

11. *Herald*, 7 December 1867; *W.A. Church of England Magazine*, January 1871, p. 3.
12. Hale, *Diary*, 26 March 1868.
13. *Herald*, 20 June 1868; *Express*, 5 March 1870.
14. *Express*, 23 March 1870.
15. C.S.O. Vol. —Corresp. Rec'd, 18 April 1877
16. *Herald*, 7 May, 4 June, 13 August 1870.
17. *Express*, 25 August 1870; *Inquirer*, 12 February 1873.
18. *Express*, August 1870.
19. C.S.O. Vol. 664—Corr. Rec'd, 31 August 1870; published in *Express*, 8 September 1870, and *Perth Gazette*, 9 September 1870.
20. C.S.O. Vol. 664—Corr. Rec'd, 6 September, 24 October 1870.
21. *Inquirer*, 12 April 1871.
22. *W.A. Church of England Magazine*, August, September 1871.
23. Sophia Phillips, *Diary*, 7-13 September 1871.
24. H. C. Prinsep, *Diary and Sketches*. Seven of these sketches are reproduced in: M. A. Bain, *Ancient Landmarks* (Perth 1975).
25. F. W. Gunning, *Line of the North* (Perth 1952) p. 9.
26. C.S.O. Vol. 713—Corr. Rec'd, 16 January 1872.
27. C.S.O. Vol. 751—Corr. Rec'd, 27 May 1873.
28. Hale, *Diary*, 1873.
29. C.S.O. Vol. 751—Corr. Rec'd, 27 September 1873.
30. Executive Council, Minutes, 27 December 1873.

The Brooks Family of Balbimia Station

Part 2

by RAY OLDHAM

The Brooks family arrived in Albany early in 1874. Their travelling expenses from Victoria amounted to £190. They paid £10.12.6 for board in Albany and bought there a horse, cart and tent (27) . . . a tent, you notice. So that impudent Albany journalist quoted in our previous paper, was not conversant with the true facts of their journey.

The Brooks family walked eastwards, at most times making camp by the track. Mrs. Brooks and Sarah had been instructed in "bushmanship" by a short course conducted by a lady in Geelong; and though their tent blew down on them the first night, they soon learnt by practice how to pitch it properly, to light a fire, boil a billy, and do the other simple necessities of bush travel. (28) Sometimes they would stay overnight at one of the few homesteads of settlers already established along the coast: at Cape Riche, 40 miles east of Albany, where the doughty Scottish pioneer George Cheyne had settled as early as 1840; the property by now owned by his nephew (29); at Bremer Bay where the Wellsteads had established their "Peppermint Grove" farm since the 1850s (30); past the Gairdner River and the Fitzgerald River: at the Phillips River the Dunnns were settled since 1872; but they'd had worries about their leasehold (31) and Mrs. Dunn said:

"I hope you haven't come to take the land away from our boys?"

"No, no," Miss Brooks reassured her. "We are going further east." (32) Alexander Moir had been settled at Stokes' Inlet since 1873 (33). Still they walked onwards, till they reached Esperance, where they were welcomed at the hospitable homestead of the Dempster brothers, the original pioneers of this area, settled there now for over a decade. Willie Dempster recorded the Brooks' visit in early May (34) and this was the beginning of a friendship which was to last to the end of their lives.

But they didn't stop at Esperance. "We left Albany with the intention of travelling through to Eucla," Sarah Theresa Brooks calmly stated, "But as we progressed, grave doubts were expressed by persons who had been to Eucla by sea, as to the advisability of our going there at all, owing to the extreme scarcity of water. Dear Mama falling ill and being totally unable to travel, Paul erected a small hut near Mr. Campbell Taylor's home

Station, Lymburn, then the last settler on the Eucla road; and after making us as comfortable as circumstances would permit, he started for Eucla on the afternoon of August 3rd 1874." (35)

It had been my intention to tell you in detail of the Eucla journey of John Paul Brooks; but time will permit only a brief resume. He achieved this hazardous trip (which had been previously done by only three groups of white men: Eyre in 1841; John Forrest in 1870; and the Kennedys and McGill in 1872, all of whom suffered great privation and hardship). With Brooks went a native, Jackie, who had been lent to him by Campbell Taylor "as he had been to Eucla before" and so could guide them to water and feed for the horses; and three white men: William Lennox, a former Able Seaman in the Royal Navy (Sarah refers to him as a "servant" but today we would term him an employee); "Jim Davies" who had been several years in the district and was a very decent fellow; and as to the other man—why, he was no doubt what he professed to be—a man tired of Western Australia, going through to Adelaide. Mr. Taylor told us this at dinner, in our hut, the evening before the start." Sarah continues, "He knew they were both escaped convicts—and it gave Mama and I (sic) a great shock when, a fortnight later, the Police came in pursuit of them. Both men had long sentences. The Police, however, did not go further than Lymburn." (35) Mr. Brooks knew of the criminal background of the two men, was reluctant to let them join his party (36) and did so only to oblige Mr. Taylor, to whom he was indebted for many kindnesses; but, to save the ladies extra worry, concealed it from them.

At the first night's camp, Paul found that Davies had barely rations enough for the journey, and the Polish-Jew had nothing at all. Paul was justly angry. How, so inadequately equipped, had the two men hoped to reach South Australia? The inference was obvious—and ominous: they must be relying on Brooks' provisions . . . in short, they must be planning to murder him and his companion.

"Paul wished me to state that his diary was kept in the most scanty fashion," Sarah wrote. "His hurried lines were scribbled by firelight, always dead tired . . . He had also to be very careful in what he wrote, for fear of its falling into any other person's hands." So Paul's journal is so condensed, so cryptic in many of its entries, that it is little more than a sort of personal shorthand, readily intelligible only to himself; and it was only by later knowledge that the full drama was revealed to me. Suffice to say here that, despite the constant threat of treachery and murder by Davies, added to the very real danger that the whole party would perish from lack of water in this region, "more awfully unblest than most parts of the earth," John Paul Brooks succeeded in reaching Eucla on September 11th, accomplishing the journey in 5½ weeks (or 39 days)—which compares quite favourably with Forrest's much better equipped expedition which, allowing for their rest of 20 days at Israelite Bay, took 29 days from thence to Eucla. (37)

Here the two escaped convicts left him, to continue their journey to Adelaide. Davies enticed the native Jackie to accompany him, needing the native's expertise to find rockholes which were the only source of water on the next difficult stage to Fowler's Bay. "Jim Davies and I had words about Jackie," Brooks reports, "and finally, as both (J.D. and Jackie) were determined he should go, I got Davies to sign a paper promising to send him back by boat or steamer." (35) It was then illegal to take natives from one State to another, and Brooks was responsible for Jackie's return to his home territory at the Thomas River; but whether he ever got back I do not know.

Davies, who had stolen a "free pass", without which no one was permitted to leave Western Australia, finally reached America and freedom; but the Russo-Pole, whose real name was Bernard Stein, was captured in

Adelaide a few months later and brought back to Fremantle to serve a longer sentence. (38) Some years later, he opened a book shop in Hay Street near the Town Hall, and, Mr. Willie Dempster tells us, he married the servant girl whom his wife had brought out from England. (39)

At Eucla, Brooks found some settlers already established on pastoral leases. The Muir family had been the first to arrive—but by only a few hours. A. Muir and Sons had applied to proceed with stock to Eucla on December 29th 1871. John Muir travelled by sea, having chartered the brig "Emily Smith", bringing 350 sheep and two men in charge. Because no other white men were yet at Eucla to certify to their arrival with stock, it was the Master of the brig, William Davidson, who did so on March 8th 1872; and on the same date, that another 300 sheep were landed with one man and a boy in charge, these belonging to A. Muir and Sons (40a) Even before this date, the Muirs had applied on January 9th 1872 for three free stock runs of 100,000 acres each in the Eucla district. (40b) Travelling by sea, they succeeded in being the first settlers to arrive. John Muir immediately selected land north and west of the Eucla anchorage, Beacon, then leave the coast and run due West say 15 miles, then 10 miles North. This application was approved subject to 20,000 acres being added around the Eucla anchorage; for, as this was the only safe place where ships could anchor for hundreds of miles along the Great Australian Bight, the Government wisely retained control over Eucla Harbour.

The Muir family, the first settlers at Eucla, were scions of sturdy Scottish yeoman farmers, cousins of George Cheyne who had encouraged their father to migrate to Western Australia. (29) By the 1870s they had established several properties in the South-West, and the brothers John, Thomas and Andrew left their homes near Manjimup to establish "Moopina" Station at Eucla. When Thomas Muir joined John there in April 1873 (40a), his six girls, aged from one to thirteen years, and Thomas kept his "Eucla Diary 1873-75" for their information. Charlotte also kept a diary and wrote to him whenever there was a chance to send letters. This is the more remarkable because Charlotte had not had the opportunity to learn to read and write; she dictated her diaries and letters to her faithful companion and friend, the governess of the children, a girl named Alice Hurst. (41)

Thomas Muir's "Eucla Diary" gives a vivid picture of the pioneering years at Eucla. (42) The most urgent problem there was to ensure water for their flocks. The Muirs found the wells which had been dug on the beach by John Eyre and John Forrest, cleaned them out and enlarged them, and set up troughs for watering the sheep. But there was little feed in the vicinity, and the sand was blown into the wells by the strong winds which blew constantly—and which constantly changed direction.

"24th Oct. 1873. Blew very strong from the North—rather the sand was blowing like a bushfire, going miles out to sea. Wind changed to the S.W. . . . before we left the Well, we set the troughs up to let the sand blow past. It was not sand but sheets blowing today, making the men's legs smart as they stood, bare-legged, watering the sheep in the Well when the water gets low. 28th Oct. Strong North wind. Rather hot. . . . Changed to S.W. about 5 o'clock. 29th Oct. Wind East. 30th Oct. Strong wind from the S.W. Blew a gale after sundown. I thought the roof was coming off the house. 11th Nov. Shifted a good deal of sand away from the troughs. 29th Nov. . . . Found the Well half-full of sand and the troughs high buried. Wind blowing strong from the S.E. This is the worst day I have seen on the Sand Patch." But they persisted, carried stone 4 miles from the cliffs to line the wells, made a trapdoor to cover the water; so that after Heinzmann

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reported favourably to the Government on their work in 1874 (43) the Muirs received the £100 grant offered by the Government to any persons who would supply water for the use of the public at Eucla.

They also sank many wells further inland, along the Range, some to a depth of more than 100 feet, but most proved salt. Their horses, turned loose, soon found their own water and feed. There was a rock hole in the gorge a few miles north, which always held water. Nallawooding Rockhole and Wurdialla Rockhole had beautiful water, the latter six feet deep. With the help of local natives, Thomas Muir cut stakes to fence in Wurdialla Rockhole to keep the sheep out, and soon made a "road" from it to Eucla. (42)

The wild aborigines had been accustomed for untold centuries to gather at certain sacred places around Eucla for important tribal ceremonies. Sometimes they would come from as far as Boundary Dam to the north, from Israelite Bay in the west, from as far east as Fowler's Bay. Eucla itself had been a ceremonial meeting place, its name derived from the aboriginal "Yirgilla" meaning Venus, Star of the East. It lay on the great aboriginal trading route which once encircled the continent. Here they would gather periodically to hold their major initiation ceremonies by the great salt water and barter their few goods, most important of these being the flint dug out of the flint quarries only by men of the "Wild Currant" or "Nala tree" totems. From time immemorial the water and the food around these sacred places had been carefully conserved by the natives for their future use. But now the white men had come with their thirsty flocks, taking the water and desecrating their sacred places; and the original inhabitants found they had no rights in their own territory. (44)

The early settlers, mostly rough, simple men, knew nothing of the aborigines' rich culture and traditions. But Thomas Muir had a kindly, paternalistic attitude to them which enabled him to establish friendly relations, and no conflict ever arose on the Muir's station. He was not afraid of them, encouraged his own native, Jimmy, to bring the wild natives in to the homestead to meet him. "I wished to see the natives from the west as I might want some of them to show me waterholes yet," he wrote.

On one occasion the white men, sinking a well five miles out, got a great fright when a number of wild natives gathered in the vicinity, on a small hill about half a mile from the well. The men, seeing Muir's native Jimmy go by, then hearing the wild natives making a tremendous noise, thought that the natives intended to attack their camp that night, so they hurried back to the homestead. Two of them could scarcely speak from terror. When the men came to the house, they found that Jimmy had already brought the mob of wild natives in to meet Thomas Muir. They started back to the well next day, no doubt shamefaced at their unwarranted fears.

"Jimmy came in the next day with a mob of more natives from Ulanda, the sand patch at Point Culver I think—wherever that is," Muir recorded. "They are not a bad-looking lot considering. Two or three young fellows among them. I gave them all a piece of damper made out of tarry flour that we could not use ourselves—aren't I generous?"

"I believe I have seen all the natives now that belongs from Eucla to the head of the Bight, 150 miles, and there is about 30—no more—altogether." (42)

The natives were able to repay the Muirs' kindly treatment by bringing a great boon to these isolated settlers. The year before, Mr. Armstrong of Yalata Station at Fowler's Bay in South Australia, arranged an unofficial "postman" by engaging a native, Karraji, also called Koolbari, to carry letters by foot the 480 mile trip and back again, which he did regularly in three weeks. He proved thoroughly reliable and never failed to deliver the mail bag intact at either end. He continued this mail service for several

years, until, after the advent of the telegraph line, a monthly mail service was run by the South Australian Government. (46)

Thomas Muir recorded that the native mailman stayed at Eucla for a while, departing for the return trip to Fowler's Bay on Nov. 23rd 1873. Muir was busy all the previous afternoon writing letters, and the men came in from the well to write their letters also. "Thirty letters this mail." The letters would later be taken by ship to Albany. The only ships calling regularly at Eucla until 1877 were one each year, chartered by the settlers themselves.

The Muirs investigated the country west and east, noting the names of native rock holes. Once Thomas Muir tracked some straying horses 60 miles to the west; Andrew Muir penetrated with a cart 80 miles into South Australian territory. The information they thus gained proved of great assistance when the overland telegraph line was constructed a few years later.

Thomas Muir returned to his "Deeside" home at Manjimup in 1875. After John Muir's sudden illness and death at Eucla in 1878, Andrew (of "Forest Hill" Manjimup) and a manager, John Batt, continued to run "Moopina" Station for a few more years until it was bought by an English syndicate in 1882, and the Muir's pastoral empire of close on a million acres (40c) at Eucla passed out of the hands of this pioneering family.

Although the Muir family's pioneering venture at Eucla has been mentioned in this Society's published Journal in 1970 (41) one finds, still being printed, such incorrect statements as this from "The Nullabor Story" by Basil Fuller: "... on the western section of the existing highway the first settlement was made at Fraser's Range where, in 1864, the Dempster brothers took up land. The next station to be established was Mundrabilla at a spot about seventy miles west of the border in 1871. Some two years later, the first run was established in what is now known as the Eucla area. This was Moopina Station, settled by the Muir brothers from Adelaide. Later runs were established in the neighbourhood by J. W. Kennedy, W. McGill and C. Taylor." He quotes as his reference W.A. Parliamentary Papers No. 9 of 1873—which, justifiably, he would have relied on for accuracy. However, every one of the above statements is incorrect!

There is not time to go in detail into the earliest settlements east of Albany: Mrs. Rica Erickson is now preparing the story of the Dempsters in detail; but we must briefly mention that the Dempsters took up their first leases around Esperance in 1863. It was not until 1866 that Andrew Dempster explored to the Fraser Range, where they took up leases, but did not stock the runs for several years, owing to lack of water. In 1870 Campbell Taylor became the most easternward settler when he moved from the Oldfield River to the Thomas River. Other early settlers were the Dunns at the Phillips River in 1872 and Alexander Moir at Fanny's Cove in 1873.

My examination of the Lands Department records of the Eucla Region, and of other contemporary documents, shows that the Muir family from Manjimup and Albany, Western Australia, were the first settlers at Eucla in March 1872; followed a few months later, in August 1872, by William and Thomas Kennedy and W. S. McGill.

The next pastoral lease taken up in the Eucla area was by the Brooks family. Their free stock run of 100,000 acres in the name of Sarah Theresa Brooks, lay west of McGill's and was called "Carlaborogabby" after a native rock hole there, and was to be stocked with 200 4-tooth ewes and 4 rams. Their application is dated January 1st 1875. (40d)

The partnership of Kennedy brothers and McGill set out from Albany early in 1872, overlanding about 2,200 sheep, nine horses and several men. They travelled slowly, shore their sheep at Esperance, from whence 8 bales were shipped to Adelaide; and while the rest of the party pushed on east-

wards, Mr. Kennedy sailed on February 28th 1872 as a passenger for Eucla with Andrew Dempster on the Dempster's little 27-ton, single-masted ship "Gipsey"; only to find, on arrival at Eucla, that the "Emily Smith" had sailed into the harbour a few hours before them; thus giving the Muirs precedence in pastoral claims in the vicinity. On the return voyage, Mr. Kennedy disembarked at the Thomas River, to join the overlanding party who were by then nearing Israelite Bay. (31) They arrived at Eucla on August 12th, John Muir certifying to the Kennedy's arrival with 680-odd sheep and four horses. (40dd) They selected land which they had passed through between Eyre's Sand Patch and Eucla. The Kennedy's free stock run began 12 miles west of the Black Beacon and 3 miles south of the cliffs, running west 15 miles, then north for 10 miles. (40dd) The lease took in Wanteen and Nairado rock holes. They named it "Knowseley". W. S. McGill's lease (40e) began about 50 miles west of the Red Beacon. It included Emu Well and Mundrabilla Well, the western portion of the run being called by the natives Boolaboola. He stocked with 600 ewes and 4 bullocks and adopted for the name of his property, the native name "Mundrabilla".

When white settlers tried to write the unfamiliar, jilting sounds of the aboriginal language, they would often spell the word in a variety of ways; none of them being expert linguists in foreign tongues—and some not knowledgeable even in their own. So McGill liked to write the name of his station as "Mondra Bella". Which has an absurdly inappropriate appearance as though it were a bastardised version of the Latin or Italian "Beautiful World". Later the spelling reverted more happily to "Mundrabilla".

The Kennedy brothers (who were said to be related to a former Governor) and McGill, had originally come from the Eastern States. During their ownership of the Eucla properties which lasted until around 1903, they frequently overlanded sheep from South Australia. This may account for the confusion which exists in many local people's minds about their early overlanding of stock from Albany in 1872. When I have spoken of it to people of the region, many maintain that they overlanded their sheep, not from Albany, but from the east. "They came from South Australia," I have been told many times. So I have checked the facts very meticulously.

It certainly seems an almost miraculous feat to have brought more than 2,000 sheep as well as a large party of horses and men, across this arid country. I have not yet traversed the entire route, but have read the reports of all those who penetrated it: John Eyre who, in 1841, stated that his horses went for seven days without water (47); John Forrest, with a much better-equipped expedition in 1870, who suffered great privations, his horses during one week surviving on only a few gallons of water, found in the native rock holes (37); John Paul Brooks' small party who in 1874 almost perished for want of water (35); the "goldseekers" expedition of 1874 (48); and others . . . how could they have brought such a large number of sheep through this well-nigh waterless region?

They must certainly have been fortunate in travelling in a good season, after rains had filled all the native rock holes. Confirmation of the story comes from Mrs. Amy Crocker grand-daughter of a pioneer of the '70s. (49) Moreover, correspondence kept in official files of our Western Australian Government departments, proves conclusively that the Kennedys and McGill did indeed bring more than 2,200 sheep overland from Albany.

W. S. McGill writes on November 20th 1872 to the Surveyor-General, the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, thanking him for his letter of December 6th 1871, and apologising for his delay in answering it as he "was then on my way to Eucla from Esperance and had no way of replying. I kept a sort of journal of my journey from Israelite Bay to long. 126 24 E, the patches of feed I passed, the waterholes I found etc . . . From Israelite Bay to longitude 126 24 min. East" (Eyre's Sand Patch) "is the only real (sic)

difficult part of the journey, water being so scarce it was very trying on both men and animals. You can easily imagine what it must have been from what Mr. Forrest says in his journal, (and we) travelling for 30 days with stock and the same tract of country that he managed to do in seven, his horses suffering a great deal also.

"It is somewhat gratifying to me that I have been the first to attempt, and that successfully, to bring stock overland here. I have shown that the route is at least practicable and should water be obtained without any considerable outlay, nothing that I have seen in the settled portions of the colony could at all equal it, in regard to its grazing capabilities . . . W. A. McGill." (40e)

But let us go back to the Brooks family: John Paul Brooks has arrived at Eucla and met the earlier settlers. He received a hearty welcome from W. Kennedy and McGill at the shearing shed and they would not allow him to proceed that day. But they were unable to give him any flour as they had none at all when Paul was there, and Muir could only spare a small quantity (35) so Brooks and his man Lennox had no alternative but to turn round at once on the return journey, very short of provisions, as they had supplied the Polish-Jew for the past 5½ weeks. They did not even have the native Jackie to help them find food and water. "They had a fearful return trip," Sarah writes. But on October 15th, Brooks succeeded in reaching the Thomas River Station, on foot—his horse having run away—and well-nigh perishing, as "he had had nothing to eat for three days save a small ground parrot which he caught." But next day, he hurried back with provisions for Lennox, whom he had left at the well at Watlie Camp with the cart while he had ridden on as fast as possible to bring succour. Lennox was retained to eating the saddle-cloth (sheepskin). (32)

The Brooks family retained their Eucla run for a few years, although Paul did not stock it immediately. (36) A few Ledger entries relate to this "brogobby" and in May 1878, relinquished it. (50)

He was still looking for better land.

He had originally hoped to obtain land at Duke of Orleans Bay, for which he had applied in 1874. He wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on January 6th 1875: "Dear Sir, Whilst in Perth I made application for a block of 10,000 acres at the Duke of Orleans the starting point to be determined within three months of date of application. I have since discovered that Mr. Munroe has applied for a free lease of 100,000 acres including the 10,000 acres for which I applied. In the event of its being granted to Munroe, I wish to take up in lieu thereof 10,000 acres as shown in enclosed application . . ." (40f)

Brooks did not receive the Duke of Orleans lease; for although Munroe's application for his free stock run was not sent in until March 7th 1876, he had stock running on the land for twelve months previously; and his Application to Proceed East with 3 men, 1 woman, 1 boy and 1 girl, with 4 horses and 1,400 sheep and lambs, dated December 14th 1874, being six days prior to Brooks' application of December 20th 1874, was judged to be the first. (66)

The alternative land for which Brooks applied on January 6th 1875 began two miles west of Point Dempster (which is the western headland of Israelite Bay) and extended west for several miles along the coast, taking in Point Malcolm, and continuing for a few miles further west: inland it went to a salt lake shown as Daringella (sometimes spelt Terkendilla) (51). On its western boundary is shown Baandandup Rock Hole. This lease was approved on May 17th 1875 "subject to Heinzmann's application." (40f)

Heinzmann's lease, adjoining on the east, took in the whole of the Israelite Bay coastline and comprised 5,120 acres. It was approved on May 17th 1875. (40g)

Gustav Heinzmann (sometimes called George) was one of a group of prospectors who had also overlanded from Albany to Eucua in 1874. They were searching for minerals, particularly gold, as well as for the pastoral El Dorado of Forrest's Report. The party consisted of Carl Lorenzen, Gustav Heinzmann and John Dunn (48). They were financed by some enterprising capitalists who apparently included William Gills Knight and C. McKenzie of Albany. John Dunn's diary records that Brooks' party came up with them at Israelite Bay on August 6th (48) and Brooks' journal gives the additional information that they spent the next day together fishing—unsuccessfully. (35) Lorenzen's name in Israelite Bay can still be seen marked on some maps. On the prospectors' return to Albany, a number of leases were taken up: early in 1875, 15,000 acres at Eyre's Sand Patch for McKenzie, with Laurenzen (sic) and Dunn in charge (40i); 100,000 acres in the same vicinity by W. G. Knight, with Carl Lorenzen to be in charge (40j); 100,000 acres at Eucua by John Dunn (40j); Heinzmann took up a number of leases on his own account. In addition to the Israelite Bay lease (which was increased to 8,000 acres in 1876 (40g) he held 1 square mile around Mt. Dean (40k); 1 square mile around Peak or Mica Hill (40l); and 2 square miles around Mt. Ragged (40m), all these being approved on May 17th 1875. As well, he had 4 square miles around "the bivouac marked on Alex Forrest's track of 1871 1st to 5th October in latitude 32 40 S (40n); 4 square miles "north of Mt. Dean at the Alex Forrest bivouac of 10th October 1871 in latitude 33 4' 40" S (40o); and 31 53 S (40p), this last being N.E. of Eyre's Sand Patch and approximating to the later Madura Station. Heinzmann's eleven leases then totalled 153,680 acres, including 3,000 acres on the coast east of Israelite Bay at latitude 33° 13' 46" East ("Wartle Camp") (40q) and 3,000 acres to the N.E. (40r).

But many of these were speculative ventures. As he investigated them more closely, he found they were unsuitable for stock, owing to lack of water or the presence of poison plant. In 1876 he allowed the Mt. Ragged and Mt. Dean leases to lapse; in 1877 he gave up the Israelite Bay land; in 1879 abandoned the "Alex Forrest bivouac of October 10"; and by 1880 his name had disappeared as a settler in this region. Brooks' records show him briefly as his Customs agent in Albany (27) where Heinzmann was registered as a brewer in 1876 (52) at the top end of York Street, and though he continued as a businessman there, he passes out of our story.

The 10,000 acre Baandadup block at Point Malcolm which the Brooks family took up early in 1875 was probably intended as little more than a holding paddock where they could pasture their sheep. Being on the coast, it would also have access to shipping. Before leaving the Thomas River for his Eucua journey in August 1874, John Paul Brooks had bought from Campbell Taylor on July 14th 1874, 200 ewe tags at 8/- a head, for which he paid cash of £80 the same day (27). These were presumably left at Lynburn Station during his three months' absence; but they could not be pastured indefinitely on Taylor's land. William Lennox, who had entered Brooks' employ on July 14th 1874, remained with him for another year after their return from Eucua (27) and was probably in charge of the flocks on the Brooks' Point Malcolm land; where he could also provide protection for Mrs. Brooks and her daughter if required.

The Baandadup lease was finally approved on May 9th 1876 and re-numbered E 189, with its western boundary extended to compensate for a Government Reserve which had been excised at Point Malcolm. This Government Reserve No. 3806 of 4,000 acres had been set aside to provide water for public use, and also an anchorage in suitable weather; for Government construction of the overland telegraph line was soon to take place in this vicinity. Brooks extended their holding by another 4,000 acres to the westward, which took in the Marburnup Rock Holes (40s) and here he built

a house for his mother and sister. They called it "Marburnup" and here the women lived for a while. But John Paul Brooks was off again, still searching for better land. This time he went northwards, looking for the Hampton Plains. He had a native guide, Black Ben (34) and his companion was Stephen Ponton.

The Ponton brothers, William and Stephen, had come from the village of Alton Priors in the county of Wiltshire in England (53). William, the elder brother, was the first to come to Western Australia, arriving in September 1856. He was then 24 years of age. (54) A few years later, his younger brother Stephen came, in May 1860, when he was 25 years old. Stephen at York, where he married an Irish girl. She bore two children—Neil in 1864, William in 1866; but the mother died while the children were still quite young. The father and uncle were devoted to the two small children, and reared them with loving care until they were old enough to go to boarding school in Perth. The brothers by this time had taken up a property near Albany, at Round Swamp, and had built up a flock of sheep. They planned to set out to look for the pastoral lands to the east, being attracted by the Government offer of free stock runs for the first settlers there. They took into partnership a friend, John Sharp, who owned a small property on the Kalgan River, and with their combined stock, they hoped to make a start (56). So in December 1873 they collected their sheep and horses and left for Albany, where they put in their application (John Paul Brooks application appears next in the book) (57). Then they set out on the long trek eastwards.

They travelled slowly, shepherding their flock of 1,000 sheep. It was not the best time of year to travel stock, and they would have had to reconnoitre ahead to make sure of water, before they moved camp; so that the Brooks family, who were travelling without stock, planning to buy their sheep at Esperance, caught up with them there and at the Thomas River. The Brooks family passed through Esperance on May 6th (34). A couple of months later, John Sharp was still coming in to the Dempsters' store to buy provisions and ammunition for the party, who had decided to stop to shear their sheep at the Thomas River; and they were paying wages to two of the Dempsters' shepherds, Hudson and Isaacs, for help with their shearing. (34)

Miss Brooks related that they had bought the horse "Nobby" from one of the Ponton brothers, Stephen or Bill. One night, when the Brooks were preparing to camp, John Paul called: "Whoa there, Nobby."

The other Ponton brother—Bill or Stephen—recognising the name of the horse, came, expecting to see his brother. The horse was the one he knew, but the man was not.

"Hulloa—strangers!" he exclaimed in surprise. Then:

"Welcome, strangers!" (58). And so began a friendly association that was to last more than half a century.

The first lease taken up by Ponton brothers and Sharp was for 8,000 acres lying about 10 miles north-east of Mt. Dean, and was dated January 1st 1875. In its centre lay "Ponton's Rock" which is still marked on some maps (40t). They soon relinquished this block, however, in favour of other land in the area.

Stocking up with provisions and equipment at the Dempsters' store, John Paul Brooks and Stephen Ponton left Esperance on June 5th 1875 (34). Paul Brooks' records of the expedition, including his hand-drawn map (59), tell that they went first towards the Fraser Range. At Mount Ridley they met the Dempsters cutting a cart track through from Esperance (36). They then went north for about 80 miles; then N.E. to a point near the 30th parallel; and then criss-crossed around Lakes Roe, Lefroy and Cowan as

far west as the present town of Widgiemooltha. "Afterwards when Ernest Giles crossed through the West Australian desert from the Queen Victoria Spring, he found the prints of horses going north. These horses' tracks were made by my brother's animals," Sarah Brooks wrote, "... but nowhere did he find grassland in an acreage of over 5,000 acres. The only water he could find, was in small waterholes in the granite rocks. So the final result of this trip was a very disappointing one." (60)

A story about the expedition still circulates in this region. They were digging a well for water for the horses, and Stephen Ponton, down the hole, called out:

"Pass down a shovel, Brooks."

John Paul Brooks' indignant face appeared over the top of the hole: "I was born to command—not to take orders!"

Local legend does not say how the incident ended. But still today, a century later, if someone gives a peremptory order, the response is quite likely to be: "I was born to command—not to take orders!" but now this response is followed by gales of laughter. (61)

They never saw a native in these parts, but they saw many signs of them. Their horses were often restive during the night, and in the morning they would find footprints around their camp. One of the footprints always showed a deformed foot—the toes turned in. They knew that when Campbell Taylor had explored here in 1866 with his brother John and young Richard Belches, it was a wild native whose prints showed just such a deformed foot, who had threatened to attack John Taylor at his solitary camp (62). Their native guide, who was of a coastal tribe, became frightened and deserted them. However, no incidents occurred and after three months, they returned to the coast.

The Brooks family did optimistically take up two free stock runs of 100,000 acres each in the Hampton Plains region. One, in his own name, Paul describes in his application of August 30th 1875 as "situated to the N.E. of a salt lake which I have taken to be Lake Roe, but of course I might be in error so I have marked a tree as shown in the application (40u) . . . the other my mother is taking up, but I am acting for her, as you could not expect a lady to go exploring about the Hampton Plains. That run is situated to the N.E. of a salt lake which I have called Lake Taylor, which Lake Taylor I presume to be 30 or 35 miles south of Mt. Belches and it runs towards the S.W. towards Lake Cowan and might possibly be that lake." (40w)

Small wonder that there were some delays in the official approval of these two leases! The Lands Department asked for more information about the encroachment of Lake Taylor. Six months after his application, on March 14th, 1876, Paul Brooks wrote a somewhat irritable letter to the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, which says in part: ". . . I stated the boundaries as nearly as I could judge—for if Mr. Forrest in his 'flying trips' cannot vouch for accuracy in detail, how much less can I, who am not a surveyor, and could never be strictly positive as to my position. I think in a case like this where I have been to a great deal of trouble and expense already, and expect to meet a great deal more, you might accept my marked tree as sufficient boundaries for the present. I do not intend to expend any more trouble or money till I have some slight guarantee that it will not be thrown away. As to a Certificate of Stock, I will forward it as soon as Mr. Taylor arrives."

Ten days later, on March 24th 1876, Brooks handed to the Resident Magistrate at Albany a Stock Certificate signed by Campbell Taylor, stating that J. P. and E. H. Brooks have each over 200 sheep in the east district and Brooks' telegram to the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands in

Perth asks if approvals will now be given for the Lake Taylor and Lake Roe leases. To which the laconic reply was that more information was required of their bearing and distance from Mt. Belches (63).

Whether the Brooks family ever stocked these two Hampton Plains leases is not clear. They had bought more sheep from Campbell Taylor in October 1874: 200 maiden ewes at 8/6d a head and 15 full-mouthed wethers at 10/- a head; also on July 30th 1876, 15 full-mouthed wethers at 15/- a head (27). Some sheep were sent to Eucla in October 1875 (27). The Brooks certainly did not have cash to purchase any more. Brooks was not able to pay Mr. Taylor for the second flock until four years later: by that time, interest on the £85 owing amounted to £207.9. (27)

Their living expenses were probably low, and a little money was coming in from the wool clip. In March 1875 he shipped several bales per McKenzie for London, but a fire at sea resulted in his receiving payment of only £42.8.6 for the surviving bales. A cheque for wool for £42.8.6 per McKenzie £48.9.5; in March 1876, for 5 bales shipped to London sold in London for £30.10.8; and in December of the same year, 3 more bales shipped by the "Tilly" brought £38.15.0, with an additional £6.5.4 from Heinzmann for 63 lbs of lamb's wool. (27)

But other expenses were keeping the Brooks family short of ready cash. Expenses for shipping goods from the Eastern States were considerable: £44 in October 1874; £63.3.8 in February 1875; £18.6.8½d in December 1876 per Sherratt; as well as smaller amounts (27). These expenses probably represent furniture, household and farm equipment, and clothing, much of which would have had to be left in Victoria until they had acquired a fixed dwelling-place. The ships would take them to Albany, thence by the small coastal ships to Esperance, Point Malcolm or Israelite Bay, whence the goods would have to be transported by cart to Marlburkup.

First Leases Point Malcolm

But they stayed only a few years at Marlburkup. The Point Malcolm leases were allowed to lapse in 1879. These leases were next taken up by Campbell Taylor, whose 20,000 acres leased for four years from February 29th 1879, ran from the edge of the Point Malcolm Government Reserve westwards along the coast, beyond Cape Pasley. (40x) George Burns Scott was next to hold the Point Malcolm land. From January 1st 1882 his 20,000 acres (40y) included the whole of Point Malcolm to about 4 miles west, extending eastwards to go inland around the north of the Israelite Bay reserve. The Point Malcolm Reserve is not excised in this lease. When George Burns Scott fell into financial difficulties a few years later, he was compelled to give up most of the land he held, including the leases around Point Malcolm; which were bought for £1, at auction, on October 11th 1888 by the partnership of Ponton Brothers and Sharp; whose ownership has continued up to the present day. They brought their sheep from inland to be shorn at Point Malcolm, then shipping it from the anchorage where big ships could, in suitable weather, anchor about half a mile from shore. Small tenders carried a few bales at a time from the shore out to the waiting ship.

Ponton Brothers and Sharp did not take up land in the Hampton Plains after Stephen had investigated this with Paul Brooks in mid-1875. Instead they extended their holdings around Mt. Ragged. The first lease taken up dated January 1st 1875. In its centre lay "Ponton's Rock" which is still marked on some maps (40z). They soon relinquished this block in favour of other leases in the area.

Stephen Ponton's free stock run of 100,000 acres, taken up on September 25th 1875 lay about 16 miles north-west of Mt. Ragged extending east (40a) and included the good water catchment at Pine Hill. Of the same

date was an additional 4,000 acres about 23 miles N.N.W. of Mt. Ragged (40t). Later in the same year, on December 9th 1875, he took up two more blocks of 4,000 acres each, lying to the north (40i) and east (40r) of the Thomas River; these probably being to gain access to the sea and shipping. There is also 4,000 acres to the N.W. of Mt. Ragged (40e) and another 4,000 acres starting 8 miles north of Mt. Ragged and running eastwards (40f).

Like other early settlers in this region, Ponton Brothers and Sharp tried these leases for a few years, but often let some lapse when it was found that lack of water or presence of poison plant made them unsuitable. Good small acreages were later incorporated into minimum blocks of 20,000 acres each. But as the numbers of the leases were frequently changed, it is an extremely time-consuming and tedious task, to trace the story of any one block of land. The history of the more important land in this area will be considered in more detail in our final writing.

It was in 1879 that the Ponton Brothers and Sharp found the great red rocks of Ballajuna, and took up 60,000 acres around this fine water catchment (40l) and Womberna (40r) making Ballajuna their homestead. The beautiful aboriginal name, meaning "great red rocks standing up alone" (64) was unfortunately put on the map as "Balladonia" due to a Lands Department error. By 1880, the Ponton Brothers and Sharp partnership had become the biggest landholders in the Israelite Bay area.

To the west, around Esperance and the Fraser Range, the Dempster brothers owned vast estates; other big landholders were Alexander Moir at Stokes Inlet, the Dunns at the River Phillips, J. de B. Munroe at Duke of Orleans Bay, while Campbell Taylor with 95,000 acres around the Thomas River, 150,000 acres in the Hampton Plains and 20,000 acres at the Fraser Range, was also a substantial pastoralist, with a total holding of over a quarter of a million acres.

To the extreme east, the Muir family, with close on one million acres around Eucla, held the largest properties. McGill with six leases totalling around 200,000 acres came next; and the Kennedy brothers with 164,000 acres.

The Brooks family were unfortunate in their choice of the free stock runs of 100,000 acres to which they were entitled and by 1879 had allowed these 300,000 acres to lapse. For by this time, interesting new prospects were opening up.

Construction of the overland telegraph line from Albany to Eucla had begun.

This stupendous undertaking, which was to link Western Australia with Adelaide (hence with Darwin and, by submarine cable, with Europe and the rest of the world), had been planned jointly by the Governments of Western Australia and South Australia. After some initial delays, the project was so well advanced that Governor Weld was able to place the first of the 7,000 telegraph poles in front of the Albany Post Office, on January 1st 1875, as his last official act before leaving the Colony. It can be seen there today. Construction began in earnest a few months later. The line from Albany to Bremer Bay was completed by October 1875; the Esperance Bay Station formally opened for traffic on September 8th 1876; Israelite Bay repeating station on December 5th 1876; that at Eyre's Sand Patch on July 17th 1877; and the fifth and final station, at Eucla, on December 9th 1877.

The overland telegraph line would now keep the isolated settlers in touch with the rest of the world. Ships, which previously could be relied on to come regularly only once a year, by private charter, would be augmented by quarterly ships bringing provisions to the officers of the five telegraph stations, and by a quarterly mail service. Other benefits the settlers could expect would be a regular, if small, market for their fresh

meat and other surplus produce: the settlers' carts and horses would be useful in transporting telegraph poles and equipment from the beach where they were landed, to their construction sites further inland. Contracts for carting brought much-needed cash to the pastoralists and laid the foundation of more than one prosperous station property. In addition, the telegraph stations would need men—not only city-trained telegraphists, but linemen to maintain the wire over hundreds of miles between each repeating station. Who better equipped for such hazardous and arduous work in the arid and isolated, often waterless, country, than the pioneer settlers or their sons, all of whom knew the country and were, perforce, good bushmen?

John Paul Brooks decided to take a position with the Telegraph Department. In July 1877 he was appointed the first lineman at the Israelite Bay Telegraph Station, a position he held for the next seven years (65) until he relinquished it in 1884, in order to concentrate his energies on Balbina Station, 60 miles inland, which he had taken up the year before. (ti)

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 - (m) 85
 - (n) 86
 - (o) 89
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Montgomery of Claremont —The First Fifteen Years

By Dr. A. S. ELLIS, Director of Mental Health Services, Western Australia

"Great things can only be viewed from a proper distance"

(Norman Douglas—"South Wind")

Dr. Sydney Hamilton Rowan Montgomery, M.B., B.Ch., Royal University of Ireland, son of the Rev. Robert Montgomery, clergyman, of Belfast, was the first Inspector-General of the Insane in Western Australia. He was the founder of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane which was described as "an institution which evokes the admiration of those qualified to express an opinion".¹

It is necessary to provide some background so that Montgomery may be placed in proper perspective. From its earliest days the colony had had difficulty in providing suitable accommodation for those of unsound mind. Until 1831 "lunatics" were placed with convicts on the "Marquis of Anglessea" and it was here that the first "mental patient" in the colony, Dr. Nicholas Were Langley, was confined² until the Roundhouse was completed in January 1831. The Roundhouse served as gaol and asylum until 1852, when the government rented Scott's Warehouse for that purpose; fourteen years later the Fremantle Asylum (now the Maritime Museum) was completed, and "lunatics" were moved there. The Surgeon-Superintendent of the asylum at that time (Dr. George Atfield) was highly delighted with the new asylum, but within five years there were complaints of overcrowding, poor segregation, inadequate classification of patients, and insanitary conditions; these complaints continued for over twenty-five years.³ In 1896 the government purchased 1,000 acres at Jarrahdale (at £7 an acre—about \$140 today) together with the farmhouse there.

After some minor alterations the farmhouse accommodated fifty "quiet and chronic" patients from Fremantle. The property was gazetted as an