.

All went well until 2 or 3 days out from Tennants Creek, when his native assistant, realising no doubt that he was well outside the precincts of his own known locality, began to show certain signs of uneasiness and reluctance to go any further, that there was "no more water that way", pointing ahead with his hand and that "we two fellow die we go on further". To be left alone in the desert with a

myall native and a certain number of camels and horses was not a pleasant thought, for whilst he had no fear about getting back, being provided with sufficient water for himself and his horses, which he carried on the camels, he felt a certain humiliation in the contemplation of being balked in his undertaking.

Nat Buchanan (at this time was bordering on or about 70 years of age and more of the “wire and whip cord” type of physique, rather than that of the robust) no doubt felt that if it came to a trial of physical strength, he could have been overwhelmed by his stalwartly assistant. He would therefore have to resort to some sort of strategy. Buchanan had in his possession a pair of handcuffs, to which was attached a long chain, so fitting action to the thought, he started to play around and show the native how they could be attached to himself and how easily they were released. Then, at the psychological (sic) moment, slipped them adroitly around the native’s ankle, having previously fastened the chain on to the heavy camel saddle. Strange as it may appear, after some few minutes protest and denunciation, the native became reconciled to his fate, feeling no doubt that he was now at the entire mercy of his master.

Continuing their course for the next 7 or 8 days, directing his shackled assistant seated on the camel in the lead, they reached Sturt Creek, distant from Tennants Creek about 350-370 miles. Here Buchanan heaved a sigh of relief, for from previous information, he had fairly good knowledge of the features of the remaining distance to be traversed. He felt that he could release his shackled assistant, for he would not dare to return over this natureless waste, nor would his life be safe among strange tribes. In the next few days, Flora Valley (where his son, Gordon, and the two Gordons, Hughie and Wattie? resided) was safely reached without any further incident.

Donald McIntyre, the early pioneer and owner of Dalgonally Station, was a life-long friend of Buchanans, and it was from Dalgonally Station that the first cattle to stock Wave Hill Station (on Victoria River) were bought by Buchanan and Gordon Bros.

Donald McIntyre, though an early pioneer of Northern Qld, was regarded as a poor bushman, and Buchanan tells the story of McIntyre setting out from his homestead in the morning with the intention of being back that same day. Not turning up at nightfall, flare lights were set on the posts of the stockyard close by in order to act as a guide. Sometime, early in the night McIntyre caught sight those lights, but mistook them for native camp fires, and as the natives in this early period were somewhat hostile, he did not venture to approach them but rode back some short distance and sat holding his horse throughout a cold and bitter night. One may imagine his feelings, no doubt of disgust, when with the approach of early morning, he discovered he was so close to his homestead. This incident was the subject of much banter amongst his comrades in the years that followed. With McIntyre’s frequent use of the word “buggeram”, he became colloquially or familiarly known by the sobriquet or nickname of “Old Buggeram”. A man riding up to the station on one occasion and dismounting at the Blacksmith’s Shop and addressing the person that was engaged in welding a piece of iron, and somewhat begrimed, asked if Old Buggeram was at home.

“Yaas” replied McIntyre in his broad Scottish accent, “Old Buggeram’s at home.”

Where might I find him? he asked,

“Here he is”, replied McIntyre, tapping his chest at the same time. It is said that the itinerant traveller with a befallen crest made a hasty retreat, forgetting that he was in search of a job.

Nat Buchanan himself a man of retiring nature, was not without a quaint humour all his own.

Tommy Cahill tells the story that Buchanan was taking a friend over a certain section of country and, coming to a pool of water, asked Buchanan if it was a permanent hole. “Yes”, replied Nat. Some months later, this friend, when passing through the same locality, found that the hole was completely devoid of water, and when next meeting Buchanan, questioned his veracity. “I thought”, said he, “you told me such and such a water hole was permanent?”

“Well, is it not so”, replied Nat, “you asked me if the hole was permanent?”.

MPD

15/10/45

MPD/MEM6**(Original in DLH file)****MPD's Recollections of Nat Buchanan, other pioneers, and the Duracks at Thylungra. Written in 1938.**

Mr Nathaniel Buchanan, born Dublin 1826, arrived NSW with his father in 1832. Stands out pre-eminently as amongst the greatest pioneers of latter day exploration in Australia, who, along with his brothers-in-law (Hughie and Wattie Gordon) were largely associated with the exploration of the NT and the movement of stock from Qld into the Territory and WA from 1879 onwards.

Associated also with the above was Tommy Cahill, well known in the Territory.

Mr Nat Buchanan was the first to take up Wave Hill on the Victoria River, and stocked it in Dec 1883. Hughie and Wattie Gordon, along with Sam Croker (who was shot by a half-caste on Auvergne Station in about 1888) were the first to bring stock (500 breeders) onto this place, now owned by Vestys and carrying 50-60 000 head of cattle.

Soon after, the Victoria River Station, now said to be one of the largest stations in Australia, was stocked with 2000 breeders and taken delivery of by Lindsay Crawford, from one of the Gordons, now owned by the Bovril Company and said to be carrying some 160 000 cattle.

Nat Buchanan, along with his brothers-in-law, Hughie and Wattie Gordon, his son Gordon, then a very young man of not more than 18 or 19 years of age, Tommy Cahill, Joe McMaugher, Bob Button, Donald Swan, and others were the first to take stock overland from Qld in to the Kimberleys for Osmond & Panton in Victoria. The former, a wealthy mining proprietor of Stawell, Victoria, the latter for many years a well known police magistrate in Melbourne.

Early in 1883, Osmond & Panton bought 4000 breeders. One lot of 1000 head, from Alpha Station, then owned by Sir Arthur Paliner(?), the other 3000 head from Avington Station on the Barcoo, owned at that time by Lumley Hill and Adam Mosman. Of the 3 drovers first placed in charge of these cattle, only one, Joe McMaugher, saw the trip to the Ord River completed. N Buchanan was eventually engaged to take full control and along with his son and Tommy Cahill, left Sydney for Townsville thence by train to Charters Towers, thence by coach, joining up with the others in charge near the Richmond on the Flinders. After some delay, misadventures, sickness and hardships, N Buchanan and party arrived on the Ord River at about the end of June 1884, adjacent to where the homestead now stands. The number of their cattle had been reduced to 2000, from the original 4000 started with.

Buchanan and his son, Gordon, after a few days spent in examining this new territory, went back into the Territory, leaving Bob Button in charge. Bob Button was then a comparatively young man who had been sent out by Osmond & Panton from Melbourne, and who joined up with the cattle on the Richmond about the same time as N Buchanan. B Button managed the Ord for some 3 or 4 years, and after doing a certain amount of exploration work in the Kimberleys selected a property for himself about 250 miles south of Wyndham and carried on successfully. He died there some few years ago.

Here it might be mentioned that FC Booty managed and supervised for his uncle Osmond for a few years, then took up a property of his own, Lambo, where he lived for many years. Sold up only about 1937, and now lives on property in Perth.

Much activity in stock movements from about 1872 to 1885, in the Territory. The names of N Buchanan, Wattie and Hughie Gordon and Tommy Cahill appear to have been associated with the movements of stock from different parts of Qld into the Territory, representing over 20 000 head of

cattle on behalf of Fish & Lyons, Dr Brown and others. N & G Buchanan, along with H & W Gordon, returned later to the Kimberleys and took up properties on their own account, becoming associated as owners of the well-known properties, Flora Valley and Gordon Downs, now owned by Vestys.

The droving feats of N Buchanan and his exploratory exploits would fill volumes. One of his final droving feats was to take a draft of 1000 bullocks from adjacent to Halls Creek across to the Murchison, about 1892. Again, he was accompanied by Hughie and Wattie Gordon. Some 1800 miles was the route afterwards known and referred to as Buchanan's Track.

N Buchanan, the first to:

- stock country which he and Landsborough had discovered in Qld,
- with cattle to stock the Barkly Tableland,
- with stock to Glencoe Station, 100 miles east of Darwin in the NT,
- on the Victoria River, and
- with stock from Qld to the Ord River, East Kimberley.

Buchanan and son, Gordon, and the two Gordon Bros, having sold their property, Flora Valley in WA, and others in the NT, retired to live in NSW. Mr N Buchanan died in 1901. His son, Gordon, is at present living retired in NSW. The two Gordons retired to Chatswood, outside of Sydney, and there died within the last few years. Tom Cahill (who was much associated with the Buchanans and Gordons) managed Wave Hill for many years for F Buchanan, until he officially retired to NSW, where he, together with his wife, invested in property, and died some 10 or 12 years ago.

After the Ord, followed the Duracks' Trek, as told by 'Bendelby', page 2. (In full Durack/Exp(loation) file.)

Those 4000 breeders left Thylungra Station (property of Patrick Durack), Coopers Creek, in Western Qld, about April 1883, and were in the charge of John Durack, cousin of Patrick Durack, and a Pat Moore of NSW, both of whom went right through to the Ord with their respective drafts. Out of the 4000 started, it appears approx 2000 landed at their destination on the Ord River.

The drafts in charge of John Durack and Pat Moore caught up to the draft purchased on behalf of Hill & Duracks (Lumley Hill, many years a member of the Legislative Assembly, Qld, and the 'Stumpy' Michael Durack, brother of Patsy Durack), on the Georgina River. Hill & Duracks' draft left Mt Marlowe on the Barcoo about June 1883.

Following some few weeks behind the drafts mentioned was that of Charley and Willy McDonald, who first started from Goulburn, NSW, about 1884, on possibly the longest droving feat in Australian history, covering a distance of some 3000 miles. Passing through what is now known as Halls Creek, they continued westward and settled on the Margaret River, about 20 miles above its junction with the Fitzroy River. The property is now known as Fossil Downs, and is held by a nephew of the original owners (Bill McDonald).

Both brothers, before nearing their destination, suffered very much from fever, and were delayed at the Katherine, leaving a man named Edmonds, who had accompanied them throughout to take charge. This journey occupied over 2 years, and out of about 4-500 started with, not more than 200 landed in the Margaret River, 1886.

After the McDonald's came, WN Stretch, Brother of the Bishop of Newcastle, who having bought about 400 head of breeders from Frank Hann of Lawn Hill, MacArthur River, in conjunction with his partners, Lewers, Weeks & Foster, started out early 1886 and formed Denison Downs Station on Sturts Creek in 1887, then one of the most remote and isolated stations in the north, about 350 miles south of Wyndham. Held on this property for about 20 odd years, then sold to Copley & Patterson and retired to live in Colac Victoria, where he died about the year 1932.

...(appears to be some pages missing, last page = p9, next = p 15)...

...in mining together with the high costs of transport - 40 and 50 pounds per ton, together with costs of labour was too great to give any surplus against the yield per ton, and the mine eventually closed down. (This was an account of the Ruby Queen mining venture, near Halls Creek, owned and run in the late 1880's by Patrick Durack).

About 1897, P Durack and his wife, who had shared with him all the trials, risks and hardships of the early pioneering days on Coopers Creek, went to live with their sons at Argyle, and here the faithful partner of a lifetime, after a short illness (fever), breathed her last.

One of her experiences on Coopers Creek was when her life was saved by the faithful native house attendants. Whilst Mrs Durack was busy attending to household duties in the kitchen, separated from the main living homestead by about 20 yards. A troop of natives, led by a painted warrior flourishing his spears, was observed by one of the household native attendants, who immediately gave the alarm. Firearms, in those days, were hung generally on the walls of the main living quarters. The faithful household attendant rushed for a revolver that hung inside the door of the dining room. As he was seen rushing from the house to the kitchen with revolver in hand, a hue and cry went up and an attempt was made to wrest the revolver from his hand. But being a powerful man, about 40 years of age, and with some influence amongst his own tribe, a momentary delay, or stay, of a few seconds enabled him to reach my mother and hand her the revolver, upon which the invading enemy or assailant and followers fled.

This took place at about 10 o'clock in the morning. It was not until next afternoon that my father and 2 or 3 attendants returned from doing their rounds putting stock together, and were made aware of what had taken place.

The anxiety of a mother all that afternoon part of the next day and the thought of a lonely night to be locked in a room with 3 young children may be readily conceived.

The 3 or 4 faithful native assistants that were camped adjacent outside gave some assurance that the evil invaders had fled, but as auxiliary to this assurance, my mother fired the revolver through the windows of the house at intervals through the night, as a further intimidation for the enemy.

MPD h/w notes dated 9/11/47 re discovery of gold etc. (Original 53 A - transcript 53B - DLH file 1.)
Headed 'Centenary Issue West Australia, 5/1/1933

1881.

Phil Saunders and Alan Johns found gold in the East Kimberly. Saunders telegraphed the WA Government from Yam Creek, SA that he had found gold on the Ord River, but not in payable quantities. He thought payable gold would be found there.

1882 - Gold

A small nugget, 14 qwt was found between Cossack and Roebourne by Alex McCrea and (Stumpy) Michael Durack found colour near Halls Creek.

1884

First cattle arrive - o/land from Qld by Mr N. Buchanan for Osmond and Panton. Arrived August, 1,500 being lost out of 6,000.

1885 - Gold

Kimberley first discovered. In August the first payable gold in the colony was discovered. The Kimberley field previously prospected by Phil Saunders and others. In August (/) Charlie Hall and Jack Slattery and party collect about 10 oz on the Elvira Ord and Margaret Rivers in that area, and obtained a Gov't reward of £500. A rush of goldfields ensued.

MPD handwritten account of first exploration of the Kimberley region by Philip KING in The Mermaid, 1817 - 1819 is to be found in DLH1. No 55. This is not transcribed.

Items from Melbourne Press 'Argus' 13/3/08 as jotted down by MPD on Menzies Hotel notepaper. Minor John Arthur Moor charged in Perth. Robbery Agricultural Bank. Sylvia Elaine Johnstone - imprisonment of mysterious horsewoman. Beer and bombs - the man Beer infuriated at the conviction wants to blow police up with bombs. The Harbour refuse dispense wharfage rate on Eastern coal and reference to fire on Ealine stating that local coal got a set-back which it may not recover from for some time.

Mr Benjamine Morgan, Manufacturers Association recorded and visits to stores Fremantle and Perth certainly an advance step. In same paper Ballarat tragedy is reported and surely Queensland, SA, NSW and Tasmania one can't altogether (be) free from their petty larcencies or are they without their friends in those places who do not require the sympathy that might be extended to the malfactors of the ?

Description by MPD of a (possible) gold reef discovered at Tamami. MP, ever hopeful of a mineral-lead recovery to the failing fortunes of CD&D wrote many such.

Length of reef above ground half a mile bearing SE by NW - averaging in width 8 ft. Situated around ironstone, ridgy country - very pronounced ironstone known as kidney ironstone lies on the north side of the reef.

Reef dips right into the sand at the end.

Timber fair amount obtainable all of light nature - fit only for firewood.

Specimens were obtained on the South side of reef practically all of them obtained at the one spot. Water at Tanami rock hole distance 4 miles. It is probable water can be obtained at shallow depth.

In 1932 JWD (brother of MPD, known as 'Jack') received a letter from Chas. H Holmes of Australian National Travel Assoc Melbourne enclosing a map of Australia and asking if he could spare the time to roughly mark the route taken on the great Durack cattle trek, then some fifty years earlier. He would like it for a 'write-up' to send abroad. He was also interested to know if the story of the droving trek had yet been published. JWD replied with the following details: (The original carbon copy of this fragile letter and the one from Holmes is in H&B/Dur(ack) file 2 No 20.)

Dear Mr Holmes;

Yours April '32. I must apologise for delay and my apparent remissence in replying to you, but the fact of the matter is I had been waiting to get the map you enclosed marked out showing the route our cattle took on the trek from Qld 1883 - 1885 to Kimberley. It is rather difficult to mark out the route accurately (on a small map) but I have done the best I could under the circumstances. First and foremost, before I go any further, I was sorry to hear that Mrs Holmes was ill but glad to hear she is well again. please give her my congratulations and best wishes to a great heroine. It was indeed heroic of her to undertake all she did. I remember when I met her I had forebodings of what she had to undergo when you told me you were going into country infinitely worse than the East Kimberleys. The Australasian Dec 1918 had an article on the overlanding of cattle 1881/5 'Origins of Overlanding'. My father Patrick Durack, founder of Thylungra Station and Galway Downs, saw Alec Forrest's account of his (Forrest's) 1879 exploration of the Fitzroy River, West Kimberley. As most of the Fitzroy country was taken up after Forrest's report, my father diverted his attention to the unexplored part of East Kimberley through which ran the Ord River into Cambridge Gulf. In 1882, my father and Solomon Emanuel, brother of Isadore and Sidney (of Forrest Emanuel) financed an expedition under the leadership of Michael Durack, brother of Patrick Durack. The party consisted of 6 all told: Michael Durack (leader), Sidney Emanuel (son of Solomon) and Thomas Kilfoyle second in command. The party left on 19th July 1882 with horses and equipment for 5 or 6 months. A reference on map will show how these men set out from Cambridge Gulf. The first river reached was the Pentacost, then Durack, Dunham, Bow etc. They followed the Ord up until they struck a tree marked by Alec Forrest in 1879, from where they went west to Beagle Bay where they arrived in Dec 1883. Most of the country we took up was in 1883 and to stock this country various mobs of cattle left Cooper's Creek in July 1883 in charge of different members of the Durack family. These cattle landed on the Ord River at the end of 1885, being by then on the trek over two years. Roughly about half of the number that left Qld arrived.

I heard that J Flynn is married. Have you heard of *Flynn of the Inland* by Idriess, author of *Lasseters Last Ride*? I like the Flynn book better than the Lasseter - the latter too fragmentary and very disconnected to my mind. Half one's time gets taken up trying to piece events and correlate them.

Reverting to the Duracks and their trek. I am sure there is material for something more than the (reminiscences?) like of the Vestey's. My brother's daughter Mary has a literary bent and is gathering up the loose fragments of history to put it into reliable shape. The Historical Society of WA has asked her to give an outline of early settlement Victoria River and Cambridge Gulf, up to say 1887, which she is now on. Kindest regards to you, and Mrs heroine Holmes. JW Durack.