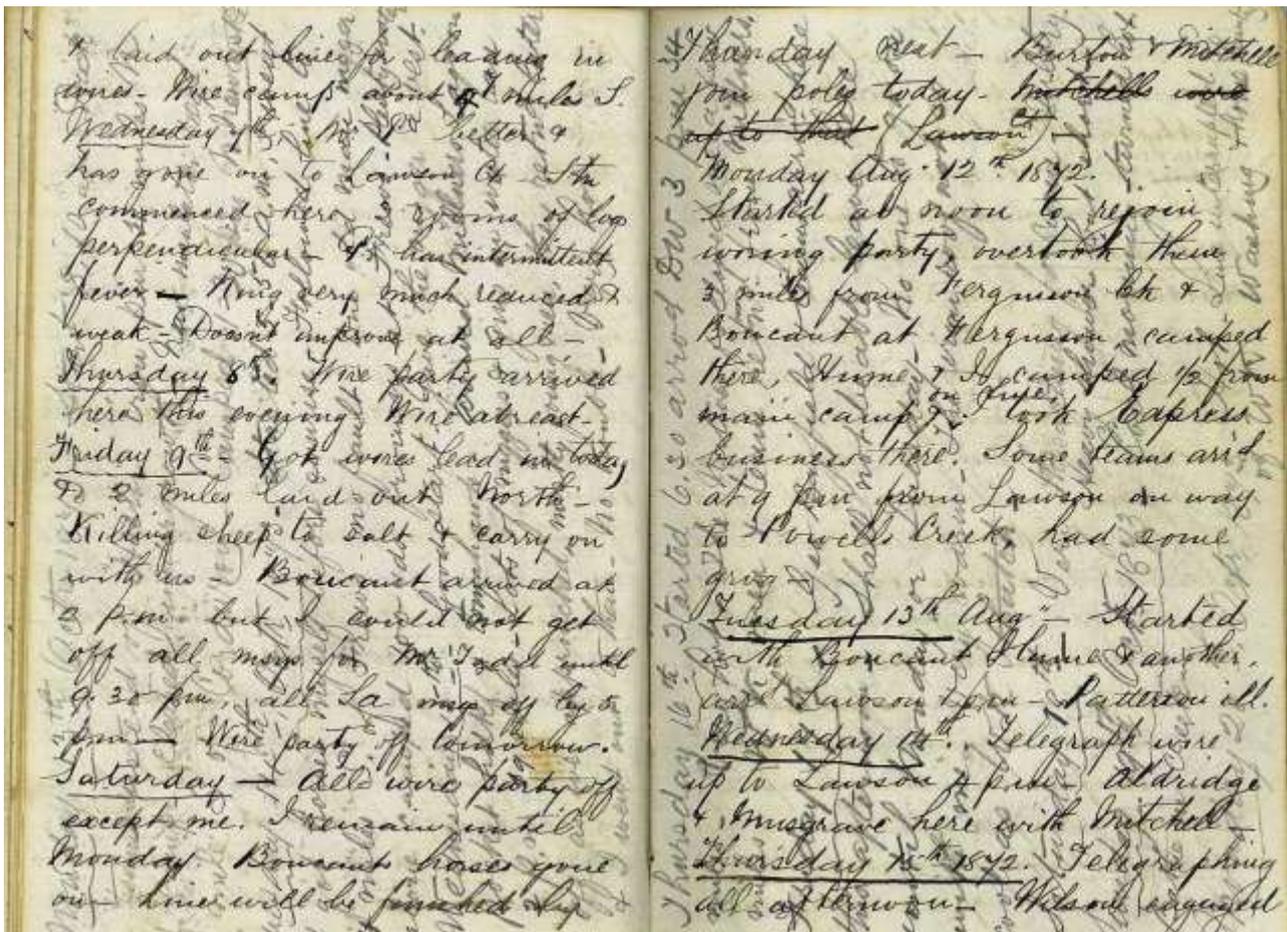


D 7265 Diary of Charles Henry Johnston 1872-73 and 1875
Transcribed and researched by Elizabeth Macilwain, a descendent, 2014



Cover of Charlie Johnston's diary and a sample page showing 'cross-hatching' which saved paper. This page has horizontal entries for August 1872 written in ink referring to working on the Overland Telegraph Line and its leader Charles Todd, with entries for 1873 back at his station written vertically in pencil



Transcriber's note: Charles Henry Johnston was born in Exeter, Devon on 13 February 1848 to John Sanders Johnston, a Catholic Scot from Lockerbie and Ann Palmer from Exeter. The family departed Plymouth in 1850 on the Sophia and eventually settled in South Australia, except for John Sanders J^{nr}, a wheelwright who stayed in York, Western Australia. Many of the family members were involved in the South Australian Telegraph Offices and are mentioned in the diary. Charles and his siblings in order of birth were:-

- *James Palmer Johnston, 1832-1914 m. Bridget Kiernan.*
- *Isabella Anne Johnston, 1835-1906, Catholic school teacher at Penola, prior to Mary McKillop, m. Charles Jonas Valentine, Chief Inspector of Stock.*
- *Eliza Johnston, 1837-1911, Post Mistress at Semaphore (1869-1905) m. Thomas Sproule.*
- *John Sanders Johnston, 1839-1924 m. Mary Gallop.*
- *Matilda Cecily Johnston, 1846-1877, school teacher at Penola, m. John Archibald Graham Little, Post & Telegraph Station Master at Port Darwin.*
- *Charles Henry Johnston, 1848-1875, Station Master at Powell's Creek, Katherine and Daly Waters.*
- *Joseph MacLean William Johnston, born Perth WA (1851-1932), operator at Charlotte Waters, Station Master at Yam Creek, South Port, Pine Creek, Port Darwin, Inspector PO&T Service. m. Catherine Josephine McDonald of Penola.*

Sat March 16th 1872 4 p.m. Instd. at 11 a.m. Left Roper Landing for Rutts Party¹, in company with R. Price² (& Crowder)³ with 9 horsemen & 50 packs provisions—Arrived at the Bar (8miles)—Giles⁴ & King⁵ follow tomorrow

Sunday Giles & King joined. Lambert⁶ & Stratton⁷ rode up, 9 retrnd. to Landing.

Monday -Started 9 a.m all hands—very bad road—Devils Pass—Port McMinn & Bluff, Butters Bluff—Camped at Creek near Harts Passage—1 horse died-

Tuesday Giles & King tried on & found road impossible—mending clothes & washing—Crowder & Easter⁸ went top of Mt McMinn—saw 3 kangaroo—Heavy rain afternoon and night.

¹ *Rutt, Walter, second-in-command of Government replacement party on Northern Section. . Many references in 'An End To Silence, the Building of the Overland Telegraph Line from Adelaide to Darwin', by Peter Taylor pub. 1980 by Methuen Australia Pty Ltd. (AETS)*

² *Price, Robert (Bob), teamster. Part of Goyder's team 1869. Ref. Overland Telegraph Line Bonuses, Central section, House of Assembly of 4th December, 1877.(OTLB), The Surveyors by Margaret Goyder Kerr pub. 1971*

³ *Crowder, William Alfred, 1854-1891, Cadet, laborer, part of hack's transport team. D8065(L) Crowder diary transcript SLSA.*

⁴ *Giles, Alfred, 1846-1931 Overseer of Transport, and Explorer. Part of Ross's Party. (Ross, John, leader of Overland Telegraph exploratory expedition). Ref., AETS, Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography Vol 1 pub Charles Darwin University 1990 (NT Biography), Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles SLSA 1926.*

⁵ *King, Stephen, jr, Surveyor of Northern Section. Part of Goyder's Team 1869. Ref, AETS, OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr.*

⁶ *Stretton, William George, 1847-1919, Sub-Overseer. Ref., OTLB, NT Biography.*

⁷ *Lambell, J.M., laborer. Accountant and postmaster on Goyder's Expedition, 1869. Ref., OTLB. The Surveyors by M G Kerr.*

Wednesday 20th—Ground very soft. King, Price, Hearn⁹ & Billy Weaver¹⁰ retrnd. to Roper Landing. (leaving us 9 all told) taking 1 pack horse. I bathed big mares leg, washed trousers, shorts and socks, 2 p.m started Mt McMinn to shoot with Crowder & Easter—no luck hard work walking thru' mud to Mt., steep bluff ascent, no game. Sandflies & mosquitoes (bathed in creek) turned into net, out of their way—song from curtain. Good night

Thursday 21/3/72 up & lit fire, wash in creek. Brkfstd, washed mares leg & 2 shirts—turned into hammock, wrote up diary—Yesty Giles tried on & forward road worse than before—I gave Bush a whipping for not stopping at my fly and he went away for several hours returned at 10 p.m—in good temper—Been a very fine day, very hot, ground drying up—Beautiful moon light nights, heavy dew —Nice bathing.

Friday -Mending clothes—[...] at my fly. Rehearsal of songs & choruses till dinner. Giles & Woods¹¹ trying track to Harts range—Giving clothes airing—Rutt will be able to start tomorrow—mngs very pleasant-Evenings same but for mosquitoes—Start mng- Saty 23rd Mar' 1872 All about early-started 9 a.m—road very fair -boggy in places—many horses bogged but got all on but 1 weak horse—had to leave mare with bad leg at camp—hot day, made about 10 miles. Road improving, hope do better tomorrow. Had a nip all round. Camped near a little creek, good water, plenty game saw 1 (old man) kangaroo today—No natives yet. Close sultry night. Passed Sherwin Creek-

Sunday 24th Started early—road fearfully boggy—No end of work getting up bogged horses & pulling them out. Very hot-Horses blown, camped at 3 p.m at small boggy creek. Bush gets along easily but bites men when rousing horses about. I have a fine horse 16 ½ hands—blk—takes me thru' every thing—very tired and bad headache.

Monday 25th Got along 8 miles right, then came to the worst bog of any we have had—Got 12 horses thru' by unpacking and great trouble—Fine creek —compelled to keep remainder of the horses this side-Would not be able to cross—1 hopelessly bogged—Sun very powerful--burnt neck and hands all blistered-Country not fit for whites to work—Last night wild dogs howled dismally close to camp.

Tuesday -Some carrying packs out of bog Mr Giles and 3 men seeking another, found one so we start tomorrow—I feel very giddy am going to get a fever I think—Cant eat any thing-We have only Boulli & tea & sugar and flour & water mixed up to throw on the fire to cook—too damp to make damper—turn in am burning hot all over, taking couple of pills-

Wednesday Start early, feel ill get along very well, help as much as I can thru' the bogs—obliged to sit down every now and then—got on —camped and shortly after Knuckey¹² &

⁸ *Easther, William, 1846-1875, laborer. Died on the "Gothenburg". Ref., OTLB.*

⁹ *Hearne, R.W., (William), laborer. Part of Ross's party. Lame in one leg. Ref., OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

¹⁰ *William Weaver (Billy) laborer. Aboriginal tracker (half-caste). Ref., OTLB.*

¹¹ *Woods, Alfred Thomas, Overseer, sub-section D, Central Section, Part of Goyder's team 1869. Ref., AETS, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, The South Australian Register (Death) 22 Nov 1892 p3.*

¹² *Knuckey, Richard Randall, 1842-1914, Overseer, sub-section A, Central Section. Ref., AETS, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, NT Biography.*

Millner¹³ (he who came thru' with sheep & stock) met us from the Line going to Roper for provisions. The blacks visited us after them saying very good very good, they were sent away—they are very treacherous—killed Millners¹⁴ brother further on—the parties on the Line are hard up for tucker—bad flour.

Thursday 28th 1872 Make camp here today to spell horses, a bad place to get over and each horse carries about 12 lbs—Knuckey & Millner left today for Landing—just after they left about 15 or 20 niggers crawled in within 10 yds of the camp with their spears and all arms when the dogs rushed at them, they ran a few steps & turned putting their spears in the wummeras and were about to throw when we fired on them and they ran like fun with a few shots in their rears to hurry them along—all our men were moving the horses leaving Giles, Crowder (a cadet) and I in the camp—the blacks must have watched and thought there was only 1 or 2 hands in camp—they meant mischief. This roused one up quickly—I feel better today -have taken some quinine twice but cant eat —start tomorrow.

Good Friday

Friday 29 1872—Started & got over well, road good then about 5 miles & came to small creeks, few yds apart, heavy travelling for 3 miles. Came to another bad bog got some horses thru' with great trouble, then had to go back ½ mile and camp on low damp ground no trees to sling to so had to camp on ground—I was too bad to make my dos and hang my net, a fit of ague, dreadful shiverings—cant eat—saw natives again in mng & found small canoes & pieces of iron from which they had broken out of drays left behind last Jany by Giles men all broken up to small pieces—Roads were too bad then to take them along-

Saty Got on 3 miles & lost 2 horses whilst getting others thru' bog, camped & search made & succeeded in getting them. Patterson¹⁵ and Millner overtook us here going on quickly —had dinner with him, found I could eat some stewed steak & carrots, soft bread & drink tea with some presvd. milk—we all camp here tomorrow. I feel first rate again now & eat some supper.

Easter Sunday 31st March 1872

Nice cool night and good moon rose about 10.20. This is the best camping ground we have had yet—Made good breakfast, got a little pepper and a mustard tin from Pattersons party, by washing the tin I got a little mustard and so made the Bouilli palatable. Walked over to Patterson's camp and had a long chat with him —he told me he heard Mrs P had been unwell, recognised Bush again—Asked one to dinner—Giles & Crowder too came but they had dined but Crowder went in for a feed again of tripe & Haricot Stewed Chops—Service was read at 3 p.m but I of course did not attend—Being a beautiful day—I think I've got over my attack. Start again tomorrow-

¹³ *Milner, Ralph, sheep drover. Ref., AETS, Mr Milner's trip Across the Continent The South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889) 14 July 1873 p 3., NT Biography.*

¹⁴ *Milner, John, sheep drover. Killed by Aborigines at Attack Creek 30 September 1871. Ref., AETS*

¹⁵ *Patterson, Robert Charles appointed leader of Government replacement party on Northern Section. Ref., AETS, OTLB.*

Monday 1st April 1872 Pattersons party got off first. A lot of our horses having rambled. Started late but did a good journey 13 miles. Camped at the Strangway River having overtaken Patterson who had to shoot 1 horse, another having broken his leg—We have passed Stuart heights McCullochs do and Moles Hill. Covey creek where we killed last horse.

Tuesday 2/4/72 Crossed Strangways and camped at Little's Bluff alongside creek 11 miles today. Poor Bush very lame. Patterson left knocked up horse today—Very beautiful lilies in all the water holes on road with most delicious smell.

Wednesday 3rd April 1872 Early start in company—1st mile all pug very heavy. Made Red Lily Swamp 17 miles, the longest stage we have yet made —Millners Camp and sheep 1 half off 2 men go for a sheep and we have mutton for supper with fish caught in the swamp 4 to 5 lb weight very great treat—Very large alligator in the water. Have got some seeds of lilies—the flowers are a pale Magenta as large as a pint basin and the leaves about 8 or 10 inches wide—they grow out of the mud in thousands. Hence the name of the swamp. I bought a kangaroo dog here today for £2

—I wish Joe¹⁶ many happy returns of the day, I think today is his birthday.

Thursday April 4th 1872

Caught more fish today and had some for breakfast. Start after sunset and at Millners Camp get some fresh young pack horses bought from him. Some of our old ones sent back to Roper by Crowder & 2 men. We go on & camp having made 4 miles—my kangaroo dog having led part way followed to camp

Friday—Came 15 miles crossing Elsie Creek & river tributaries of Roper. Passed McMinn's Bar pretty good road—The grass all along has been 5 to 10 feet high—Camped on Elsie River good dry camp—Fresh Mutton for dinner again—We have but 2 meals per day generally—We expect to reach the line tomorrow at McLachlans¹⁷ camp—Patterson is a mile further on—Very cold nights, hot days -plenty water.

Saturday April 6th 1872

Lost horse this morning for long time found him at last and made a start about 10—We believe a party passed down yesty having seen fresh tracks—Bush and another dog lost today—they stopped behind in the shade—McLachlan & Hack¹⁸ overtook us 1 mile from their camp, they having passed us & went on to Millners. All well here arrd. 3 p.m

¹⁶ Johnston, Joseph McLean William, (Joe) 1851-1932 Brother. He was the operator at Charlotte Waters, Yam Creek. Station Master at Pine Ck and Inspector of Posts & Telegraphs. Ref., *The OT Line in the NT, Who Was Where and When* by Lawrie & Jim Debnam 1988, *The Shackle*, D E Kelsey, 1975, *Johnston Family History*, E A Macilwain, 2014.

¹⁷ McLachlan, George Galbraith 1842-1873: surveyor, Northern Section. Part of Goyder's team 1869. Ref, AETS, *The Surveyors* by M G Kerr, NT Biography.

¹⁸ Hack, Bedford, Overseer of Transport, 1855-1912. Ref., AETS, OTLB, *Exploring in the 'seventies* Alfred Giles.

Sunday 7th We remain here today. Patterson not well having a fall on Friday and cut his leg—go on with him tomorrow to Rutts party where Stapleton¹⁹ is, 40 miles by road only 30 direct. The sheep not turned up —The wild dogs are very numerous all through the country, we hear them every night. Some say they will have killed our dogs—My young kangaroo dog kept up all right—I gave Bush a drink out of my water bag only 10 minutes before I lost him—Burton²⁰ is all right we hear, but one of his men very ill—Rix²¹ has gone on to see him—He is 4 days journey from here South—I rode 2½ miles to a water hole off our track altogether & found Bush & other dog —brought them on, tracked him on another road —Have the Ague tonight bad, had to turn in before sundown—shivered fearfully for an hour then red hot until I broke out in a perspiration -drunk quart hot tea.

Monday April 8th 1872 Start today with Patterson for Rutts int—12 packs provisions & 4 Rutts stray horses—& 4 men -Made 10 miles-weak today.

Tuesday All right. Made Roper River. The Roper here is a small creek, having crossed it camped—Bush lost again 3 miles back—Have had a fine bath in the creek, Patterson & I. His leg is very sore to ride with. Will reach Rutts tomorrow. The Conorl-volis grows wild here and is very pretty. I can feel another attack fever ague coming on—Saw a young wild dog today-Must turn in, have got the shakes-

Wednesday 10th April Had a dreadful night of it after the ague. I was burning hot until 2 a.m when I at last perspired freely and slept until daylight. Mr Patterson very kind. He and men kept watch for niggers this being a bad place for them. I could not take my watch. Started 7.30 a.m arrived Rutts camp at 12 noon. Saw 2 dingoes on the road. A man's horse knocked up yesty, he went back for him and to look for Bush but there were no signs of him, he may go back to MacLachlans camp—I hope I shall get him again. I left my kangaroo dog at McLachlans in care of Eckers²², brother of Jno Eckers²³. My horse lost at Union Camp—had to ride a filly she will make a fine hack bye and bye—Have just had a long yarn with Howley²⁴ at the Catherine—He speaks well of that station. There is plenty of game duck & kangaroo. It is the farthest Stn North & is 200 miles from Pt Darwin—Stapleton is to be located there—he has asked me to be his assistant—I said I would like it very well if Mr Todd²⁵ did not offer me a Stn and I spoke of salary—he said he could get me £140 per annum if Mr Todd does not give me a Stn that would be very good in 3 years I could save I should think £300-and be out of debt and then perhaps a station—Just had dinner 2 legs mutton, 1 boiled 1 roasted and good bread—Tea without the flavour of sugar though—I remember Mr Stapleton—I find I met

¹⁹ *Stapleton, James Lorenz, 1834-1874, Field Operator, Telegraphist, Station Master at Alice Springs & Barrow Creek. Killed by aborigines 24 February 1874 at Barrow Creek. AETS, L&J Debnam, The Shackle.*

²⁰ *Burton, R.C. asst. Govt overseer on Northern Section, part of Goyder's expedition, 1869. Ref., AETS, OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

²¹ *Rix, Dr. Edward Cecil, Government Chemist, Medical Officer. Ref., OTLB. Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

²² *Eckers, Charles, laborer. Ref., OTLB.*

²³ *Eckers, John, laborer. Ref., OTLB.*

²⁴ *Howley Andrew, Field Operator at the Join with Patterson, telegraphist, Station Master. Ref., AETS, OTLB, L&J Debnam.*

²⁵ *Todd, Sir Charles 1826-1910, Postmaster General and Superintendent of Telegraphs. Ref., AETS, OTLB, L&J Debnam, The Shackle, NT Biography.*

him at Penola years since in Terry Woods²⁶ time—There is not communication with Pt Darwin from the Catherine. Mr Stapleton will not be able to start for 2 weeks for want of horses—it is 45 miles from here—We passed Gum Creek and Gum Creek Billabong today—Take Quinine 3 times a day now—No fever tonight-

Thursday 11th, 1872 Mosquitoes very bad last night—Mr Hewnmack guys carried away last night and threw me out half asleep, I thought I had been thrown off a horse—Feel first rate today. Have had to give up my horse for line work and my saddle & bridle to Stapleton—It is a great shame—It is impossible to say when I shall get another fit out—Patterson starts back today and goes onto Burton—This party starts work today and puts up line to Southward. McLachlan works to join us—Stapleton starts on Saturday-

Friday April 12th 1872

Occupied in examining instruments—and talking to Howley—The storekeeper here named Wiltshire²⁷ shot an ibis today and had it stewed for supper—We have 3 meals a day now—breakfast at 6 a.m dinner at 12, tea at 6 p.m, turn in about 8 every night—We move camp on Monday probably—There is a nest of Finchs in one of the trees to which I have strung my hammock—they are beautiful little things-

Saturday 13/4/72 My tree with the nest came down last night and the little birds took their departure—I have got a fresh pair of trees and am very comfortably rigged up—Stapleton starts after dinner—I help him pack up. Expect to see Howley next week—A Mr McCauley²⁸ returned tonight from Millners Camp having passed us on the road to the Roper for supplies but hearing at Millners that we had come on, returned—I can't telegraph for 4 or 5 days so I go back to McLachlans for a keg of rum for this camp and other articles. I take 1 man—1 pack horse.

Sunday 14/4/72 Had breakfast and started 8 a.m—made lagoon 41 miles from Rutts 14 miles from McLachlans—This has been a long stage for the N.T.—Never go out of a walk—Looks like rain tonight and I did not bring my fly-

Monday 15th Had to turn out about 3 a.m—The rain came down in torrents—Put on my Macintosh and long boots and weather it out over the fire—Had breakfast long before daylight & as I did not know where the track was had to wait for light to get the horses and find track—Daylight a quarter to six—Make a start at 6 and reach McLachlans at 10—Mr Patterson here, leaves today after dinner for Burtons—Bush is here so I take him and my kangaroo dog back with me tomorrow—Turn in early not having sleep last night-

²⁶ Woods, Terrence, *Station Master Penola, brother of Rev. J. T. Woods. Ref., Notes of a Journey to the South eastern District January 1863, Peter Rymill Ed., 2010.*

²⁷ Wiltshire, W, *storekeeper, member of Rutt's party. Ref., OTLB.*

²⁸ McCauley Colin, *Sub-Overseer, member of Rutt's Party. Ref., OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

Tuesday 1560 sheep arrived here tonight from Millners for the use of the O.T.L. Start a.m after 2 horses of Rutts to take back—Found the horses—Start at 6p.m Have to wait for meat for the road—Bright moonlight night—Shall go 14 miles to water—Got Rutts rum OK-

Wednesday 17th-Got here about 11 last night-must make 10 miles today to the Roper Creek—The dogs travelled first rate last night. Baking a damper this morning—Start about 9-arrived at Creek about half past three—Rutts is now 6 miles from here as they will have shifted camp on 4 miles-Get in tomorrow early—Nothing but damper for us in the morning-

Thursday April 18th 1872

Met the drays after travelling 5 miles—again moving camp 4 miles towards the Roper Creek difficulty getting horse teams along the ground doesnt bear them—Got to camping place about 4 p.m being 6 hours moving 4 miles—Hacks dray arrived to place the wire on line of construction—Good camp here, creek a branch of the Roper.

Friday -Went out on line and tried to speak the Catherine put in Galv but can get no current—Howley ought to have arrived before this—Must try again tomorrow-Had some lizard stewed for dinner today-It was very nice indeed-It measured 4 feet 6 inches-Killed a fat bullock today for beef—all the bullocks of each party are in splendid condition—the horses quite the reverse—Mosquitoes are not as troublesome here—Saw a wild dog today but could not get a shot at him-I want his skin for the side of my hammock to stand or when turning in & out-All this country is very well grassed and watered—cattle and horses would well here—there is plenty of high ground in case of floods-the natives are keeping back on the swamps-as long as the water lasts the game is staying there-Their huts are sheets of bark bent across the middle resting on a ridge on 2 forked sticks thus [*tiny drawing*] just high enough to crawl under, inside only to sleep I think.

Saturday April 20th Cleaning up my rifle & revolver, sewing on buttons. Cant get a horse to go to end of wire 4 miles off—Cant walk & carry instruments—Good meals today & enough to eat for the first time since I have been here. We are so short of rations, of flour, sugar, tobacco and tea—A small loaf like a penny loaf for each meal—It is expected the teams from the Roper Landing will arrive at No 2 well about the 15th of May from where pack horses will bring rations for us all—That will be about 50 miles from us. We have provisions to last (at present scale) until then—took a team round with the gun saw nothing but a pigeon which I brought into show-

Sunday -Service at 10 a.m-Reading—Plenty of beef-

Monday 22nd Make a pad to go to line to speak—Get a horse at 11 a.m. No signs of Howley yet—He ought to be here by now. It was expected the road would be bad but it is 8 days since he left for here and Stapleton left us the previous evening—I have been to the line and could not speak—Not any current-rewired 2 hours with Galv & relay in circuit without any sign—Quite hot again today—Nice breeze in the evening-Very slow progress being made with the construction of line. Expect Mr Todd on line next month—The distance from here to the Catherine (K N) is about 54 miles—Stapleton would only have 46 to go—2 creeks on

road where he would have to make a crossing—he has 1 man with him & Howley a blackboy from Pt Darwin who is very fond of Howley and would not leave him under any circumstance—They each have a cart and 2 horses—Stapleton rides a third—We move camp again tomorrow 2 miles further on—to the Roper Crossing then I shall have 4 miles to return to end of line

Tuesday April 23rd 1872 Busy all the morning packing up instruments and preparing to move camp—Got to new camp having crossed Roper by dinner time—McLachlan arrived here in afternoon having seen Mitchell²⁹ with a bullock team from the Landing—they will arrive at Union Camp next Friday. Howley will be near to them—We are making a mile and [...] per day now—they will be 25 miles from the present camp—No sign of Howley so I start—tomorrow—(try to speak first) to find him—We are all very anxious—No one at the Catherine

Wednesday 24th April 1872

MacLachlan started back—I after trying to speak KN started at 10 a.m in search of Howley with 1 man (Witherick³⁰) passed our old camp at Providence Knoll had lunch there and came out the Roper 20 miles from our camp—both dogs following well—No signs of Howley. Stapleton passed here alright—we see by his tracks—

Thursday 25 -Just starting about 7 a.m having baked a damper the only food we have with tea, no sugar—Expect we will know something of Howley today—Found tracks of his cart where he turned back with Stapleton—Shall travel by moonlight tonight to get over 10 miles of heavy sand, camped at waterhole now (3p.m) until moon rises at 8 p.m letting the horses have a rest —Shall get within 6 miles of the Catherine by 1 a.m at creek—Good night.

Friday Made early start after a mouthful of damper and got to KN before 8 a.m too soon for their breakfast crumbed biscuit & sugar mixed with hot water & fire dried—Howley could not get on with his horses and why I could not speak is still a mystery as Stapleton arrived here on Tuesday week—and has been trying me ever since—Howley is 57 miles off on Pt Darwin side repairing line -met by G G Todd³¹ on same duty both short of provisions—I am to wait here until Howley returns here on Monday—We then go back to field in company—dinner & tea same as breakfast (promise of meat & pumpkins tomorrow) Have been very bad with dysentery last 4 days -S tells me I am to be his assistant when line completed, he thinks salary £160—The Supt. gone over to Batavia expected hourly at Pt Darwin—have spoke Little³² several times today—This is the best place I have been in the Territory—The Catherine is a fine stream -rocky banks-high rocky hills around and plenty of grass on the valleys—

²⁹ Mitchell, Alexander James, *Surveyor, Goyder's Expedition, 1869. Ref., OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr.*

³⁰ Witherick, W, *Storekeeper, G.P.O. Ref., OTLB.*

³¹ Todd, George Griffith, 1852- *Asst Operator Pt Darwin, nephew of Sir Charles Todd. Ref., L&J Debnam.*

³² Little, John Archibald Graham, 1843-1906 *Station Master at Darwin, Brother-in-law married to his sister Matilda. Ref, AETS, L&J Debnam, The Shackle D E Kelsey, NT Biography, Johnston Family History.*

Saturday April 27th 1872 The men on line last fossicking in a creek 57 miles from here found gold just by poking about after camping in the evening—The Gold Prospecting Company in the "Alexandria"³³ arrived at Pt Darwin all well. Long yarn with Little this morning & heard all home were well—I am glad to hear it. He comes through to Katherine with repairing party starting in a week—G Crouch from Portland is at Pt Darwin—he has tried pearl fishery with little success—intends trying gold fields, he says Kelsh at Nichol Bay is doing first rate at pearls and is a teetotaller! Wonders never cease.

Sunday April 28th—Fishing for our dinner—No more meat for three days. Caught 16 small fish for 5 hungry men. They wont make us bilious—Crushed biscuit & sugar for tea—bad sugar & damaged biscuits, weavils in thousands—started by sunrise with gun, saw no game—Will go to meet Howley tomorrow—The nights now are very cold-

Monday April 29th 1872 Having gone 10 miles met Howley, his pack horse nearly knocked up, reached the Katherine about 5.30 p.m.—having spoken Little—We have a long yarn about Adelaide people—Howley and I start for the field on Wednesday—he wants a days spell, attends to his affairs here—In some creeks today I got some Agate & pieces of Jasper—very pretty

Tuesday 30th—Yarned with Fletcher³⁴ & Little, the latter having paper war with Govt. Resdt.³⁵ about Bengal. G.R. refusing to discharge Bengal & endorse Little's order on Mr. Todd, for amount of charter which would be taken by Capt. of Bengal and which he wished to discount at Batavia or Java—G.R. obstructing L in performance of duties—L fitting out party to start on line repair to KN—Revolvers refused from armoury & refused Bengal carry mail—Sent memo home thro Little—Fletcher spoke about 2nd Operatorship at PD @ PO which I declined to let him speak for—would not take it, too small a salary—Hopes of more promise from Stapleton of effort to interest himself for my advantage-

Wednesday May 1st 1872 The first day of the month of May—Up at sunrise—but cant get Ho to start. All ready—Get away at last at 11 p.m. I follow line over very Rocky ground have to get off & pilot my horse—Howley got a buster—Roachey bucked him off so I had to mount and a greater brute I never rode—I quietened him down though—I hear now everybody considers him as a nut and no one would have him before so I got him—a mouth like a Gum tree—make 17 miles—Howley very stiff so am I-

Thursday -Bake a damper & get off at 7.30 a.m. Meet dray with supplies for KN—get 2 [...] meat and make 27 miles—Roachey packs well—Camp at Providence Knoll—followed line & picked up 2 horses which we passed going to KN—cant catch them so leave them in yard all night—fine fresh & fat—Howley and my man came up an hour later and grey pony knocked up & fell with Witherick—my bay colt after good deal galloping after the fresh horses brought me through first rate—my choice was correct again-

³³ *Valentine, Porteus Means, 1828-1901, his uncle was a member of this party of 9 prospectors. Ref. The Territory by Ernestine Hill. Johnston Family History.*

³⁴ *Fletcher, J., Telegraphist at Pt Darwin, Station Master at Yam Creek. Ref. OTLB, L&J Debnam.*

³⁵ *Douglas, Captain William Bloomfield, 1822-1906. Ref., AETS, The Shackle.*

Friday 3rd May 1872 Put the 2 horses in the yard last night, this morning found they had jumped over fence—I went back 2 miles & got them—overtook Howley 5 miles from Knoll-Grey knocked up again, camp at Roper Creek Crossing. Could not catch the fresh horses previously but here I roped them. No yard. Basked both of them—one, an old stayer—broken to harness-would not do for saddles. The other, a first rate stallion-went well—will ride him and will pack other—spell 2 of our old ones—Wild dogs in hundreds round the camp tonight-my dogs continually rushing them-Get to Rutts camp tomorrow morning I think-

Saturday May 4th 1872

The 2 horses allright-Got along first rate-The black horse bucked his load off but once-Overtook Rutts party moving camp-line poled as far as Rutts party pole it—wiring party keep on working to No 1 well—the poling party go from here to No 2 well to pole onward & dist. from here about 60-Knuckey takes Rutts place in charge-Mr Patterson & Knuckey be here & left yesty—2 saddles for the field have been sent on by bullock dray, we met to KN-must try to get them some how-Try to speak from here tomorrow-

Sunday May 5th 1872 We went over & spoke Mr Little & KN about 11 a.m, arranged to speak again at 3 p.m & bring Rutt over to speak Little-great anxiety felt about Mr Todd (Supt.) he not having turned up yet. "Young Aust" has difficulty get fuel to return from Batavia having gone there from Roper & she was to proceed from Batavia to Pt Darwin. Rutt from No 2 Well starts to building station, but its intended he still return authority over this party—I went over with him to wire and Howley remained in camp. I got through first rate with the speaking-I proceed to KN again tomorrow-for the saddles and bring back Rutts wiring cart which S took there in consequence of the KN cart being broken he wished to retain-I take 1 man & 3 horses and repair line as I return

Monday 6th Get away at 11 to get to Providence Knoll, 23 miles.

Tuesday 7th Reach within 1 mile of Sandy Well, 26. Not very quick today for a couple of hours, like a return of fever, I hope not.

Wednesday Get to KN in time for dinner, having come 20 miles, total dist from start 69 miles. No saddles on the waggon— [...] allright-Spoke Mr Little—Mr Todd left & G Todd arrived there today, the later from the line.

Thursday 9th May I have had a [...] of fever today—got up a good profuse perspiration which left me weak for some hours—I hope I have settled the Ague—spell here today & start tomorrow examining every pole & pin for 23 miles, cart, ladder etc make thorough repair of line within that distance from here—with only one man will not be able to go over that dist. at more than 5 miles per day—we will have to go 128 miles by ourselves—that is to No 2 Well—it will take us a fortnight I reckon allowing horses time-

Friday 10th May Got away from KN at 11 a.m with another man—found the horses in camp very troublesome, put in 2 insulator pins this side KN & tried to burn grass around poles but

the rain had made it too wet-pulled the grass from around poles-camped 5 mile creek at dark —there found Hart³⁶ & bullock waggon returning from KN. Plenty of rain all day.

Saturday Replaced one pole after felling many trees to find a sound one. Bullocks & men assisted most promptly. Put in 3 pins & camped at 2nd lagoon having to work back tomorrow—shot a pigeon-horses knocked up pulling through the sand.

Sunday 12th May 1872—Went back examined every pin from where we left off yesty & replaced 6-poles allright-heavy days work for pack horse —made him carry ladder one side [...] the other, better than cart—left Smith mind camp—shot parrot & white cockatoo—had them stewed for supper—Hart still camps with us—Hurst³⁷ remains here again tomorrow & repairs & examines line

Monday 13th May 1872 Examined line to end of Bacon Swamp replaced wire on pole where off—found pins sound-Hart went on this morning—I work—F Davies returned & ammunition alas portmanteau—Today completes my job of line work having put on 6 new pins—the poles will stand I think for near another 12 months-Total new pins put on 17,7 new poles and wire & insulators put on

Tuesday 14th May 1872 Make a start the horses not used to the collar yet, camped at the King-Caught a good feed of fish for supper and shot a wild dog with my revolver—Some heavy pulling tomorrow to cross some branches of the King and the Roper Creek-

Wednesday 15th -12 horses rambled during the night and caused a late start-They dont pull together-had to level embankments of creeks and after great difficulty got cart over them much knocked up—Camped after getting over the Roper Creek only about 4 miles from last camp-Think will get over to Providence Knoll as the road is now all good to there—No fish worth catching-No game-

Thursday —Made an early start, met Millner & party with stock of 70 odd horses bound to Pt Darwin—he gave us more tea-reached Prov Knoll about 3 p.m camped-The days journey 17 miles-horses pulling well-my pony has carried me 450 miles within the month and still looks first rate-ridden every day-not bad for a 3 year old-

Friday May 17th 1872 -Reached Roper Crossing about 11.30 stop to rest horses—Mr Lachlan on his way to Goldfields met us here with P T Keppler³⁸, Masson³⁹, Jones⁴⁰ and another man Joshua Jones⁴¹ very bad complaining immensely—Bilious fever -MacLachlan takes "Bush" from KN I had to leave him behind, his feet so sore from stones & seeds of grass-McL camps Gum Billabong—we go on 6 miles-Shot 2 ibis & pheasant which I make a fine stew off-One of my men (Smith) from KN very queer with fever-16 miles

³⁶ Hart, A, Laborer. Ref., OTLB.

³⁷ Hurst, J., laborer. Ref. OTLB.

³⁸ Keppler, Reney, Police Trooper. Ref., Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.

³⁹ Masson, J., Police Trooper. Ref., OTLB.

⁴⁰ Jones, S, Laborer. Ref., OTLB.

⁴¹ Jones, Joshua, Laborer. Ref., OTLB.

Saturday Make Bullock Swamp this evening—heavy days work—I had to let Smith ride my pony & I drive—the other man (Shinnick) cart drive-Game stew goes high on the road-22 miles today—No water between last camp and this-horses done up-Spell tomorrow-

Sunday—Heard gun shot about 8 a.m to the ly W see me about a mile off—one of the wiring party probably heard me fire at ibis just before-Will catch Garcia⁴² tomorrow-I hope-I am cook now Smith laid up so I baked a damper & made johnny cakes for brkfst-plenty wild dogs here abouts-

Monday May 20th 1872-reached Union Camp 9 a.m—Garcia with wiring party just gone on-Met C Johnson⁴³ here who was in search of a mare in foal bought by Howley with another horse to the field use—Overtook Knuckey , Howley, and the rest at dinner-they are moving camp 4 miles from Union Camp—finish wiring tomorrow—Rutt is 30 miles ahead-On arrival at camping place put in pocket inst and rcvd memos for Knuckey & Rutt from Supt via KN. Line working badly between KN PD-KN repting from P.D. Knuckey goes S & establishes express service-Lots of msg's to be taken for SA this morning—also memo from Harvey⁴⁴ , Mitchell & Burton's parties-

Tuesday 21st May 1872 -The evenings are bitterly cold now—2 rugs are quite necessary—Camped on the Elsie Creek—very busy all day telegraphing Port Darwin & Supt to Knuckey regarding establishment of estafette—I go to south end of gap with him & not in the morning - Mr Todd will likely overtake us in July or August—I go 280 mile S from here-

Wednesday 22nd May 1872 Said goodbye to Stapleton, Little & Howley and Rutts wiring party started on road to Morphett Creek-Burton's party reached No 2 Well 20 miles today-at No 1 Well it is shameful to see the number of goods left behind thrown about the ground, harness, packsaddles, ironmongery, tarpaulins etc—Met 2 men here from Mitchell going to No 1 Well for solder left behind, this is 37 miles back for this carelessness—Mr Todd should see all this. There would be a row!!

Thursday May 23rd 1872 -Got horses up—and started, reached Rutt 10 miles from start—All well-Played Rutt 2 & McCauley 1 game of chess in the evening and won all—We get all our horses shod tomorrow & start on Saty-

Friday 24th May -Queens Birthday, many happy returns to her Majesty—Buy 2 shirts & pr trousers today 26/6—Picked up a dog at No 1 Well, which I had seen at Landing-seemed glad to see us-Busy all day—soft waping saddles, bridles, boots, straps, hoisters and all things leather-

Sat 25th Started & reached wired pole 22 miles. 2 men of Mitchells, 1 R, K & self—Gave order on Paterson to Rutt, Rutt to pay Richds 17/-

⁴² Garcia, J.M., Laborer. Ref., OTLB.

⁴³ Johnson, C., Laborer. Ref., OTLB.

⁴⁴ Harvey, William, Overseer subsection E Central. Surveyor on Ross's Expedition. Ref., AETS, OTLB.

Sunday 26th May 1872

Overtook Mitchell 8½ from this mornings camp. 4 men laid up with fever-Rix here attending them-Work being pushed on vigorously-The line now up erected by Mitchell is the best piece I have seen it is splendid-Got here to dinner-a very good one, roast leg mutton, potatoes & duff-

Monday 27th Mitchell with clearing & surveying move on 4 miles—We get our horses shod by Brocks⁴⁵ man & follow camping with M tonight-Daly Waters tomorrow 27 miles-

Tuesday 28th May 1872 Reach the Daly Waters just after sundown—Tucker⁴⁶, Giles, Hacks men here-Giles waiting for Boule to take him on in wagons & wire to Burton—All hands well here-

Wednesday 29th -We spell here till Friday & start again for Burton

Thursday —Busy getting our rations out from store & arranging pack bags-Dont feel at all right—fresh mutton has given me diarrhoea the last few days-

Friday 31st May 1872 Giles with wire & wagons started 3 p.m to camp at 8 mile water, we follow-Got to camp first—Giles met a Hawker⁴⁷ & 2 men who were coming up this way & were stuck up by the darkies at Newcastle Waters & the hawker in pulling his gun out of cart, shot himself thru' the back and has gone on to see Rix about it—Burton met them Frew Ponds and started forward to save cart & stock which Hawker planted, also to teach nigs a lesson-

Saty 1st June 1872 Try to make Kings Ponds today-Camp at Millners Lagoon instead-Plenty water in the ponds 28 miles-

Sunday 2nd June 1872-Reach Frews Ironstone ponds—Burton here returned from Newcastle—6 nigs tried them-man to man -but the darkies being fired at retired into scrub

Monday 3rd June 1872

All start today for Newcastle, the natives very numerous and bold there-Knuckey and I travel with Burton until we pass that Crossing Sturts Plains today—15 miles wide here Bay of Biscay—ground plenty grass—camped 10 miles on, it for the night—No water in 15 miles come over today-Water cart in use-Very dry [...] of country-5 miles to edge of plain from Frews-

⁴⁵ Brock, William, (Willie) Sub-Overseer, Ass-inspector on Northern Section, part of Mitchell's party. Ref., AEST, OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.

⁴⁶ Tucker, Charles William, 1848- Operator, Station Master at Tennant Creek & Barrows Creek. Ref., L & J Debnam.

⁴⁷ Chawner, hawker and 2 men, a Dane named Anderson & Jim Crow, an Aboriginal lad. Ref., Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.

Tuesday June 4th 1872—Very cold morning—All who had them put coats on—I had not one—my box still at Roper—Early start, camped at N Newcastle—10 miles—Burton had to [...] before crossing

Wednesday -Crossing finished

Thursday—Crossed this morning—Bagot⁴⁸ & I went ahead, expected to come across the hawkers cart—Saw about 20 darkies at large waterhole about 400 yards off—but as we were but 2 we gave them a wide berth—Came on, I found plant and started one nigger off as if the devil kicked him. He had first found where plant was buried and turned out he and his friends would have turned it up—I got a coat out of it—All the things are taken by Mr Burton at Govt expense for sale to men of party-

Friday 7th June 1872 Started and got 7½ miles and camped at large Lagoon to dinner. Plenty water and feed—Whilest at dinner a shot was heard to southward where Alfred Giles with reinforcements of horse teams came onto us from southern sections saying the Express started 1st June from Morphett creek—due here tonight—is relieving Knuckey from that—Horses have been obtained from Lewis⁴⁹ for the Express—Harvey poling northward from Morphett-

Saturday June 8th 1872

Giles left with his waggons to Daly for wire to bring on to us—we go on 9 miles today—start 9 a.m.—stop for dinner at very nice waterhole of the Newcastle—plenty water all along it but the road takes us away to & close to range to and Bay of Biscay country, Bagot & I traverse the creek for adventures & to see what it is like. In the evening join Knuckey & Crowder going to find creek nearest point to tonights camp—came upon a township of darkies—on the opposite side of creek to us who made all sorts of signs & yabber but kept to 50 or 60 yds off—2 followed us back to camp but would not come into it—we did not want them—15 were near & around camp, tall dark-

Sunday 9th All up before sunrise to get on 8 miles. Camp & water. Crowder, Lamb & I followed Creek 1½ off & saw thousands of ducks but except some darkies were outside our camp, when we left saw none. Struck across to road & found head teams camped at small running creek (the Lawson) No nigs around us this afternoon.

Monday 10th June 1872 remain here today. A party including Knuckey starts tomorrow to try E of the range (Ashburton) for poles & suitability to run line thro'—horses being shod. Some men washing, I stuffing my saddle. Express not turned up yet.

⁴⁸ Bagot, C.M: *Cadet, sub-section D, Central Section. Ref., AETS, OTLB.*

⁴⁹ Lewis John & Jim, *horse breeders. Ref., AETS, NT Biography.*

Tuesday 11th June 1872 Late start, exploring party ahead. I go on with wire & party to put it up when it comes. Burton, Knuckey, Bagot, Crowder, Lamb, Woods, Kingswood form the exploring party. We overtake them, they having met Express & Lewis. Boucaut⁵⁰ conducting it left Tennant's Creek this day week-he has not made much headway-Passed on & camped on Fergusson Creek 12 miles-the other party further on. King bad, with us.

Wednesday June 12th 1872 As my horse has bad back from saddle, I ride on a waggon today & allow it to get right-The new stuffing wont hurt him then. We make Powells Creek 13 miles, fine large creek with plenty water in holes, open country round but like all the rest, a bog in wet season-King a little better-

Thursday June 13th 1872 Three of the horses left with us for the Express by Boucaut, are missing this morning-Teams go on-I & 2 men hunt & find horses on our track back, on crossing to camp again meet Giles & Abe on way to Burtons party for some fresh horses, his waggons at Fergusson, some of the horses knocked up, so he waits fresh ones—goes on with us. Reach camp (7miles from this mornings camp) supposed to be the Gleeson, the future depot of Burtons party-Very little water in creek—Giles sleeps with me tonight as he did not bring his bedding & I have made a large bed with a tarpaulin & my rugs under my fly.

Friday 14th Havent slept so warm since the cold nights set in—shall put up my fly every night in future-My eyes are sore—King better today—Gone with Stretton⁵¹ & Stirling⁵² to look for better camp with more water-passed 1 creek yesty where they may find nearer range—too much Porcupine grass in this country-Giles turns back & horses tomorrow -

Saturday Giles left us this morning to rejoin his team-Washing day-

Sunday 16th 1872 Very bad all night with diarrhoea-Burton returned this morning with Ringwood⁵³, Crowder & Woods. Knuckey, Bagot & Lamb gone on to Tennents Creek via Harveys camp—Burton turned back from within 35 miles of Harvey-Plenty water in east side of range, a few poles seen-Line to be taken that way being 9 miles near & better country-they saw several horses 2 miles back on creek which were lost by Milner when coming through-Expect Giles up tomorrow-Main party return to the Powell tomorrow & my wiring party & I start South-Depot to be on Powell-

Monday 17th 1872 Got away about 11 a.m with 5 horse waggon & 3 horse wire spring cart and 6 men—6 weeks rations-Reached the Hunter 2 p.m 5 mile camp—next stage 10 miles to Burke—no water between these creeks but plenty there for month-3 months in some-here there is enough for 2.

⁵⁰ *Boucaut, Ray Parkin., in charge of party of operators. Ref., AETS, OTLB Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles..*

⁵¹ *Stretton, William George, 1847-1919, Sub-Overseer, Store-keeper Ref., OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

⁵² *Stirling, W, Sub-Overseer. Ref., OTLB.*

⁵³ *Ringwood, Alexander, (Paddy), assistant surveyor, draftsman in Goyder's team. Ref., OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

Tuesday Heavy pulling to Burke, arrd 4 p.m—some of the horses done up-made early start about 8 a.m-Porcupine. Good feed at this camp-Having 19 miles of sand to cross to next water. Must spell here a day. 4 miles of wire on waggon, tools & tucker—swags etc are on cart—no game-Saw a very pretty pair of hawks here, of a lavender colour, body and back on range—common size of kite-Light rain.

Wednesday 19th June 1872 Stewart, Ross Milner & Burt marked trees here—Water holes 8 feet deep-No darkies to be seen—old tracks, beautiful up creek. Went out to Range about 1½ miles off-seems to be range to Westward & more hills to Eastward of us-Showers in night-

Thursday June 20th 1872—Having got on 3 miles today. Had to put 8 horses in waggon & send it on 4 miles, 5 horses could not take it, 5 returned after sundown & bort' man & I & cart to same place about 7 miles from camp on Burke—2 horses being away for sometime caused a late start this morning—Road very heavy, wet, porcupine, stones and poor feed at camp-fine moonlight. Hot fine day.

Friday 21st June 1872 Made an early start, 8 horses in waggon, reached Tomkinson 1 p.m. Send back 6 horses 4.30 p.m—to camp half way back to cart to bring it. Dodd & Billy on tomorrow-Plenty water here and all along up the creek for 2 miles—Saw some emus today but could not get a shot.

Saturday Hot day & cold nights are the rule now—no game in creek, plenty small fish, shags & crows. Dodd has wire on, goes on road tomorrow to see where water-

Sunday 23rd. Dodd returned 6 p.m Found Harvey 10 miles from here with the party putting up poles—We go on tomorrow—Harvey sends 3 horses to meet & help us on.

Monday 24th -Early star. I met Harveys overseer Roberts⁵⁴ with man & the horses 4 miles from Harvey—I went on. They keeping on to meet our teams. Our teams met Musgrave⁵⁵ with bullocks for Burton, Dr Keune & Jim Aldridge⁵⁶ all bound to Burton. Arrvd. Harveys camp. No one, he out on line—Teams came out 3 p.m. Our horses nearly done.

Tuesday No assistance or horses for us to be had as it would compel him to stop work. He would do that and wire Burtons wiring party to return. Dodd⁵⁷ could do this but throws of 4 miles wire & goes on-I say he cant so the work with our horses but he persists. We start this p.m to go part of 14 miles to next water. We are now on the S Tomkinson next Kuercheners Ponds 12 mile from here. Start this afternoon to go 4 or 5 miles. Bid Harvey good bye and

⁵⁴ Roberts, J. Le M. F., *Sub-Overseer for Harvey's Team. Ref., AETS, OTLB.*

⁵⁵ Musgrave, W. C. (Charlie) -1875, *Sub-Overseer central Section, died on the "Gothenberg". Ref., AETS, OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

⁵⁶ Aldridge, James H., *Cadet, Subsection A central section. Goyder's team, 1869, chainman, Telegraphist Southport 1872-1873. Ref., AETS, OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

⁵⁷ Dodd, E.H. *laborer. Ref., OTLB.*

got away 3 p.m. Camped just after sundown 5 miles—horses going better—roads good in contrast to our late tracks.

Wednesday 26th Harveys bad road is to us first rate. With a good start we got to Kuercheners Ponds at noon-7 miles—I found a nice water hole 5 miles back from here today 2 Emus showed themselves today-Cant get more out of horses than these short stages—Had to carry water yesterday—Morphett Creek 8 miles—tomorrows stage-

Thursday 27th June 1872 One of our best horses (Kit) appears to be lock jawed, she is blind and cant open her mouth. Will have to leave her this morning. Started 9 a.m passed Cox's Pool 1½ miles from Kuercheners Ponds, 5½ from Morphett. Camped on latter 2 p.m Knuckey with telegrams passed us at 3p.m going to S. Tomkinson tonight. Bagot & Lamb with him, left Tennents Ck yesty 1 p.m—I got memo from Ted Harns & Joe⁵⁸, all well and those at home alas-

Friday 28th June 1872—The Queen's---? Had to put one of my own swag bags in waggon to get along—we reached Attack Creek in good time today. No sign of natives. I have been told all along there were 5 miles of wire here, Harvey said so also that it was in a heap at this camp—we now find there is but 2½ miles. This will capsizе all calculations and cause considerable back carting. There is a fine sheet of water on the creek & plenty of feed. We run out the wire that is here & go to the Haywood tomorrow.

Saturday -Having started the wire party and got ½ mile on with waggon was alarmed by hearing shots fired by wire party being them ahead of waggon, turned around & galloped back to wire thinking niggers had attacked the party when I met Billy Edwards⁵⁹ running & sobbing who told me Fred Moles⁶⁰ was shot by the rifle being slung alongside of cart-No cap was on the rifle tho' loaded but some of the detonating powder had come off the cap & remained on nipple—a stick as the cart passed over it flew up and suddenly letting it down again fired the powder—the bullet passed thro' the upper part of right shoulder immediately below collar bone & to the right side of it—the man was behind the cart clearing the wire from the barrow as it was being run out—the bullet before hitting him cut thru' 3 thicknesses 2 inch Europe Rope thence thru' the shoulder-I think there is not anything in the wound, it bled freely for hour when with pocket handkerchief we managed to stop it & putting him in cart—I gave him a drop of rum & returned to camp where we made a pretty neat bandage & sling out of some old calico. the pain tuned him up dreadfully but he bore it well—sent 2 men off for Dr who would be 60 or 70 miles off—fresh horses to be had on road—Cold water applied to bandages-seeing to be cool as can be expected but no rest for the poor fellow—he is a son of one Lieut Moles RN, Plymouth, Devon.

Sunday 30th June 1872 Turned out about 3 a. m hearing Moles groan & went over to him—2 of the party asleep at the entrance to my tent which I had put up for him and whom he could not rouse them but one had been up twice before—Bitterly cold before sunrise -The

⁵⁸ *Brother Joe*

⁵⁹ *Edwards, William (Billy), laborer, Goyder's Expedition 1869, chainman. Ref., AETS, OTLB, The Surveyors by M G Kerr, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

⁶⁰ *Moules, Frederick, Laborer, son of Liet. Moules RN, Ref., OTLB.*

bandages had got dry & stiff giving great pain, bathed them and got him into easier position—* put on some clean bandages & washed his body clean of all blood—cold water & a high pillow & better rest for arm gave great ease & he dosed now & then thro' the day— Can eat scarcely anything—Quince jelly & bread and rice & sugar, afterwards a little Jam Poley—he eat very little of —oatmeal he cant touch—we havent anything else-Boucaut (Express) & 1 man arrived 6p.m from Daly Waters—War England & America seems immanent—England gave 24 hours to consider the Alabama Question & if America not satisfied with arrangements, war -Grant Presdt.-Cable broke between PD & Batavia before expiration 24 hours. Boucaut left again at 9 p.m leaving knocked up horse—had to lend him my Jack—Moles going on well—sleeps for an hour or so-I keep renewed cold water-

Monday July 1st 1872—

Moles passed a good night -I turned out 5 times between 10 pm & daylight, put on fresh cold flannel —Eat a little toast & some biscuit made by our cook—Lewis & man arrived 4 p.m going to Tennents Creek leisurely, could not keep up with Boucaut, Knuckey took on Express horse from Harveys camp—remains tonight—takes on horse left by B & leaves one-Whist for an hour-Cold SE wind fresh all night—Moles knapping-Took off pocket handkerchief this morning which was put on when accident first occurred-Wound looking clean and healthy-no running whatever-swelling not at all-put on clean white rag & bandages-gave 2 aperient pills this evening-

Tuesday 2nd July-Lewis off 8 a.m Moles going on well, pills worked very little-No fever— Bitterly cold wind fresh-

Wednesday-Expect to see some one from Tennents Creek today-Judd⁶¹ one of the 2 men sent for Dr, just returned—camp Dr will be here today-12 noon—he, his man & Billy now— examined & dressed Moles shoulder, very narrow escape from severing main artery or gone thro' lung-& say couldnt be doing better than it was -great satisfaction to have him here- remains tomorrow—and takes Moles on back to Burtons depot.

Thursday Harvey from North & [...]ass from Tennents Creek arrived, latter with horses for us but no reply from Dr or Adelaide, the former for our wiring tools to commence wiring at N Tomkinson, Harveys tools we get at Tennents Creek—Giles arrived with wire—Our camp lately so dull, now all alive—We all move our different ways tomorrow-

Friday The Dr & patient got off OK, we with Giles made Haywood OK 1 p.m, saw an Euro & a sheep the last tho" poor, we shot for the dogs—2 emus were seen at camp on our arrival—the fresh horses pull very well—9 miles

Saturday 6th July 1872 Some trouble to get our horses together but got a fair start & reached camp at 3 p.m 12½ miles-The Phillips—Went down to Keckwicks Ponds 1½ miles from camp to get ducks-None but plenty shags-

⁶¹ Judd, E.,*Laborer. Ref., OTLB*

Sunday 7th July 1872

Giles and I go through with the wire party today to Tennents Creek—Some of the horses gone on to Tennents—made my start late looking for them—arrived 3 p.m. Clark⁶², Boucaut & Lewis are here, all well—Express starts Tuesday.

Monday 8th July 1872 Dont get the wire party started before Wednesday—today a bullock is to be killed, causes some rejoicing & a tank here of 50 gallons which we take with us. Dodd is busy patching up—Express msgs, coming through all the afternoon—over £400 worth—My eyes dreadfully weak—cant see anything clearly after sundown. Up until midnight helping Clark with despatches—Lewis leaves with them 6 a.m

Tuesday Beefsteak for breakfast!! Lewis left 7.30 am. Dodd put up leading on wire today from N side—Wild dogs fighting & kicking up a row all night over the Bullocks offal-

Wednesday Giles & team gone 8.30 a.m Dodd and men left 9.30 a.m, he is long way off. One waggon & wire cart accompanied him, horses brought back for the night to water—The waggon left by Giles for us goes on tomorrow with water, the horses which came in tonight go out loose and move camp. I go on in day or two as my horses want a spell—Will start tomorrow-

Thursday July 11th 1872—Both waggon and the horses sent back have gone on—one of mine not found—2 p.m —horse just brought in—having wished every body goodbye got away 2.30—reach camp 5 p.m, wire put up since commencement of this party 9½ miles—Work going on well—Poor feed for horses here-

Friday 12th —Moved camp 5½ miles to a waterhole 1 mile S of Phillips W of track 100 yds—good feed—Wired 5½ miles today—spoke TK 5 p.m OK. Men from TK—JC. report the position & progress of wire party every day—Looks like rain—shot 3 ducks here this p.m here-

Saturday 13th Rained lightly all night. damp cloudy morning. Emu walked up to camp off again before time for a shot. 2 more ducks—raining steadily, likely to rain all day—Wire party cant get on well today as they have to stop every few minutes and run under shelter, raining heavily—Knuckey off 2 p.m—too wet —Could not speak at noon as horses away and I was looking for them —Reached camp at Phillips Creek 2.30 p.m. 2 miles wired

Sunday Rained all night—cleared off after morning—cold fresh breeze-

Monday 15th Men get to work in good time today —fresh but cold—I tried to speak TK about noon but no event—tried again 4 p.m no signs—Wiring going ahead quickly 6 miles wired

Tuesday 16th 1872 Wired 5 miles today—I had to ride back to Gibson to pick up a tarpaulin—Knuckey & Bagot arrived 6 p.m—Mr Todd meet me Attack Creek Thursday-

⁶² Clarke, Benjamin, 1843-1870, in charge of Northern party Telegraph Operators. Ref., AETS.

Wednesday Sent thru' all official msgs & memos for Adelaide-Later Mr C working-sent thru' CW-finished some private memos after dark. waggons gone on 3 miles to water—K & I remained to finish up-Only 2 miles wired today and of wire 3½ miles from camp, we finished business about 7 p.m. Boucaut & Harns joined us today.

Thursday 18th Rode on 3 miles to Attack Creek to meet Mr Todd (11a.m.)-Waited till 1 p.m & retnd to camp-Mr T arrvd with P about 4 p.m-Busy at Inst until 10 o'clock-Seems pleased-

Friday 19th 1872—Hard at it all day-Recvd. memos from C.V.⁶³ gave me great pleasure to receive it—Very long memos of extracts from press on Roper affair & O.T. from Adelaide to Mr T —gave him much satisfaction-7 sheets foolscap-

Saturday Line gone wiring between PK & S.G.-makes earth—Heaps of memos to CW, AG, BK & TK-At it until 9 p.m.

Sunday 21st—Busy copying into letter book for Mr Todd, all memos & correspondence to Little and others: gives me an insight into future prospects—I see I am booked (at least temporarily) for Powell's Ck Stn. S of Newcastle Waters and between DW & TK

Monday 22nd July I buy a watch from Jimmy Burton⁶⁴ for £8 -A new pole is being put in at angle beyond the crossing here with iron hoop guards on each pole next to Ck and also at angle-

Tuesday 23rd In consequence of line being still interrupted I was not started (as was intended) last night to take on any dispatches to Boucaut who is with wiring party—Mrs Todd, Patterson & Wells⁶⁵ and party go to Tennants Creek today—Meat getting short-P's packs with Lambell, Miller & I go North. I to join wire party, they to Harvey to await Mr P's return. 12 noon just started I push ahead find wire party abreast Cox's Ponds—Camp there.

Wednesday 24 th Knuckey is here—Spoke today line ok again—Boucaut had started at 1 p.m yesty—No dispatches today nor until next week —wiring going on very slowly—Men in camp at 6.20 p.m line 1½ miles distant.

Thursday 25th Men started for line at 8.40 a.m. Horses in at 7 .30 for them. Some not up till 8 oclock. Wired 1½ miles yesty.-Today 5½ miles. Spoke & recvd. several memos at 7 p.m. Put in at 10.30 am and noon no signs. Camped 6 miles N of Kuercheners Ponds.

Friday 26th July 1872 Knuckey left for Harveys camp to get tea for Supt & Mr Patterson—No insulators on work of today-Insulators at old camp of Harveys 3 miles from line—will be put on tomorrow-Wire past S Tomkinson-camp at old camp. Spoke at 5.20 p.m-

⁶³ *Valentine, Charles Jonas, brother-in-law, married to his sister Isabella Anne. He looked after Johnston's affairs. Ref., Johnston Family History.*

⁶⁴ *Burton, Jimmy, a Coxswain on Goyder's expedition 1869. Ref., The Surveyors by M G Kerr.*

⁶⁵ *Wells, Charles Frederick, 1849-1897, Assistant Inspector on Northern Section, Cadet Surveyor on Goyder's Expedition 1869. Ref., AETS, The Surveyors by M G Kerr.*

Saturday 27th No Boucaut yet, at 9 a.m spoke Mr Todd at 9.30 and again until 11.40 when I went to dinner—returned to line at 2 p.m and remained until 5 p.m having arranged to send messages at 9 p.m if any had arrived—returned to camp—Knuckey & Bagot arrived with Boucauts express msgs—tonight Cable still interrupted. Several of Boucauts horses at Relay Stns poisoned consequently he had had to ride same horses extra distances and on reaching Harvey's camp N Tomkinson were so knocked up that he could not bring on Express which Knuckey has brought. I am to ride to Harveys with the despatches from South on Monday night after receiving them—Send all here now per Knuckey, at 12 tomorrow—Saw 3 natives near line—

Sunday 29th -Sent all by 3.15 p.m. Natives close to me all the time, made it uncomfortable—Knuckey & Bagot gone onto Tennants Creek—left camp at 10 a.m-

Monday 29th July 1872

Wire men off working again—I with waggons make line and stop for dinner with wire men, then having tried to speak, proceeded on 3½ miles to camp for night—Wire not up to camp in evening so went out ¾ mile to end of wire and spoke with my fly for a break wind and with candles commenced taking memos & msgs for Express at 8 p.m, strong wind very cold & miserable, finished 2 a.m copied business and started for Harveys camp N Tomkinson to deliver to Boucaut which was done at 5 a.m

Tuesday Eyes very sore and weak with night wind and work—Wire party came on today—yesterday 5½ miles wired to 2½ miles back—Wire wagons arrived 12 noon & party in evening-wired 5 miles today

Wednesday 2 miles wired shoeing horses —busy telegraphing all p.m.

Thursday 1st Aug 1872

Wire party off again to North. I follow tomorrow morning and take Boucauts horses—Spoke TK at noon & sent Harveys & other Memos to TK & AG. Spoke again 5 p.m. recvd. Memo from James⁶⁶, hard up wants money—must try send some, sorry he left Whyte & C's.

Friday 2nd Aug 1872 Boucaut's grey horse could not be found till 12 o'clock. Harvey off whole camp South to fill in —Got away about 1 p.m after some bother with horses, overtook Dodd at 2.30. camp at 4 o'clock. Boucaut to meet up soon after—Cable still wrong. Had sent all the Express msgs at 11p.m to Joe. arranged to give James £5 thro' him & C.V. 6½ miles wired today-

Saturday reached camp at Renners Springs early 3 cases of insulators packed up today—5½ miles wired today. This place is best site for Stn rather than Powell Creek, a very fine spring, lime stone & other kinds in abundance with good feed on plain near at hand-

⁶⁶ Johnston, James Palmer, eldest brother, had worked for Whyte, Counsell & Co., wholesale grocers, Currie St, Adelaide. Ref., Johnston Family History.

Sunday 4th Aug' 1872 Spoke TK today at 4 p.m & rcvd several memos for RCP Mitchell & Tucker—and more left to come tomorrow —Boucaut leaves a man with us to look after his horses—We got a horse here yesty evening which came off the "Tararua"

Monday 5th Aug' 1872—Marchant from Mr Patterson arrived daylight on Tuesday morning—Camped 6 miles N of Renners Springs & took all msgs for Express by 10 p.m Marchant just in time with Mr. P's news-

Tuesday 6th —Mr P overtook us at dinner time looking very ill—having sent some news at noon I went on with Mr. P to Powells Creek. & laid out line for leading in wires. Wire camp about 7 miles S.

Wednesday 7th. Mr P better & has gone on to Lawson Ck—Stn commenced here 3 rooms of logs perpendicular —P has intermittent fever—King very much reduced & weak—Doesn't improve at all-

Thursday 8th. Wire party arrived here this evening. Wire abreast-

Friday 9th—Got wires lead in today & 2 miles laid out North —Killing sheep to salt & carry on with us —Boucaut arrived at 2 p.m but I could not get off all msgs for Mr Todd until 9.30 p.m, all SA msgs off by 5 p.m—Wire party off tomorrow.

Saturday—All wire party off except me. I remain until Monday. Boucauts horses gone on—Line will be finished by Thursday next—Burton & Mitchell join poles today-

Monday Aug 12th 1872

Started at noon to rejoin wiring party, overtook them 3 miles from Fergusson Ck & Boucaut at Fergusson, camped there. Hume⁶⁷ & I camped ½ from main camp. I took Express business there. Some teams arrd. at 9 p.m from Lawson on way to Powells Creek, had some grog-

Tuesday 13th Aug'—Started with Boucaut Hume & another, arrd Lawson 1 p.m—Patterson ill.

Wednesday 14th. telegraph wire up to Lawson 4 p.m—Aldridge & Musgrave here with Mitchell-

Thursday 15th 1872 Telegraphing all afternoon. Wilson⁶⁸ engaged as Cook for WK strongly recommended by Hack—Geo Curtis⁶⁹ another hand—Both off yesterday with teams & stores for WK-

⁶⁷ Hume, Andrew, Laborer, hand at Powell's CK, Ref., Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles, *The mystery of the Leichhardt survivor: the story of men who sought to solve it* / Les Perrin 1991.

⁶⁸ Wilson, Aveling, cook, Powells Creek WK.

⁶⁹ Curtis, George, Laborer, hand at Powells Creek WK. Ref., OTLB

Friday 16th Aug'—Hume & I started for line. Burtons wire party wired N from Lawson on Mitchells work—Hume drunk fell off horse once & having overtaken teams we passed them at SE bend of Newcastle waters when he hung behind and got off. I proceeded & overtook Mitchells wire party 12 miles from Lawson, spoke at 5 p.m . Hume not arrd & camped with wire party with tarpaulin for a bed.

Saturday 17th Aug' 1872

Hume arrd 7 a.m—Busy telegraphing all day until dark Boucaut arrd at daylight—Nothing to eat all day —arrd. Brocks Camp on Newcastle at 9 p.m & camped there. Boucaut gone on to Mitchells Camp, 2 miles off N-

Sunday 18th. Mitchell came back today—Hume & I went on with him to his camp passed Mr P camped at large lagoon —got our swags there—Camped at Central Newcastle-

19th Aug' Started to go to Boucaut to Hawkers plant. He had shifted Northwards so retrnd to Brocks camp—King, Giles, the doctor & part of Burtons party campd close by—King looks much better—Bought Giles watch for £10 . had a quiet yarn & grogs with Dr Renner⁷⁰ & got the old man quite fuzzy

Tuesday August 20th 1872

Williamson⁷¹ here with Giles—having retrnd from WK as he was told by Curtis he was not to get but 5/—per day, he wanted 6/—and as R.C.P. told me he would get 6/-, he returns with me. Started at 2 p.m and met Mr Burton & Stretton & Alfred Giles—Camped altogether at E Newcastle. Got grey horse Doctor-

Wednesday 21st

Got Doctor packed but he got away from us bucking like fury, knocked cob Bob over & got rid of swags, bolted and dropped bags, lost revolver and ran into a tree knocking it down and got pack saddle off piece by piece—could not track him, he went over range—Then caught Sally & packed her & Bob—started about 11 a.m for Lawson & met Burt at SE bend and caravan shortly after—Shot 2 ducks & 1 teal on Newcastle—reached Lawson sundown lost Spring—Made stew of ducks with potatoes, culled from damaged lot left here in a case , and onion made good feed-

Thursday 22nd August 1872

I find I have several of the last dates wrong having kept no daily memos

Friday left for Lawson & met Burt⁷², not on Wednesday.

Saturday 24th Aug' 1872

Arrd. at Powells Creek

⁷⁰ Renner, Dr Frederick Emil, 1819- 1893 Surgeon for Construction Parties. Ref., AETS, Diary in SLSA.

⁷¹ Williamson, A., laborer, hand at Powells Ck. Ref., OTLB.

⁷² Burt, Adam George, Assistant, Sub-section C. Ref., AETS, OTLB.

Saturday Oct 12th 1872

Hume and Loxton⁷³ cutting thatch stuff.

Sunday 13th Octr. 1872

Wilson & Loxton out for a ride this p.m, Hume ill, diarrhoea-

Monday 14th; Tom Dyke⁷⁴ & Loxton cutting thatch-

Tuesday 15th. same

Wednesday 16th —Hume still ill.

Thursday 17th equally interesting

Friday 18th—Hume better-

Saturday 19th caught 2 horses to go out tomorrow—away after thatch until dark, found some suitable—Hume ill again, gorged-

Sunday 20th—Loxton & I off for a look around horses he to catch a horse 1st one having got away in night. Saw all the horses—Millners young ones also, the water at Cockatoo Springs still plentiful, unreduced—No water below the Station water hole in the Powell—[...] spoken

Monday 21st—preparing to kill bullock.

22nd Octr. Killed beast, fave beef—Nina pupped-

Wednesday —Cut him up & salted down 8a.m

Thursday 24th 1872—Hume in a pet this mng declared to clear out, asked use of snobs tools to mend pair of boots I gave him—thus he keeps his word about sticking to me for the time until teams come up next season—Tom & Loxton cutting grass. I made a table. Took out beef to cool in night & boil brine—fresh beef nearly played out—Some going bad—Salted looks right-

Friday 25th October 1872

X Cable OK 21st Octr. 1872

Dyke & Loxton cutting grass—Hume at his books, wild dogs last night over very close and noisy—Hume wishes to leave as his teeth are falling out, he means trying to get across for advice—to Queensland, (Normanton) from a point South of this—Tom & Loxton late in returning from grass cutting, took their dinner with them & saw 2 emus as they did

⁷³ Loxton, W.(Bill), *Bullock Driver Section C, hand at Powells Ck. Ref., OTLB.*

⁷⁴ Dyke, Thomas, *Teamster, Linesman, Station Master at Powell's Ck & Pine Ck, 1848-1919. Ref., OTLB, L & J Debnam.*

yesterday—Telegraphed [..] Aveling Wilsons order correct—Hume remains to thatch hut - before starting-

26th Octr. Loxton & Tom with team cut & brot in timber for front verandah—I rode out tried get a turkey no luck saw 2 Emus but no start for dogs, tried Turkeys again in evening result same—Saw plenty but all too wild-

27th October (Sunday) Hume & I ride to have a look round seeing if any natives & try to find new waters-Retnd. unsuccessful but in finding good grass country and Spring ground which if opened would supply large quantity water—E.N.E. & N by E —the latter has large water hole last 3 months yet-

Monday 28th. putting up verandah in front & tidying inside of hut—Very hot & hot wind from S.E. Passed the evening by playing crib at which I came off conqueror—Kept one horse in to fetch the rest in mng-

Tuesday 29th Octr. 1872-

Very hot, carting in thatch-Wetting down grass to begin thatching tomorrow—Carting firewood—8p.m o'cast, lightening S.S.W. looks like rain-

Wednesday Octr. 30th 1872

All hands busy about thatching—Got ½ done by sundown—Great improvement to hut. Evening overcast. Wind S.S.W. strong, threatg. rain—8.45 a.m Wind S.E mod. clr fine-

Thursday -31st-

2 men & Dyke thatching—I got in harness horses to cart water afterwards put on front battens. Shall want 100 sheafs more grass to complete roof—One side done, commence other tomorrow by doing verandah and then wait for grass cutters—Fine pleasant day. Wind E all day and fresh & cool-

November 1st, 1872

Friday—2 men grass cutting. Hume & I shears sharpening & doing odd things about the hut. Made a rake & candlestick—Hume sheared 5 sheep in evening-Fine cool day—Wind E.S.E fresh.

Saturday—Hot wind W.S.W light. Marker, Wills & 3 others with overland teams for diggings arrd. today—Got Aldridges present of 4 bottles grog—Grass cutting—Fires E to S —Natives seem to be passing near—Got letter from Joe.

Sunday. Reading all day—Very hot—Thunder storm 3 pm few drops of rain—Evening cool. Wind SE fresh—fires very close tonight.

Monday Nov. 4th 1872

Grass cutters out. Overlanders gone on —I shot a turkey today, very poor. Thunder storm with light shower in morning—Cool day-

Tuesday Novr. 5th 1872-

Men finished grass cutting today at where they were at work—I must find some more to finish off hut. I shot another and better turkey today—Am quite fortunate all at once—Yestys roasted went very nicely as a change but was not enough for all—Hume has his old complaint again—thunder storm this morning but very little and light rain cool-

Wednesday—Dyke found some grass nearer than last, recommence cutting tomorrow. Day very warm & sultry—Thunderstorm & light shower 2 p.m squall from W.S.W & rain from E. I saw a darkie today not 100yds from the hut but he was off directly he saw me-

Thursday Novr. 7th 1872

Dyke & Loxton off grass cutting today. Hume saw a nigger at daylight this morning but he like the one I saw yesty was off to the range quick—I hope they will come up boldly not prowl about we can then put ourselves on good terms with them perhaps—The day warm—Wind N.E all day-

Friday 8th Novr. 1872.

Finished grass cutting yesterday. Great trouble to get any horses today—Team horses not to be found—Heavy thunderstorm & lots of rain, set the creek running in places—Ground quite boggy & several sheets of water on the flats Directn. of storm, from NW to SE —Commenced 11a.m continued until 1 a.m Saty.

Saturday Novr. 9th 1872

Got all the cut grass I today just in time to avoid thunderstorm which came down with great violence for 3 hours setting the large creek & all the others running strong—came on again 9 p.m lightning terribly vivid & near.

Sunday. Day broke very fine & cool—The atmosphere beautifully fresh—Fine all day with cool fresh breeze from W.S.W-

Monday Novr. 11 1872.

Holiday!!! We spend it here by thatching front side of roof of hut—Fine cool breeze from E.N.E all day—I shot 2 teal in Creek this evening and something got one away while I was in water for the other-

Tuesday Nov. 12th 1872.

Hume off to Fergusson for some papers he left there. got all battens on roof—Geo Curtis commences thatching in the morning—very strong breeze all day from E.W.E. Cool pleasant day-

Wednesday Sent memo recommendg that Hume be allowed to go. His work very unsatisfactory. Yesterday I told him so and whether he wished to leave or not he would no longer be employed here—I would feed him until he could to Roper with some one but he goes off, he says. He returned today—H.B.P died yesty.

Thursday 14th Nov. 1872—Recvd. memo yesty from Supt. authorizing my giving Hume saddle & bridle, horse & revolver & ammunition & provisions—as much as he can carry. Hume goes at the end of the month. Meantime he does everything we are likely to require in the way of saddlery & harness—Today is partially a holiday in SA in commemoration of the opening of the Adelaide Pt Darwin & London Telegraph line & cable—A Banquet is being enjoyed in Adelaide, healths of London Govt. Colonial Officials and B.A.T Co. Directors—Line busy most of the day transmitting banquet msgs.

Saturday Novr. 16th 1872

Curtis & Tom cutting & morticing for stockyard—Fine but sultry—Line working well--

Sunday Hot fine. I shot a very pretty water hen—Circuit hard. thunder hanging about, a few drops of rain fell about noon. Evening o'cast sultry 10 p.m —Thunderstorm.

Monday 18th Novr. 1872—Light rain with last nights storm—this mng o'cast threatening—11a.m very heavy clouds, thunderstorm & heavy rain for 3½ hours, flooding creek—over ran its banks, ground very boggy—Cleared off 3 p.m I walked out with gun & shot a turkey weighing 14 lbs nearly bogged in getting him—Evening again o'cast, dense heavy clouds up to 10 p.m. looks like more rain.

Tuesday Novr. 19th, 1872—Thunder in night, light rain. Morning o'cast threatening more rain—11 a.m storm came on rain very heavy lasted 3½ hours—Creek a roaring torrent—Line interrupted (since noon yesterday) SA side of C.W. Line working pretty well this side—Afternoon thunder, fresh breeze from E.S.E.—8 p.m wind S fresh-

Wednesday—rain commenced at daylight coming down steadily until 8.45. Line still interrupted beyond C.W. Circuit this side rather dicky owing to heavy rains along line-

Thursday weather dull cool-

Friday Novr. 22nd 1872. Morning fine cool, shot some ducks. men horse hunting found 2, rest not tracked-

Saturday—Digging piece of ground for a garden—others horse hunting. Fine warm. Not any horses found.

Sunday 24th. Fine warm.

Monday 25th Hume found 3 horses yesty. Geo 2. Tom nil—Fine J Dodds accident

Tuesday 26th. Had 2 horses tied up last night—carelessly done so they were away in the morning—Bill caught another on which I started Hume off to find others. Bill on foot after 2 escaped ones.

Wednesday Novr. 27th 1872.

Hume got some of the horses yesty. Bill & he start today to find others & if not successful to came out tonight continuing search. Hume mounted Tom Dodd who set to work bucking like fun and pulled Humes hands down and turned back thumb nail which nearly made him faint—he stuck to him well but after this he could not hold him so Bill had to mount Mr Dodd who again went at it 'lemons'. but Bill with a roller in front kept on him—Hume riding Darkie my old Roper to line nag—Tom took a long round turn but no result.

Thursday Novr 28th. I and Tom took turns out to trace horse tracks I found they crossed the range but as I could not get them back tonight I turned back and took another direction without any luck. Hume & Loxton had retnd when I got back, they found 2 horses. Sal & M (black) mare-

Friday Nov. 29th 1872. Hume & Loxton horse hunting still. Some of the missing ones yet to be found. Recvd memo today from Supt asking if Dyke competent to take charge of this Stn if I were transferred to the Warlock Tel' Camp—replied yes. Then got another asking could he read by sound and manage pocket instrument—Reply, yes. Then it is settled Dyke goes to Warlock soon. This will leave me but 2 men and a cook.

Saturday 30th. -horse hunters not successful. One of the lately strayed turned up this mng. 2 niggers came here today—I gave some bread & mutton of which they ate part & took remainder with them—I gave them an old axe which they made me understand they wanted to get the native bee honey—they seemed very friendly having thrown away their arms—I kept them at a distance from hut and on their leaving gave them 2 strips magenta flannel which pleased them much, and the shepherd gave them a handkerchief & 2 old hats. The horse hunters saw 3 darkies also but did not stop to speak them nor did they find any horses—we spied 5 horses from the hut which turned out to be some of the stray ones. They get into the range where impossible to track them—Curtis refused top yard today—Sheep now not out more than 6 hours per day—So I think I am not unreasonable in expecting him to work an hour, or 2 in the cool of the day! Must stop him from laziness.

Sunday 1st December 1872

No horse hunting today, horses & men had need of a spell—Fine warm day as usual with lightening in the evening—Wild dogs howling near tonight. Sheep never out of sight of camp as the feed is good & now plentiful-

Monday Dec. 2nd 1872

Hume found three of the last horses, there is but one away now. Thos. Dyke is to get 7/—per day from the day he starts for Warlock as operator. I am very glad of it. Curtis is still opposed to work—when he comes in with the sheep and now refuses to do the shepherding at all. I shall get another man in his place if he persists in this, he is abetted by Wilson the cook who is a meddling mischief making and unsuitable cook for the bush and shall get rid of him on any account, he asked Loxton to sign a statement of Curtis's case which he is doing and which is a fabrication of falsehoods. I offered Curtis to allow him to make a true statement of what I asked him to do and the circumstances under which it was asked and to send it to

Supt. —he seemed to think me unjust but according to the testimony of Dyke, Hume & Loxton, his statement was false, so I told him and refused to send it but I also said that if he would swear to his statement I would let the matter drop and he might shepherd the sheep and do nothing else but he refused that so I will effect his removal if I can get a substitute-

Tuesday Decr. 3rd 1872

I am getting in post & rails for stockyard—I am shepherding sheep & Loxton is helping Tom. Hume is not in the employ now so I do not ask him to do anything. Tom starts Thursday at 7/—pr day.

Wednesday Got horses ready for Tom to start tomorrow & Loxton with sheep-

Thursday 5th Decr. 1872

Tom out early for a pack horse. All had breakfast 7 a.m & drafted out 50 sheep for Tom & Loxton for D.W & on. Hume was taken ill last evening of fever, consulted Dr Milliner⁷⁵ by telegraph & got directions for his treatment by 9 p.m! Dyke & C off by 8 oclock. Curtis has knocked under & I have let him off again this time. the overlanders not on for engagement for this side of D.W. Tuckers men started today for their 50 sheep from here & Daer⁷⁶ & another man did from D.W.

Friday 6th Decr. 1872 Curtis at work again, taken the sheep & doing other work. Hume better-

Saty—Nothing particular

Sunday TK men arrived 11 a.m

Monday 9th TK men spell today, report line in good order, except one pole burnt down in TK section.

Tuesday. Drafted sheep for TK but they were so late in getting horses could not start them. Hume all right.

Wednesday. Loxton not arrvd. today—Sheep not started Hume & I getting in horses to go & see after Loxton—got them & on going 3 miles met him. O.K. Water scarce. None in Fergusson & Lawson Creeks, some in Watson—Sheep travel badly. Line put OK. 2 insulators & 2 pins put on (borers)

Thursday—Squared up Hume's A/C & started him and TK men with sheep.

Friday Loxton gone to Renners Springs with Snap & to look for bullock. Shot Nip last p.m as he came back.

⁷⁵ *Millner, Dr James Stokes, Surgeon on Ross's Party, Acting Government Resident, Died on the Gothenberg, 1830-1875. Ref., AETS, The Shackle, NT Biography.*

⁷⁶ *Daer, Abram Middleton, 1835-1875, Teamster, Linesman, wounded at Roper River with Johnston & Rickards, died at Daly Waters. Ref., AETS, OTLB, The Shackle.*

Saturday 14th Countess pupped Thursday 12th. 9.

Sunday Rode to meet Loxton retrnd. 5.15p.m without him. Bush fires numerous today. Loxton retrnd. 6 p.m. Dyke arrd. DW today. Sheep alright lost only one. TK men lost 4 up to last night.

Mon Decr. 16th 1872 Loxton & I commenced stock yard. Sent memo re bonus to my hands on a/c Construction—No reply today.

Tuesday George lends his help at stock yard—getting on very well. Good shower in night.

Wednesday -More rain last night. Very sultry. I planted some veg. seeds Monday—hope they will turn out well. Melons and that sort should suit this climate. Evening very close until 10 p.m -light wind & cool after thunder. Wilson ill

Thursday. Overcast—got all stuff for yard and half up. Cool. Line to P.D. improved last p.m. Yard finished today

Friday 20th Decr. 1872

Fine cool-Evenings generally warm & sultry until about 10 p.m when light E.N.E breeze springs up quite refreshing. Loxton cutting brush for sheep paddock to run them in when anything calls 2 hands away. Heavy rain and thunderstorm this evening will do my garden good.

Saturday 21st Decr. 1872. Sheep arrvd. TK last night 45 all told. Thunder all day. Cool evening, stormy, rain & severe lightning. Brush cutting & I shirt making!

Sunday. Loxton went out to get a horse if any handy to drag brush tomorrow. Cookey went with him for a walk, they brot. in a black duck & blk & white goose.

Monday. Loxton got 2 horses this mng, he & I then hunted up others. Shot a large Iguana 4 feet long which we will have for dinner tomorrow. Goose & duck today. Rats in hut at night innumerable! P.m. sheep.

24th Brush cutting & dragging.

Wednesday 25th Decr. (Xmas day) Many merry Xmas's to all my friends. We have a fair prospect of a pretty good dinner having currants & raisins for pudding, good fat leg mutton & 2 teal with a bottle of pale sherry wine and watermelon for dessert. Enjoyed the day with thoughts of bygone days and of the company with whom I passed Xmas days before.

Thursday 26th. Boxing day. The wine or melon has upset me and makes me very ill.

Friday 27th. Mr Todd wishes us all comps of the season and increased happiness, to him we wish the same, for my part most heartily. Great annoyance my pay not being paid to C.V. yet. Paddock for sheep will soon be finished.

Saturday 28th Decr. 1872

We have had a strong cool SE breeze for last week but today it is wanting—It blew from 7 a.m to 5 p.m keeping the weather cool. Killed another fine fat sheep last night. Want some rain for garden

Sunday 29th Decr. 1872

Warm day. Found horse (Baldy) dead—this is the 2nd in the last month—and they were good strong active horses fit for saddle or harness. Got a lot of nunyeroo yesty and had it boiled today, good! Thunder all p.m

Monday 30th Decr. 1872-Public Holiday. Anniversary foundation Colony. Curtis unwell. Loxton brush cutting.

Tuesday 31st Decr. 1872. Curtis still unwell, Loxton brush cutting. A happy new year to all-
1873

Wednesday 1st January.

No work Loxton takes sheep part of the day—Plum pudding & boiled beef and roast mutton for dinner. No liquids of the spirituous kind or malt.

Thursday—Loxton off for horse to drag brush found him late and found 2 horses affected by poison. Can do nothing for them. I telegraphed re balance and payment of salary monthly to C.V. Loxton fencing.

Friday. Brush fencing. Warm hazey dry. Hume arrvd BK yesty.

Saty. Jany. 4th 1873—Very warm. Few thunder clds, no storm. Evening very close & sultry.

Sunday 5th January 1873.

Very hot all day

Monday. Line making earth TK side after 9a.m. sent man for horses & went myself finding some at 6 p.m. but none of the saddle horses. Loxton found tracks late. Line OK. Bee⁷⁷ left T.K for line taking mail and as he does not intend speaking until he meets WK hands must be off tomorrow and get mail. Loxton gets horses in mng.

Tuesday Horses not in until 11 a.m Loxton & I get away by 12 arrive at North Tomkinson 11p.m, 34 miles. My dogs Ranger & Nina followed and before going 9 miles nearly died from the heat: bled her & carried her on my horse to Ringwoods Ck left her there, Ranger behind that, both came on to us in the night.

⁷⁷ Bee, Thomas, (Tom) Cadet, Sub-section B, Cadet surveyor in Goyder's, Expedition, Telegraphist Tennant CK 1876. Ref., AETS, OTLB, The Surveyors M.G. Kerr.

Wednesday 8th Jany. 1873.

I remained with dogs and sent Loxton on 16 miles to meet Bee, he retnd. 3.30p.m with mail and we had supper and started for Renner's Springs at 8 p.m, arrd. there 11.30 p.m—days journey 48 miles.

Thursday. One horse broke hobble and other 2 followed to Ringwoods Creek. Loxton retnd. 8 p.m with them and we started for home at 8.30 arrd. 12.35a.m. dogs kept up first rate. dist. 18miles.

Friday 10th. All gone well in my absence. Bee retnd TK last night 7.15. Moonlight nights-

Saturday. Loxton giving the saddles a good cleaning and soft soaping. Not a native to be seen during our trip—Bee repts 5 poles burnt down 4 miles from TK. No rain yet. Feed good & water plentiful on line—White wild dog Renners Spgs.

Sunday 12th Jany. 1873. Very warm.

Mon13th 1873. Very hot. Brot. in all horses but Tommy Dodd, Darkie & Brown horse. Saw Dodd OK, Darkie & Brown were bad when I started on line & expect they have since croaked. Plenty of turkeys about.

Tuesday 14th—Loxton brush fencing yesty and today after horse for drag brush—Very warm-

Wednesday 15th. Loxton out all day horse hunting for saddle horses to go meet Hume & TK man & blkboy for bullock hunting on Attack & Morphett's Creeks. I out all p.m but we found none but dead ones: those that were bad, 5 wild dogs around one of them—Want to start if possible tomorrow. I go one days stage & return next day.

Thursday 16th 1873

Got horses fortunately this mng at water 1½ miles off—started 10.15 and after putting on insulator at bracket tree & one new pin 4 miles S of Stn arrd. North Tomkinson 7.40 p.m., very hot day. spelled at Renners Springs 1½ hours. Ants bad at camp.

Friday 17th. The little ants drove me out of mosquito curtain at 3.45a.m so boiled quart pot and got away at daylight (6a.m) arrd. Renners 9.40 very hot. Ringwoods Ck 12.30 having remained in shade on road. Left Ringwoods Ck 3p.m home 5. all right. Shot 5 foot Iguana.

Saty 18th Jany. 1873. Very hot again today but unlike yesty. there is a little breeze.

Sunday.Very hot and sultry, a severe thunderstorm in evening but little rain-

Monday 20th Jany. 1873

Nice cool mng. Evening sultry—Night, heavy thunderstorm & rain 9 p.m. Very severe lightning & strong wind from W.S.W.

Tuesday 21st . Cool day. Rain 3 p.m. Loxton retnd today. Hume & Martin with blkboy arrvd. TK 11 a.m. Hume refused hunt for bullocks owing false yarns spread by BK. Natives made attack TK stn today. Threw kylie & were fired upon & retired in haste about 50 or 60 strong—fully armed-

Wednesday 22nd. Rained 4 a.m.—Showery afternoon—Heavy squall 7 p.m—Very dark & overcast, cool.

Thursday 23rd. Loxton did not find draught horse in search of which he has been all day—Cool. Evening very cloudy—9p.m storm, heavy rain and severe lightning until 11 p.m—Assisted PD & AG until lightning drove me away from inst.

Friday 24th Jany. 1873. Very heavy rain last night. Today cool. Evening sultry until 9 p.m fresh breeze fro NE, overcast threatening. Found horses all but one (Sweep) I could not find him—My riding mare looks bad.

Saturday—Line working badly. Intended get my mare in today to see if any signs of poisoning but state of line prevented me. Aldridge returned to DW today. Nigs at Landing stealing—Davies speared in 2 places by them, treacherously.

Sunday 26th—Showery—Light rain.

Monday 27th Found Sweep today. Old Bluey (draught horse) came in to camp last night poisoned, blind and nearly done we had to drive him off and this morning did not find him when looking for the other horses. Tis very disheartening to have the horses dying this way & cant help them—Could not get all the horses. Heavy thunder thru' all the evening. Impossible to assist on line—lightning too near & fierce.

Tuesday 28th—Rained all last night. —Sent from BK msgs to PD this mng 7 msgs 8 a.m. Sent Curtis help Loxton yesty & today I shepherd sheep until fence done to a certain point—Day fine & cool

Wednesday—Very warm last night inside—Today very warm until 6 p.m when fresh breeze E by N sprung up—Shepherding all day, set Curtis to help Loxton fencing. Sheep off camp 2 p.m & 7.30 a.m. Lightning E & N.

Thursday. Shepherding —Heavy rains 3 p.m. thunder & lightning terribly for 2 hours after which blew a gale until sun down from NE . Not long raining.

Friday Sheep very unwell today.
31st Jany 1873.

Saturday February 1st 1873

Fine cool, fresh breeze E.S.E. SA line interrupted 5 days today [..]K. I am still very unwell. Diarrhoea.

Sunday. Fine cool. Evening threatening. E.S.E. fresh-

Monday 3rd Feby. 1873-Fresh E.S.E. breeze all day. Brush fencing proceeds slowly—Bad timber

Tuesday. Warm early morning—S.S.E breeze from 10 a.m all day until sun down when it usually ceases until about 10 p.m when it blows again until 4 a.m. Get horses in tomorrow to start Thursday to meet DW men with mail each way-

Wednesday. Out horse hunting early & retnd. 11 a.m with all. Kept those required in yard let others go.

Thursday for continuation see other end of book.

Thursday February 6th 1873

Started 8 a.m. for North Newcastle with Loxton to meet DW men & to exchange mail—Arrived S E bend Newcastle before sundown having seen a number of fresh native racks on the road but not a native to be seen—Dist 35.

Friday—Good start more tracks along road and got to northern most waterhole of the Newcastle 4p.m., found 2 pins eaten off by white ants, replaced them, otherwise the only fault is a slack span near W.K. which we shall rectify on return trip. DW men arrived about 6 p.m. having found some small trees across wire & some pins off. Got my letters and feasted my mind on thoughts of home after having read them —8 newspapers from both very welcome mail—Heavy rain all night and having unwisely left my fly behind I got well soaked in my bed clothes—Dist today 28 or 29

Saturday 8th Turned out early still raining. Made an early start having got 4 tins salmon 2 tins marmalade & some few prunes from Howley, very acceptable they are! Arrvd at camp 24 miles; shot some ducks today & yesty, very nice cooked on the coals. Rained a good deal today but kept dry with my Macintosh Travelling heavy. Feed splendid-

Sunday 9th Followed the waters all day & shot more ducks, no rain last night—Was within a 100 yards of two darkies yesty when I shot at ducks but did not see them but as it was raining at the time, when we came on found their tracks where they were startled by the report and suddenly turned and fled, they were accompanied by a dog—Today were looking for stock but found none nor any fresh tracks at least not any made in the rain—Camped on the Lake and cooked our ducks and a small turkey on stakes surrounded by fire-

Monday 10h February 1873

No rain here last night—The lake is I believe a very shallow one, it is impossible to dip up a pannikin of water until you have walked 1/3 a mile into it—I can easily believe that the lake was dry when Stuart was out here. Having made a good start got on 10 miles to the Fergusson Creek where there is plenty of water and camped for breakfast of duck and turkey which were very sweet. Rain had fallen last night and on the road—the Lignum on part of the

shores of the lake is quite impenetrable, it is very tough indeed—Large numbers of aquatic birds thereon. Arrived at Station at 1.45 dist 24 miles—All well here-

Tuesday—Heavy rain and thunder storm last night, Today cloudy but fine & pleasant—Pain in my chest from cold caught on Friday night—Line gone north of Daly Waters at 12.32 p.m today.

Wednesday 12th Fine cool. Rain fallen up the creek set it running strong this morning—Aldridge starts from DW today. I received memo from Knuckey yesty, he is coming out with iron poling party, he offers to bring out anything I may require so I have asked C.V. send out some things, books, papers, socks, hdfs, books, 1 case brandy, a diary to.

Thursday 13th My birthday today bought retns. from home & all along line—Memo from CV says will send goods also leaving a balance. Memo home—Long yarn with Joe last night—Today being very cool & pleasant . Putting caps on stock yard blistered my hands. PD line restored communication but bad circuit. Natives near No 1 Well, cut wire, Dyke surprised them in the act—Line North of Union Creek down-

Friday 14th Fine cool morning—Our cook laid up since yesty morning with face ache, he does not forget to sing out over it—I do the cooking now and it gives more satisfaction to me & the men—Curtis & I finished capping yard and made good job of it—Line restored this afternoon—Great relief-

Saturday. Thought we should have some rain last night but was not right—Fresh ESE breeze all the night—Today cool. Contriving alterations to end of hut to keep tarpaulin from blowing inwards and when raining prevent rain from dropping of it inside hut. Planted some peas and more onions giving them plenty water hope this the 3rd trial with the onions will succeed, ground wants a great deal rain yet to make it grow anything other than melons, pumpkins & vegt marrows which are doing very well indeed—Line still working very weakly-

Sunday 16th February 1873—Dull cloudy—commenced raining 4pm. Fine soaking rain still falling at 10pm—Line still working very badly—DW repeating business-

Monday 17th Feby 1873. Rained until 3a.m. Morning cloudy. Wind E by S fresh, cool. Evening dull looking like more rain—Wind ESE light—Line OK about 3p.m. Took some messages from PD this mng but cir' became too bad and DW had to repeat.

Tuesday 18th -Overcast threatening rain—Cool. A little shower fell this afternoon—Rain seems to pass us to NW. Cold night. Can bear a blanket comfortably I think-

Wednesday 19th Cloudy, rain nil—very promising. 9.30 rain commenced and continued without ceasing until 7p.m. a nice soaking rain—Repeated msgs from AI to PD & from PD to CW this evening—Onions growing at last! One radish up-

Thursday 20th. Today got orders from men for half pay, payable in Adelaide by authority from SA of yesty—Forwarded—No rain today—Plenty seedlings up now of various kinds—Nice cool weather here—Doing some brush fencing—Accidentally broke dog "Stretton's" shoulder—poor little fellow—had to be killed.

Friday 21st Cool fine—Little reported Joe last night—ridiculous trivial affair—Very unpopular—Men brush fencing—I do some gardening and chips!

Saturday 22nd February 1873

Fine and cool again wind S strong growing weather. My onions and other seeds coming on well —Had a long yarn with Jim Aldridge tonight-

Sunday—Very fine—Cool pleasant-

Monday 24th Sent Loxton to look around the horses which we muster tomorrow and send all we can do without to TK to get them off the poison-----Loxton saw all but 3 which I think will be found tomorrow—11p.m Have been assisting tonight E on S side from 11p.m.—Today fine —Rain fell W, on creek.

Tuesday 25th Loxton today found all horses but my mare which he saw yesty with others—TK not found their horses or my men do not start tomorrow. Horses yarded tonight. Line broken S of TK. Bee & Hume gone to repair line—Today fine & cool until evening, clouds & lightning W, no rain.

Wednesday—Loxton looking for my mare, Curtis tailing other horses—Line OK at 12 noon. Flint from BK found line on ground. Bee found wire fused by lightning—Rain today and very threatening. TK horses are got so I start men tomorrow—No cir' KN side 8 a.m. until 9.30. Spoke NC. KN unexplained. Men North of YC on line repairing get wire on ground-

Thursday 27th My men have started with horses for TK. Rained nearly all night and still raining light —a good shower fell yesty too—Been assisting all day line working badly—finished 11.45 p.m.—not bad hours from 7.30 a.m. Regret hear from Joe that he has scurvy and of course as he is without vegts he goes down to SA as soon as he can be relieved-

Friday 28th Feby 1873.

Line fault between here & TK, line working very badly—Lightning all day —Repeating every thing here—Humbug on this line intolerable—Joe recvd offer of YC and declined—finished 12.15.

March 1st 1873

Saturday 29th —Line working no better, leakage to TK 35 degs—Repeating all day—Alfred Giles coming up with sheep for OT stns (4000)—now at BT—shall be glad to see him here if he comes so far—Rained heavily from 9 am till 2 pm, light drizzling until 5 p.m —Joe will be relieved by end of month by Bowley⁷⁸ —he complains of his mouth —goes to SA-

⁷⁸ *Bowley, Joseph Albert, Station Master Strangways Springs. Ref., L & J Debnam*

Sunday 2nd Mar 1873

Today warm & sultry, heavy clouds about & thunder

Monday 3rd March 1873—Today is Mattie's⁷⁹ birthday. I wish her many happy returns—Threatening sultry—thunder & lightning evening, heavy clouds, more rain soon I think—My men should be back tonight but they have not arrd at 7 p.m—Line working badly this evening—The leakage between NK & TK this mng 1 deg only —DW & WK 2—killed sheep tonight-----

Tuesday 4th. Fine cool —now cloudy. TK men returned back night between 10-11 o'clock—Loxton met them Coxs Pool Saturday —Roads very boggy—Expected to get home Wednesday. Heavy shower this afternoon. Lightning SE all night-

Wednesday 5th Beautiful morning & cool—Garden looking well—My men returned at 11 a.m roads boggy creeks all been flooded—2 pins & 1 insltn gone, pins replaced & part of insltn fixed between wires & pins . They had very heavy weather—met TK men Saty.

Thursday 6th Blew heavy gale last night—no rains—Cool cloudy morning fresh ESE breeze—George shepherds—Bill tidying out of temper, growled. Soon put him straight—strong E wind all day & night.

Friday Blew up the cook this mng (Saty) for waste of mutton he was saucy and I put him out of caboose, he took up the axe to me—I first took the tomahawk out of his hand—Did not strike him in any way—Put him straight and set him to work again—should punish him if near a magistrate. A usless malbred knave.

Saturday Men doing little—Horses spelling till Monday to go on brush fencing then— SA line interrupted since Thurs' Killed snake tonight 5 feet 6", I saw him in hut!

Sunday PD line been working very badly many days.

Monday 10th SA line likely be restored today—Fine cool fresh E wind—Horses in, men repairing & continuing brush fence—All horses look well—SA line OK. Cir' this side worse than I have ever experienced it—I repeatg---I let my cook have a horse [...] yesty to ride with Loxton.

Tuesday 11th Fine cool. Brush fencing —Topping up

Wednesday 12th Was up until 2 a.m last p.m sending & receiving and repeating from & to Al & PD—o'cast p.m

Thursday 13th Light drizzling rain all night—mng o'cast light showers —SE trades strong—Been blowing very hard for the last 10 days—Equi-notial gales? —Nice showers all day—

⁷⁹ *Little, Matilda, 1846-1877, wife of JAG Little and sister of Charles Johnston. Ref., Johnston Family History.*

Leakg to N to PD to WC 80 Very hard cir' Fletcher out. KN men returned—No horses other than Dick today.

Friday 14th. Loxton hunting horses—No find. Hamilton⁸⁰ arrd TK yesty leaves tomorrow—Nice showers. KN to PD lkg 60 W. C. 70. KN men at home----

Saturday—Our one horse nearly done up. Not found others yet. Circuit very bad. Showery

Sunday Dull, cloudy, light drizzling rain until afternoon when heavier rain set in & continued all night—Loxton went out today to find horses this afternoon not returned at 11 p.m-

Monday 17th March 1873—Loxton retnd 9 a.m with all horses—he camped out having got on very fresh tracks & ground very heavy could not get back before dark—it was a very wet night—Leakage yesty to DW 59 degs, will start men tomorrow mng if not improved considerably. Tail horse today & yard 'em tonight—Very wet.

Tuesday 18th. Very heavy rain in night, creek this mng over flowing its banks—rushing down with a terrific force—Showery morning—Leakage to DW disappeared this morning! As country very heavy it is fortunate Horses hobbled and kept at hand—Afternoon fine, creek going down had a swim this evening—current still so strong it was difficult to swim against it —Garden plants growing ahead fine—Can't get a pumpkin to mature, as soon as blossom going off fruit wither—Vegt marrows the same —Melons thrive well-Carrots, raddishes, lettuces, cabbages and onions, plants doing well. Cape gooseberries from seeds growing—just come up!!! Cir' PD side NC very dicky----

Wednesday 19th March 1873

All horses mustered again this mng—will continue this practice and keep them at hand in future Very heavy rain again—this afternoon—Circuit very bad to PD & YC. YC men proceed towards KN today Stapleton's men started to meet Dyke. Party from KN with Stapleton proceed to Fergusson tomorrow. Stapleton goes to speak-

Thursday 20th—Line still working very queer. I cannot get msg's from PD after 5p.m today. Little complaining of talking on line and a stn using E wire too freely and his being done up. A good deal untrue—Very heavy rain in night (last)

Friday—Stapleton starting today —Horses from his S party retnd in night—Dyke spoke me from 25 miles N of NC. Proceeds further N—Country boggy. Fine day today. Cant work from here to PD—Saw SA today better than I could PD for some time. Dyke spoke again 5p.m—repaired where a pin out and line amongst undergrowth—Cir' improved-

Saturday 22nd. Fine cool. Stapleton spoke from the Edith. Leakg still heavy from PD to that point at 6 p.m. River flooded. Speaks again 9 am tomorrow—Circuit to PD very bad —DW took all PD had up to about midnight. —Mosquitoes very numerous and vicious-

⁸⁰ *Hamilton, T. C., drover. Taking stock to NT to receive sections of land. Ref., South Australian Register 4 Oct 1872 p5.*

Sunday 23rd I took PD business and spoke KN at Edith —River rises 5feet in night—Can't cross he says. Could not see result of PD test to him. Leakg to WK 60—Found my mare is staked in hock—Very inflamed a hind leg opened it a little need a flow of matter tremendous —can't see anything in it —I have at last found out how to cause my pumpkins & vege marrows to mature—that is by nipping off the fruit of the shoot on which fruit shows and enoculating at time when female or fruit bearing flower is in bloom—KN goes N.

Monday Commence shearing balance of sheep yet unshorn. Horses brot in every mng—KN spoke from Fergusson River. Leakg very heavy—cir' to PD as bad as ever allowed himself to run out of rations in 4 or 5 days so must return!!! 18 sheep shorn —Loxton 12 & Geo & I 6—Joe started South today.

Tuesday—Horses got in—Cir' the same —KN returns today—I have not been able to see PD since Sunday. Loxton shorn 15 or 16 —we 7 = 22 or 23. Poulticing mares leg.

Wednesday 26th Poultice drew a great quantity of matter from mare's leg—Loxtons hands blistered so we leave sheep alone today —Busy enoculating pumpkins, marrows & cucumbers—all promising well now—Line same.

Thursday 27th Mare's leg doing well -Renewed shearing. Shot a wild dog 50 yards from hut today—Before quite dead dogs shook him bravely! Line same—Blew very hard from E by S last night, very light rain. Today cool—Little and Stapleton complain fever & ague.

Friday 28th Line works slightly better —under the delusion today Good Friday men holidaying!!! Found out mistake by reference —Fine cool fresh SE

Saturday 29th Got in my young rock pigeon today, they are top-knotted and very handsome. Saturday continued—Rheumatism I think, giving me great pain —cant sleep—Very cold winds now every day.

Sunday 30th March 1873—Line working very bad N of KN still—induced Stapleton to start Gulnare early tomorrow —to remove fault between Fergusson & Cullen Rivers —I am very unwell still no sleep —No signs of Hamilton arriving who intended being here by Friday-

Monday 31st Renewed shearing —Mares leg is no worse I think—Vegt marrows & pumpkins are doing very well now_ Shearing finished today. Commence mending brush fence tomorrow—No sleep again last night —Very cold

Tuesday 1st April 1873

Feel better today—Curtis got in 4 horses, my mare and pony not found. I tried but did not get them—Line very much better—Topping

Wednesday Loxton got all horses except my mare —and hunted for pony mare (Ratty) but did not find her—After dinner men resumed mending fence—2 snakes killed today near hut, another seen go into garden fence-

Thursday 3rd April 1873—Joe's birthday, I wish him many happier anniversaries—Loxton got all horses but my mare and Ratty. Curtis brot in mare in and bathed leg. Resume fence mending—Line bad again today. I am much better —Fine pleasant cool day_____

Friday 4th—Strong cold E wind every day now, cold mornings—Rheumatism gone today—Men hunting for Ratty. Not successful. No signs of Hamilton yet. Few bush fires appear again after long absence of any. Garden doing well. Mare very bad -will die tonight most probably—Fine moonlight—Mosquitoes & sandflies.

Saturday 5th April 1873 -Mare died this morning. Loxton went out to find Ratty this evening. Other horses allright—My pigeons doing well—Weather cool fine—Wind E & E by S fresh & strong every day. Morns cold—Garden vegt doing very well—Dogs away hunting by themselves—all yesty retnd today —or rather about 10 p.m!

Sunday—Horse put together—No signs of Hamilton yet. It is strange he is so long on the road—measured two pumpkins today.1 was 20 inches round the other 26—many others smaller—Vegt marrows and various kinds of melons coming on in abundance. Onions, cabbages, carrots & radishes very backward. Cucumbers are growing very fast—Bush fires around-

Monday 7th April 1873

Loxton hunting for Ratty who has left the horses again, he retnd unsuccessful. Line broke down 'tween TK & BK at about 5.45 p.m. Fault still North of KN.

Tuesday 8th—Loxton hunting for Ratty, unsuccessful. Line OK this mng 8a.m. when Fletcher was at fault N of KN. afterwards O'C all day. Line put OK South of TK about 3 p.m.—Fine cool. Wind E until sunset then S light, fine clear—Joe left S.G yesty all well.

Wednesday 9th 1873—Loxton hunting for Bob, Sweep & Ratty!!! the two former got off in the night—No find. Line interrupted N of KN-

Thursday 10th April 1873—Line OK towards evening of today. Loxton found Bob, Sweep not a mile off—and Ratty later 8 miles W. Tying their heads down. Bush fire drawing nearer.

Friday 11th April 1873. Good Friday —A fire on the creek about 5 miles W of stn, took Loxton & rode down to see if any niggers. First came 1 man & 2 gins hunting, all of them ran away and we after them, lost the man but one gin squatted in the grass & other took to a tree, after vainly endeavouring to make them understand we would not harm them we left one in tree, the other having run away. We followed the direction taken by the man (who was vainly called upon by gins) to see if we could make him friendly, we came upon their camp with spears provisions and all their household goods! here we remained leaving them as we found them and in a short time heard a darkie or more approaching singing seemingly in lamentation, bye & bye an old man and two younger ones came near and halted suddenly on seeing us—they had boomerang each 7 waddy, having my revolver in my belt I gave my horse to Loxton and motioned old man to disarm which he did reluctantly and I went towards

him motioning him to approach—had a yabber! and gave by signs an invite to come to stn for a feed —the young men would not come nearer than 100 yards—We retnd home but none came up to Stn.

Saturday 12th. The horses most addicted to stray we have hobbled with heads tied down on good feed—men at buggy harness—Line clear-

Sunday 13th. Cut pumpkins 20lbs weight 39in' round not full grown—Dinner of pumpkin Roast mutton and bread—Suet pudding & stewed prunes, desert water melon—Best dinner I have seen in country!!! Fine cool, cldy. Cucumbers for tea last night. Great relish.

Monday (Easter). Men doing nothing. Being a holiday. Horses all right. Line working badly. Threatening rain—Cold winds-Loud rept S by W 11.15 a.m.

Tuesday 15th Men cleaning harness & drawing in firewood—Few drops of rain last night—Hamilton arrived today about 2p.m.—Hassell⁸¹ & horses following. camp 4 miles down creek tonight—Hamilton retnd to them and brot Hassell up to Station at my request. Killed a sheep and sent part to camp . Passed the evening at whist and chat. Both Hs know a good deal about SE. Hassells father manager (I think) of Bank at Hamilton.-

Wednesday 16th They go on today.—I gave them some fresh mutton & they leave after dinner. I got letters from Joe & home by the mail they brot also Cecilia's photo'—all very welcome. Loxton went on with them to bring back any stock up on Newcastle-

Thursday 17th —Raining since 3 a.m. Loxton retnd as Hamilton & Co stopped by rain on Fergusson—No stock. Line better.

Friday 18th April 1873 Showery, ground very heavy—Men transplanting cabbages & lettuces.

Saturday 19th Fine calm, rather sultry. Evening cloudy & threatening more rain—This morning I rode up to 3 mile camp—and there suddenly came upon 3 darkies at a case of insulators which they had broken open and were employed breaking them up, they made off at a run my dogs intercepted one of them and pulled him down I am sorry to say, they gave him a sever mauling and would have very quickly have killed him had I not beaten them off—The poor devil could not walk away at once, but having tried to make him understand I did not want to hurt him. I left him and went to the horses which I found allright near handy, exchanged horses and returned to where I left darkie but he had gone—I had no revolver with me and the ground being very boggy I did not feel comfortable so near them, as if they chose they could easily surround me, a horse could not get over the ground faster than a slow walk-

⁸¹ *Hassell, Thomas, (Tom), drover from Hamilton. Taking stock to NT to receive sections of land. Ref., South Australian Register 4 Oct 1872 p5*

Sunday 20th—Fine calm—Evening o'cast promising heavy rain—Lightning to the E & E by N, mid-night rain.

Monday 21st April 1873

Raining steadily since midnight—Nina had 12 pups in bank of creek, the water nearly drowning them, took all out & put them under my bunk! Killed three. They are very handsome lot. Rain ceased 9 a.m. —day cloudy & cool. Ratty gone off again leaving no tracks, the rain washed all out. Loxton hunting all day on foot—no luck—Got 7 ducks today-

Tuesday 22nd. Had precious little sleep last night the puppies kept up their chorus all night howling—Mr Hassell came in today—Hamilton went on on Friday.

Wednesday 23rd—I rode to the Fergusson with Hassell today to see if his camp man & boy were OK—Country too heavy for Hassells wagon to go on yet. Dogs followed me and killed wild dog at 4 mile camp, it was nearly pure white in colour, I have its brush—found all safe & brot Hassell back with me—We left WK at 11.30 a.m. I having made sure cir' was OK, followed line N & retnd from Fergusson, 12 or 13 miles in 2 hours—Line working uncommonly well. Hassell is a very pleasant fellow.

Thursday 24th—Busy letter writing home for Hassell to carry on tomorrow—Weather very cold all day. Recvd news from home yesty all well -replied—Dogs very noisy tonight and seemed frightened & cautious in their movements, think they must scent nigs at hand—Line working splendidly.

Friday 25th April 1873—Had pleasant evening last, thinking and writing, wrote lengthy letters to the Beach and C.V.—Today Hassell decided to postpone starting—Went for a ride, but a trip of the kind is very uninteresting about here —Played cards & chess in the evening —Line working splendidly.

Saturday 26th Wrote to Donald McDonald of Penola—Made a small match box for Hassell. Quite a gem for me! Evening chess—I win half the games I play Hassell but am very much out of practice or would beat him always for altho' he has played at nearly all stns coming thro' he plays indifferently--

Sunday 27th. The usual strong E wind is blowing very cold every morning now—Line is going well—Fine pleasant weather—Garden looking pretty well—Had very nice melon this morning—After dinner Hassell took his departure to my sorrow, accompanied by my cook to whom I gave my permission to ride a few miles. Mr Tom Hassell has been a very welcome & agreeable acquisition to the limited but select(!) society of WK! Expect to hear from him from the KN—after he has been around by Strangways

Monday 28th, Wild dogs howling very close all night kept ours barking—was up until 3.30 this morning, had very little sleep—Found sheep this morning killed by wild dog yesty. Curtis saw the dog in paddock make rush at the flock but a shout caused him desist and bolt. Must kill it

if possible. Loxton & I watched by carcass tonight but I did not see any dogs, left Loxton there

28th contind

Today Loxton brot horses from 3 mile camp to go with George tomorrow for bullock on the Hunter 15 miles. George (Curtis) took sheep out for the day that I might have a fair field for the wild dog should he show up, he did not—Heard today 200 sheep coming for WK-

29th March April 1873. Loxton off before breakfast for horse, got there and he with George got away by 9 a.m. Watched near the sheep this afternoon from 4 to 6 without the desired termination of shooting a wild dog—up till 11.30 p.m., no luck tho' the dog was at the bait soon after I left. Will set poison-

30th April 1873 Wednesday Tucker left TK for BK today on a short visit—These cold nights are favourable for sleeping! Very strong E by S wind blows from midnight until 5 p.m. every day—It is too much of it —fills the place with dust and blows everything about so much that all doors must be kept closed—The mosquitoes have been compelled to take their departure by the wind—Killed lame sheep this morning thought bitten, but no.

1st May 1873 Was about the Strangways River this day last year with an unpleasant attack of fever & ague and 2 days before that, had a narrow squeak with being speared after Millner left us—Thank God I am well this year—No signs of men returning today from bullock hunt.

Friday 2nd May 1873. Wild dog ran into the sheep this mng. Cook there, dog ran to within 3 yds of him but Cookey missed him—no harm done.

2nd May continued-

Men returned 6p.m. without having seen a sign of bullock on any creek S of this & North of the Burke Creek, to which creek they did not go as they did not know that part of country, they were but 1 or 1½ miles from it—Curtis brot home a young native companion—Wind quite moderate since yesty mng.

3rd May (Saturday)-Men volunteered to put up a dogs house for pups as I told them I had no work for them. Today very fine, wind variable & light, pleasant cool-Sandflies taken advantage of mod' weather to return in millions, mosquitoes not quite up to the old style!!! Line looking very well indeed-

4th May (Sunday)—Very fine, warm almost calm—Loxton went out to look for the pony (Ratty) by his own wish—Did not find her—He reports seeing many fresh native tracks 4 miles down creek and as he was riding Dick and had no revolver he turned back—Laid poison bait at triangle tonight.

5th May (Monday). Dogs did not come to poison last night—Loxton took Dick & Sweep to 3 mile camp and brot Bob & Giles down —After dinner allowed the cook to go with Loxton after Ratty, brot her in lame—kicked thigh joint—Think not serious. Curtis out with sheep this afternoon. Laid poison again-

6th Tuesday May—Loxton having got the horses has his Sunday today! George out with sheep—has his tomorrow—Large wild dog poisoned—Cook went out with me for a ride in the afternoon—No niggers at fires—Rode about 5 miles to there—No game of any kind seen-

Wednesday, May 7th 1873 No poison laid last night—Loxton shepherding—George brot in horses—Killed sheep laid poison—Daer arrvd at DW from Roper, repts heavy floods —Man drowned Roper—Daer reached the Strangways and was stuck up some days, retnd to Roper abandoning 2 horses—next start got through—Letters for me at DW

Thursday May 8th 1873—Curtis resumed sheep. Loxton brot in horses—4 p.m.—Cook & I went for a ride—Saw a kangaroo, dogs ran but too stoney & rocky—Line working splendidly—Saw SA work with DW today.

Friday 9th Today was astonished at the return of Mr Hassell who reports his wagon stuck at the N Newcastle the water 200 yds wide at Corduroy crossing—My men were to have started next Monday but now only man will go to meet Daer from DW with mail from Roper—Hassell waits till then and proceeds with Loxton who will with our horses render all assistance in his power—2 wild dogs poisoned last night. Line works splendidly—Horses brot up all night ----

Saturday May 10th, 1873—Horses Bob & Giles not found this morning—Loxton after dinner brot down Dick & Sweep from 3 mile camp—Hassell & I rode out a few miles—I wrote Father O'Conner⁸², Fred Davies and a letter for Loxton—Enclosed all OHMS orders and wrote to the Supt asking for increase in salary. Recd news from Joe telling me he was on for Yam Creek at the end of May and £5 would be sent to Davies—Wrote C.V. this evening—Hassell busy writing this evening also-

Sunday 11th May 1873

Hassell writing nearly all day—Strong E wind set in again blowing all hours since Fri'

Monday 12th Loxton starts with Hassell tomorrow to put line OK and to pick up the horses on the line—to meet Daer on Saturday—They were off at 9.40 a.m.—Line still working well. Hamilton arrd DW today—Leakage every pm. to DW.

Tuesday 13th May 1873 Very quiet without Hassell & Loxton—Strong E wind as usual—Waterhole is very cold this weather but very nice—Hamilton leaves DW tomorrow—He repts picking up one horse on Newcastle and seeing another at the Lawson, also dead one between Lawson & Newcastle. Made a new hammock and did some gardening—Caterpillars very destructive still, can scarcely raise a cucumber-

Wednesday 14th Recd memo from W.H. approval of starting Loxton!! Fine cool, fresh breeze—Bob & Giles (horses) came in but were so flash could not get near them—hobbles broken—Line working OK. Cable interrupted beyond Singapore, causes business to be slack—Gothenburg sailed for PD 10th inst'

⁸² O'Conner, Fr Michael, Catholic priest at Penola appointed 1867.

Thursday 15th May 1873—Wind moderated—Cool fine pleasant—Forgot to mention total eclipse of the moon on Monday night last about 8 p.m. for some 12 mins' total—partial (coming on & going off 25 or 40 the night was cloudy—Daer started from DW this mng—Hamilton yesterday—Campbell arrd TK noon today-

Friday 16th May 1873 -Campbell arrvd TK today—Beautiful pleasant day—Gardening and grass burning—Had a nice dish of fish for tea, they are from 6 to 8 inches long now very numerous in the waterholes—Aldridge with Daer was to have spoken from Frews today but did not.

Saturday May 17th 1873. Commr Crown Lands (Reynolds) arrvd PD today per "Flying Cloud". Line working first rate. Little cut stns out not withstanding circuit very good—was not in when [...] cut out but heard PD speak of it when I came in—Bush fires raging around. Cool pleasant weather—Sandflies fearful every ni' & a.m. Aldridge not spoken yet from the line-

Sunday May 18th 1873—Very pleasant day—Aldridge spoke at sundown today—Met Loxton on Saturday—Loxton said Newcastle Waters rising! This is strange as we have not had rain for some weeks now. 7 niggers at DW today. "Coorong" barque arrvd PD this evening—70 odd passengers.

Monday —George Curtis takes sheep out again today, they were allowed run in the paddock since Friday—Very fine, line busy—Making a table for my room now partitioned off from rest.

Tuesday 20th May 1873 —All the principal men of the diggings down at PD waiting to see Commissioner. Great business doing on line since his arrival there—Hamilton expects to be at KN tomorrow—Daer found a great mare dark spot off shoulder supposed to be Hamilton's. Loxton should be back tomorrow with Hassell & his party, if they are returning as he intended to do. Beautiful pleasant day. Geo brot in a shell parrot with wing broken, put in a cage—Pups growing very fast and handsome—Garden looks seedy (!) and dry.

Wednesday 21st May—Hassell & all retnd today bringing a horse and bullock—The latter we kill tomorrow. Loxtons revolver found—Weather fine this mng but cloudy towds evening looking like rain-

Thursday—A few drops of rain fell 12 noon today. Cloudy & sultry till afternoon then cool again. —Loxton looking for Giles & Bob—Shot the bullock at 4pm and got him up before sun down-

Friday 23rd May 1873 —Busy cutting up the beast which has cooled nicely, very good meat. Salted all in by 11—a.m., all bones cut out —Fine cool day—Line working first rate—Bullocks heart, steaks & kidneys stewed are a great treat—want onions & herbs!!!.

Saturday—24th May 1873—The anniversary of Queens birthday holiday observed on Monday when the sweep inniated by AG will be won or lost. The fresh beef is making some

of the men ill —All salted looks first rate. Four emus came close to hut today, I shot one and dogs Dick & Nina killed another—obtained 2 pints of oil from the one shot—very fat.

Sunday 23rd May 1873. Loxton renewed horse hunt today—retnd 4 pm having got them (Ratty, Bob & Giles) 13 miles away S.S.W.—Today very fine, rather warm at noon.

Monday 26th. Today being a holiday, Mr Hassell, George Curtis & I rode to Watson Ck and got some agates—Very warm noon & pm—Cup to be run tomorrow AG tells me. Loxton & Hassell's Sam started to meet Mr Bee and bring him on Ladgrove⁸³—

Tuesday 27th George had deal of trouble to get the horses together this morning, some of them making away S.W. again—The day very warm —outside but cool in hut and light and cool breeze—Sent memo re Wilson's discharge to.

Wednesday 28th May 1873. Very cloudy all day & sultry, towards evening densely o'cast with very little light rain and lightning distant S & SSE—Line interrupted to TK until 9 p.m then ok so far, but dead earth making towards BK—Hamilton arrvd KN Tuesday night—All our horses mustered today. The Cup Sweep won by Bowley with "Dolphin", Praetor 2. After Dark 3. Night cool-

Thursday May 29th 1873. Sheep got out of the paddock today—George gone to bed with the tooth + ache—Raining thick at intervals all day—Cold—Line interrupted South of BK, Flint started early, spoke from 40 miles—Bee spoke from AK yesty—meets Loxton today—Every appearance much rain—Thunderstorms.

Friday 30th. Wilson disobedient & dilatory—impertinent—today decides me to dismiss him tomorrow—the end of the month. Bee spoke again today, met Loxton yesty—Campbell will be at Cox's Pool tonight—Heavy rain all day, thunder at intervals—Line still interrupted. Planted cucumber again, also some pumpkins—George still laying up with toothache-

Saturday 31st May 1873. Flint⁸⁴ met AG men who had passed fault—he pushed on & found it at sundown line then restored—Rained light all day, heavily all night at, creek high since Wednesday night—Country very boggy—Bee retnd TK this evening said Loxton intended camp at Cox's Pool Thursday night—Line been working very queer. Chess

Sunday 1st June 1873—Rained in night morning o'cast very cold. Showery throughout day. Line very busy —Curtis unwell again evidently a cold-

Monday 2nd June—Dull overcast morning very cold wind, fresh S.S. E. —Loxton arrvd with Ladgrove & Sam 5 p.m—Roads very heavy—one horse left behind knocked up—L saw niggers S of Bourke.

⁸³ *Sadgrove, W. Ref., Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

⁸⁴ *Flint, Ernest Ebenezer Samuel, 1854-1887, Telegraphist at Barrows Ck, Station Master at Alice Springs. Ref., L&J Debnam, The Shackle, NT Biography.*

Wednesday 3rd June—Bitterly cold, fresh E by S wind—Killed sheep. Gave Wilson notice of discharge and cessation of pay from the date of discharge—Large number men on stn now (8) looks and makes all lively—Clear fine day—Line working badly-

Wednesday 4th Mending pack bags—Curtis still laid up with cold in face! Rats playing [..]iole gooseberry with my melons—A messenger from the Roper arrived at Union Camp this evening, Knuckey & party arrvd per "Lord Ashley" on 18th May— Masson the msngr tells Bayfield started same day as himself, for DW. Dyke sent the news from UC-

Thursday 5th—Very cold clear & frosty—Went with Loxton & put horses, Bob, Giles & Sweep, up Creek towards 3 mile camp—Ground heavy. Line working much better—Fine water melons demolished by us today—others stored on shelves-

Friday 6th Frost mng—bathed with Hassell 7 a.m. —very very cold—Wind ENE fresh—George improving—Found out Millner & McMinn brot news from Roper—not Masson & Bayfield at all—Millner & McMinn arrvd at KN this p.m—Masson & Bayfield alluded to as coming to line in charge of Keaws[..]I think M to UC—B to DW "Atalanta" & Lynn Fern arrvd PD—Gothenburg also days since—Monday I think—Creek here running strong—Line very busy—repeated this mng CW & PD—Tries SA, saw him but he could not get me 11 batteries being off at the time—More cucumbers coming up-

Saturday 7th June 1873 Tonight Wilson is dismissed—George still unable to work, Greenwood lends me a hand and we cook—Supplied Wilson one week rations—10lbs flour, 1 lb biscuits, 2 lb sugar q tea, q lb tobacco and back allowance tobacco 4 lbs not previously required—also 10lbs boneless salt beef, 2 tins matches, pepper 7 salt—abused to an extent highly provoking by Wilson—Line fully engaged—Fine cool weather, frost mornings-

Sunday 8th. Very dark oerhead threatening rain, cleared off by noon—Greenwood very obliging—Samuel Smith agrees serve station at 3/6 per day—from tomorrow & including tomorrow. repeated PD to CW in forenoon-

Monday 9th June 1873 Morning threatening & cold—Today received final sanction make arrangements & discharge Wilson—George to receive 5/6 not 6/—Loxton rather hurt at his old mate getting increase & him none. this evening rain commenced sundown, light & cold—Smyth engaged—Hamilton at YC sold horses 30 & 40 pounds. 'Great row' tween Todd & Little at PD—Little appears very heated.

Tuesday 10th June —Young Todd at PD dismissed, an inquiry into grave charges made against Little to be held—My name mentioned in W.J.C's⁸⁵ memo re Todd's—Very cold indeed—Line fault towards TK must go myself tomorrow—Chess with Hassell.

Wednesday —Loxton out for horses until 5.30 p.m.—then retrnd. Start go as far as causee line—Reached Renners Springs midnight bright moonlight. Road & miles from WK very boggy

⁸⁵ Cunningham, W.J., Assistant Superintendant Telegraphs. Ref., AETS, OTLB.

Thursday 12th Started early—Found Ladgrove & Sam camped at Renners Springs last night told them follow line and examine it closely homewards—Hassell & I found the wire on ground 1 mile S of Renners springs—Pin eaten out—repaired & went on to N Tomkinson spoke there 2 pm road very boggy impassable, kept on range where possible—Sill another fault Southwards, arrd S. Tomkinson 6 p.m. Boggy-

Friday 13th Early start reached Cox's Pool 11a.m. I went 1 mile beyond and left notice for TK men who started yesterday—All remain here tonight—TK men return tomorrow—we remain for a day. Anti-up in the evening! Bishop Shorts son here-

Saturday 14th Anti-up—Brought 3 pairs socks for 15/—!!!—Campbells horses very poor lot.

Sunday—Stock men seen tracks of bullock traced and found old 'Darling' as I have no salt at Station and cant drive him on took him to Campbell and allowed him half for salting and carrying on the other half so we remained today and will stay tomorrow and have some fresh beef—Not a tooth in the beasts front but he is good beef and fat-

Monday 16th Killed beast last night—Steaks and roasts today—Anti—up in the evening—very cold-

Tuesday 17th Take 30lbs roasting beef on pack horses and start at 9 a.m.—found some nice stones at [...] of hills near Coxs Pool—Arrive at small creek 6 miles S of Renners Springs and camp—Road no better—Tucker sent up 'Dandy' horse so we have him.

Wednesday 18th After a good deal of bog got home at 1 p.m.—All well —Line working first rate. Loxton gave me notice to leave after I asked him what he had been doing all the week of my absence. He said mustered horses and kept sheep in the paddock. I told him that as Smith was with him here all the time he might have made some hide hobbles—He replied that he did not think it necessary and made out he was full handed. I then told him as the sheep had got out but once and he and Sam did nothing else but look at the horses each morning and walk into the paddock and looked after sheep his excuse was not good and had he thought of it he had plenty of time make some hobbles which were required—Admitting he could have done so he gave notice to leave notwithstanding, in a week—He, I am positive jumped at this little rebuke to get out of temper and leave because he wishes to go on with Loman with Campbell—from Loman he bespoke a horse when down for Sad'

Thursday 19th Loxton brush mending. Ladgrove half the day / afternoon helping him. Sam Smith after Dandy and looking around all horses—shepherded sheep afternoon

Friday 20th June —Public holiday I learn at 11 a.m.—Loxton and Ladgrove mending brush fence. Sam round horses and greasing forge bellows—Cold. Offices closed until 6 p.m. —Sam half holiday—Loxton Monday. Sheep got out this afternoon and found at sundown camped one mile away—Sam George & Bill looked for them-

Saturday-(21st) Shortest day—Dyke at UC ill of fever. Ted Bayfield⁸⁶ expected to be at DW now—Dyke says bitterly cold day and night—Brushing—Horses—Loxton desired me inform CT he would stay until teams arrd

Sunday 22nd June 1873—Campbell ought have been on this creek today—Hassell & I rode down to meet him at lower crossing but instead of C there were 7 or 8 darkies camped there who bolted as soon as seen, I dismounted and walked slowly towards them cooeing & beckoning them to return which one did and then tried to have a little chat (!) meanwhile Hassell came on and another darkie—I gave them an invitation to the station (!) & we gave them a woollen cravat & shirt (off Hassell) a belt and some lucifers which I showed them how to use: we left them and retrnd homewards—The darkies fired up after we got home and I made a fire in reply they might not know which way we were—They may come up tomorrow. Here the natives wear no covering or clothes of any kind but all these were smeared with a red paste and in regular lines diagonally and up and down was a white down stuck on—They seemed friendly and were fine made, good size and good conditioned-

Monday 23rd Loxton & I went as far as the Hunter Creek to see if any signs of Campbell—but no signs of him—No natives seen—Millners horses seen—42 miles.

Tuesday 24th Hassell started today—Supplied 50 lbs flour—Hassell supplied Ladgrove & Greenwood 2 weeks full rations and apples to boot. Wilson 1½ weeks flour meat & tea—Sugar & tobacco 2 weeks and apples ad -lib—All started 3 p.m.—Forwarded mail.

Wednesday 25th Loxton found horse 'Sweep'. Hassell drove up Campbell & [..]Wns this evening—remained night

Thursday—Had to go down to lower Crossing with Campbell to get some money for Tucker, arrvd there teams had gone on to 'Fergusson' some of our horses in their mob—went on & remained the night. Leonard gave me a ham!

Friday 27th Started with Loxton 7.30a.m arrd WK 10.30—all OK here-

Saturday 28th I shod my horse, first attempt at farriery—Mending a waggon to send DW to return with rations also my stn waggon & a bullock team from TK and 12 horses for these waggons—Hume is likely to pay me a visit with these horses! Smiths pay Procurations. Fine warm—Smith (Sam killed wild dog near stn.) Loxton topping up sheep yard—Smith round horses.

Sunday 29th Cloudy threatening—Sandy McInnis came here today—been looking for 8 lost horses. I join him in buying the chance £25—he goes on tomorrow—Black boy with him—Loxton horses

⁸⁶ Bayfield, Edward H. (Ted), *Sub-Overseer. Ref., OTLB, Exploring in the 'seventies Alfred Giles.*

Monday 30th Recvd reply from Supt approving arrangements suggested Saty embracing engage Hume. McGinnis shod Dandy and Bob for me —then left. Loxton & Smith gone meet TK men, Hume & horses. Forwarded via TK. Smiths procurations & Wilson rept.

Tuesday 30th 1st July 1873—I tried bread making & baking —succeeded—Geo Curtis horse hunting—unsuccessful—greasing harness—C.V remit per "Omeo" to English Scottish & Australian Chartered bank PD £27 -at my request & to my credit—Humes reengage' commences today. Geo Curtis greasing harness & getting it right in time for horses.

Wednesday 2nd July Curtis found all horses—I cook. he drags wood and renews preparations for teams—Horses put on creek above stn-

Thursday 3rd 2 horses away this morning—Curtis after them—Hauns arrived with mail from South, no private letters for me—the teams gone on to Hawker creek to camp Hauns left at 2 p.m. Curtis retnd 2.30—sent him off with water cart body taking my boxes on to Haun's for KN also sent a sheep to them and a melon—Very fine today—Enclosed Campbell's note and order to Howley to fill in & forward after him when I know how much it will be including (or otherwise) the chance of the horses to be purchased by McInnis & I and asked Howley to attend to the order for me-

Friday 4th July—Curtis retnd 11 a.m did as I wished—Loxton, Smith & Hume with horses for teams arrd 4 p.m. No signs of Campbells lost horses below N Tomkinson—I think there is a good chance of getting them near—Line working very queer DW repeating to PD-

Saturday 5th July 1873 All horse looked to today—Loxton hobble making for the teams. George at his wagon. I cooking. Sam horse hunting with Hume and minding sheep—Very cold night & mng.

Sunday 6th—Loxton looked at horses—Tommy, Dodd & Dick away, all others right—Cold strong E wind-

Monday 7th—Sam first brot all horses but Bob, Sweep & Chestnut draught horse—he found them by 12.45 Hume then off with 'Bob' to have look for Campbells—PD line been almost stop' since Friday-

Tuesday 8th July 1873

seven teams from Roper to DW arrd today bringing ammunition for stns & a box for me —A letter for me from UC is at DW. I suppose 'tis brot from home by Knuckey—Line restored DW to PD. by Stapleton—Bitterly cold this morning-

Wednesday 9th July 1873 Giles arrived today, left the sheep 3 mile camp to come on tomorrow with bullock team and Hallett who has left one bullock between the Haywood & AK. Curtis & Bill walked to 3 mile camp after supper—retnd midnight—very cold.

Thursday 10th 302 sheep left by Giles, others gone on accompanied by Hallett & team of 4 he lost another bullock at 3 mile camp—Curtis & Loxton off with their teams quietly after

dinner—Giles stays until tomorrow—Hume retnd this evening saw the horses tracks between 'Hunter' & 'Bourke' the horse 'Bob' left him Tuesday night Hume had to carry his saddle & swag home—arrived sundown—Received Tuckers kind present in box. Chestnut horse sent in teams to make up the compliment.

Friday 11th July 1873 Giles left today. I went to his camp and left the dog Dick with him to take on—sent 'Nina' & 3 pups by our teams—one pup for Giles—He takes on the lot from DW for me—Had a nip of PB with G at his camp—Retnd home to supper 5.30 p.m having left the stn at 2.30. "Birchgrove" arrvd with Joe: Spoke him—all well-

Saturday July 12th 1873 Smith shepherding—Hume helping at cooking! Very mild day for a change. our flour so bad cant make a loaf of bread.

Sunday July 13th 1873 Hassell's, McInnis's. William's and Campbell's teams leave DW tomorrow for KN—I received news from Supt. today re KN stn—satisfactory—Sandy McInnes takes on the case from home for me to KN

Monday 14th Hume off on 'Bob' to look for my chances. Very boisterous & cold—Eyes sore—Wood dragged-

Tuesday July 15th 1873—Very large mob of nigs at DW Yesty quiet—Very windy still. Boiled the last of my English ham! today, it was a very great treat with vegetable marrow—Bad bread again, cant make it with this flour—Line working brokenly—No Hume yet. Hauns & Bob Price arrd DW today.

Wednesday July 16th 1873 -Smith shepherding—Giles ewe dropped a ram lamb today. Hume retnd. no luck, says the tracks of horses, (not stn horses) other side of the creek going up to range 4 miles SW from Stn—My bargain looks blue—Very boisterous & cold. Line N DW gone.

Thursday 17th July—Was up till 11.30 p.m recog Pd business from AG—Howley was to have started today to repair line but Stapleton repaired (wire broken 5 mile Ck) line before he had left. Working very queer—Mild day—Cleared off my lot to PD by 11.30 a.m-

Friday 18th July 1873. Hume brot 4 horses this mng—Dandy & Ratty away, Smith found Dandy. Hume off again looking for Campbells lost horses, riding Dick—Line working queer northwards of DW.

Saturday July 19th 1873 Smith looked at all horses except 'Ratty' which he could not find—Ewe & lamb OK. Line better. All day by myself—Sheep I brot in at sundown Sam Smith not home till nearly dark-

Sunday July 20th 1873. Smith away on foot for horses from 9 am till 3 p.m and the retnd without one. Sheep allright—Hume retnd sundown., says seen tracks near at hand—Curtis & Loxton arrvd at DW last nī. all well. Repts 5 horses on NC Open cir N of DW 5.30 p.m. I have Sam Smith at his writing and am going to teach him to operate and make him improve

himself in his spelling to—He is a youngster of 16 years: his father (bedridden) and mother(very old and poor) live at Coleraine in Victoria. Sam came thro' with Hassell, he is a good disposition, willing and intelligent, education neglected—I will try to work him up-

Tuesday 22nd Hume got Sweep & Bob horses tis mng and after dinner went off again to look for others—Line OK to PD at 10a.m—Smith brot in the ewe & lamb again-

Wednesday 23rd Line OK Little at SP spoke—Warm mild—Sheep were met by a wild dog this morning when Sam out with them, it ran when seeing him—All the horses of my team at DW shod today.

Thursday 24th July 1873 The two teams left DW for here today having all WK stores on—Line works OK. Had a bath in the creek tonight, water very cold—The Stn masters of TK & BK complain of short number of men on their stns having 2 men, cook and black boy. whereas I have only 2 men, cooking myself-

Friday 25 July 1873 Hume complains unwell—done nothing today—morning windy but clear—clouds thick at sundown as last night—looking like rain—Cir queer. Very boisterous night and densely overcast.

Saturday 26th July 1873 Cir' very bad today, 17 deg leakage to AG. Rained lightly all day and blew hard—Hume out for a horse until 2 p.m no luck. Sheep killed today. Bread better than usual. I attribute it to the yeast which I made myself!!!

Sunday 27th July 1873. Fine but cold. Hume got all horses today except 'Bob' -Put side lines on the pony (Ratty) to make sure of having one horse at least near at hand—Giles arrived with sheep at DW today—he passed my men near Millners Lagoon on Friday—they would camp there that night—I made a plum duff today, quite a success—raisins Bee sent up with some almonds—Very short of sugar now—We have to do with tea but twice a day, this is rather a hardship after being used to 3

Monday July 28th 1873

Hume contriving a pair of boots for Smith who is badly shod—Wood dragged—Sheep out with Sam. Line fault S of BK after 2 o'clock. Rather mild day.

Tuesday July 29th 1873 Geo Bayfield⁸⁷ & teams arrvd DW yesty from Roper—Aldridge placed with teams not yet left Roper when Bayfield did—Glasleyn bque there with more poles—Knuckey to start up when she had discharged—Today line working very badly—Flint repaired BK AG fault 11a.m—Poling parties northwards causing leakage—Hume finished Smith's boots—Sheep came in very full today—Pleasant day.

Wednesday 30th Having taken the hobbles off the pony Hume had to go 7 miles for her and then 'twas too late for him to start look for my chances—He saw Bob, Sweep, & Dick—He

⁸⁷ *Bayfield, George, Sub-overseer, Axeman on Goyder's Expedition 1869. Ref., OTLB, the Surveyors M.G. Kerr.*

will start tomorrow -and go on & meet the teams from DW McMinn at the diggings discovered rich reef "Brittania" -Line extremely changeable still—Very busy all day. Smith out with sheep.

Thursday 31st July 1873 Hume off 10 a.m look for horses for me and to meet the teams bring on some sugar & tea—The pest sandflies are thick now—Line working badly—A sheep killed today—had salt beef & vegt. marrow for our tea-dinner—the vegt is a great favourite and fortunately we have a good stock yet stored. News from home today—all well—Replied—Warm day.

Friday 1st August 1873. Quite warm now. Tiresome and dull times being nearly all day by myself—Hume as now generally away horse hunting and Smith out with the sheep—today he brought in a fine Awanthis 8 inches long, winged and bright green and yellow hued. Line working badly.

Saturday August 2nd 1873.

Very warm—Sheep out all day. No Hume yet.

Sunday 3rd Aug' 1873—Sheep in paddock. No Hume—Knuckey arrvd DW p.m—Aldridge will have no more telegraphing—Dyke expected to arrive DW 6 weeks time 4 Central fire revolvers and ammunition for this stn at DW. Warm

Monday 4th—Cool fresh E breeze. Pleasant morning. Sheep out—Hume retnd midnight left teams at Fergusson Creek 12 miles off so may be here tomorrow. Hume saw one of my fillies but could not head her on Wilson Creek 8 miles—Can get her by sending 2 men.

Tuesday 5th August 1873—Very fine, cool breeze after 9 a.m—Busy clearing out old damaged stores make room for the new. Weavil innumerable. Teams arrvd sundown.

Wednesday 6th August 1873. Unloaded one waggon. Flour is beautiful and the bread a great treat.

Thursday 7th—Hume & Loxton both bad from grog—Nothing done—with other waggon. Hume I & L find 2 horses.

Friday 8th Hume still unwell. Loxton & Sam gone out for horses. Hume shepherding—Horses Bob, Giles & Sweep found. I go to Wilson Creek tonight taking Loxton & Hume to search for my filly

Saturday 9th—All day riding, no fresh tracks return home by p.m—Very sore—Cold day.
Sunday 10th Strong cold E wind. Have a good duff for dinner. Hume & Loxton sleeping all day. Hume Planted.

Monday 11th August 1873. Hume & Loxton off early for the horses and retnd 11 am with Bob, Giles & Sweep and then started to meet Tucker at AK on Thursday looking for stock as they go by W track—Warm day —Line working well-

Tuesday 12th August 1873. Very hot. Line working well.

Wednesday 13th Fine pleasant—Sheep killed. Tucker starts tomorrow to meet Hume & Loxton without Hume's mare —Cant find.

Thursday _Spoke TK early before he started—Sam Smith shot two fine black ducks today and I brought them but having had a good swim after them—Warm day.

Friday 15th August 1873—Very warm—Curtis very seedy today having taken too much to drink last night. Sam & I had a good swim again today in same water hole as we got ducks in yesterday. Curtis stuffed the ducks today—Very nice indeed.

Saturday 16th August 1873. Very warm—Had a chase after a wild dog this evening but he escaped through the sheep fence and my dogs lost sight of him-

Sunday 17th August 1873. Nice cool breeze sprung up last night and lasted all day. Very pleasant. Spoke Joe.

Monday 18th—Still cool—Part of sheep fence burnt today through carelessness of Sam. No signs of Hume & Loxton yet. Tucker met them Thursday & retnd Friday night-

Tuesday 19th Aug' 1873

Hume & Loxton returned this afternoon with two of my chances (horses)—Cold wind, fine clear.

Wednesday 20th Aug' 1873—Roped the younger of the two horses and put the tackle on her—Line working very badly—A fault N of YC and S of BK.

Thursday 25 Aug—Loxton mounted the filly today as I allow him to take her to DW and if reqd to use her to Yam Creek to forward his return

Friday 22nd. Loxton rode filly again and he & Hume brought in team horses to start in the morning. Filly gave Hume a kick in shin but not serious. Carelessness. Roxreyed other one quiet.

Saturday 23 Aug' Teams away & Hume with them after dinner—Horses got away last p.m & were not got until today—Filly led away by Loxton. Hume driving Loxtons team—Cool, fresh breeze—They had a sheep & a half.

Sunday 24th. Warm. Sheep out in morning but paddocks in afternoon. Line working well since Friday noon.

Monday 25th Aug' 1873—Line broke down North of DW last night. Very warm—Watched until 10p.m (Howley not in hand till just then) Took 37 AG msgs.

Tuesday 26th—Cool morning. Very hot midday—Line OK at 12.15—I then sent the 37 on to PD -OU & YC

Wednesday 27th—Very warm, bush fires very near. Howley spoke 18 miles N of DW—lost horse 30 miles, tramping back, left saddles & swags—no water—Hume tomorrow

Thursday 28th Aug. Howley retnd this mng nearly dead, vomited blood—his horses supposed to have made the Strangways River—Knuckey at KN. Beautiful breeze pleasant day, bush fire in same place (NNE) dist -about 4 miles. Line working OK but for interruptions by poling parties—KN men retnd reptd 3 poles burnt down, wires broken

Friday 29th Aug'—Fresh breeze. Fire freshened up today—must be niggers camp—an attacking party! Hume should be home today—Warn noon -no Hume

Saturday 30th Aug'—Strong E wind raising dust until noon but nice & cool—Hume retnd 12 noon. No horses—plenty niggers on Newcastle. Fires close here in various directions—Line fault 'tween TK & BK line touching LC at intervals—Line N of YC, men humbg'

Sunday 31st Aug' 1873—Strong E wind raising the dust to a disagreeable extent. Cool—Watson arrd AG this afternoon—sent Humes memo to him respecting papers—reply I forwarded to Melbourne sometime since. —Rode my mare today in the yard.

Monday 1st Sepr. 1873 Am now just 12 months here on £160. Hope I shall soon get my rise with KN. Fine cool day. My mare very quiet, gave her a good quiet handling today. Howley retnd. KN tells me 'Dick' my dog there is very bad.

Tuesday 2nd Sepr. 1873—Stapleton informed me 'Dick' was dead last night—His brother 'Ranger' here is very bad but I think will get through his illness. WK teams arrvd. DW tonight—Very calm towards sundown afterwards cool—Watson left AG today—Line OK.

Wednesday Sept 3rd 1873. Curtis reports natives followed teams from Newcastle to Millner Lagoon. Frightened to return unless with a part of 3. I rode my mare today again, she is very quiet. Dyke expected this week at DW with Bayfield teams.

Thursday 4th Sepr. 1873—Hume rode my mare away this morning looking for the stn horses, he returned about 2 p.m without any. Goes again tomorrow. Tucker & BK party start to repair the old fault between TK & BK—Very broken cir' this mng.

Friday 5th Sept.—Hume off again today & retnd with 'Ratty' & 'Sweep'—took latter in cart & brot in a good lot of grass—Sam helped him.

Saturday 6th Sept' 1873. Hume brot in all horses today and brought in a cart load of grass for my mare & 'Bob'—Very cold & windy—Tuckers pup very bad.

Sunday 7th—Tucker spoke from 'Dixon' yesty fault on BK section. He retrnd today. Hume cut another lot of grass today—Sam got 'Dick' in riding 'Bob'—Dyke arrd at DW last night . Had chat with him & Joe today. Tuckers pup(Mossy) still very bad , fits violent—'Dick' a brother pup also very bad—Nights cold.

Monday 8th—Pup Dick died today—Mossy very bad. 'Dick' the horse fed near yard all night. Sam took him & mended sheep paddock this mng. Hume brought grass with him in afternoon & Sam rode 'Bob' shepherding—Line OK. Tucker retrnd last night.

Tuesday 9th Sepr. 1873. Hume snobbing me in the morning & brot grass on 'Bob' in afternoon—Cold windy all day. Tuckers pup Mossy dead. Mick OK

Wednesday 10th Sept 1873—Hume finished my boots today very nicely—He brot in two large bags of grass also this afternoon—Sheep killed—Line OK. Cool-

Thursday 11th Sepr. 1873 Sam lost about 80 sheep this morning—Hobbled out my mare with 'Bob' today and brot her in at night well filled—Sam took 'Bob' to look for lost sheep but retrnd at sundown without them. He neglected to tell me he had lost them until 4 p.m altho' he had missed them when coming into dinner & told Hume.

Friday 12th Sepr. 1873—put the 2 horses out again, 'Bob' seems unwell, griped—I leave them out tonight after looking at them in the evening—the lost sheep were seen feeding near at hand this morning—One sheep came in alone about 5 p.m—Howley is unwell with fever—Line OK.

Saturday 13th Sepr. 1873 Very warm all day & sultry in the evening. I hope for some rain with the Equinox to freshen up the grass & make it grow on burnt places. Hume bought TK mare 'Spider' —Howley better. Had a chat with Tucker & KN—Carlier with 3 teams & 4 men are to leave TK end of next week coming thro' shearing sheep as he reaches each stn for the wool. Took hobbles off 'Bob' & let him go as he is falling off but seems OK otherwise—my mare came into the yard last night & again tonight. I have been in the habit of burning sheep ordure to keep the sandflies from bothering horses in yard & she comes in for that—I put some cut grass in for her now at night.

Sunday 14th Sepr' 1873—Sent memos to C.V. re Davies money —Long yarn DW,TK & KN. Howley right again. Humes two horse in at TK come on by Carlier—My mare came in again last night OK. Quite a hot wind—warm-

Monday 15th Sepr. 1873—Very warm again. Was up first & before sunrise—got breakfast on table by 7. Had a visit from 2 niggers today—(Hume & I at home—Sam just coming in sight with the sheep-) they were friendly in their own way and wanted axes badly—I think they will come again tomorrow—I gave them some flour, bread, cold plum pudding and a box

of matches. Mare came home. Countess pupped 12. Mosquitoes very numerous—Hume saddlery—Line OK—Several of the operators & Howley have an increase of screw. The last of my pups from 'Nina' very ill, distemper—made myself a pair of Pyjamas(?) today-

Tuesday 16th Sepr. 1873—Up very early—Breakfast 7 a.m. A sheep killed—the niggers have been squatted up on the rise (about 200 yds off) watching us. Hume found the bread, pudding & flour thrown away which I gave them yesterday—line gone between here & TK—I have not started any one from here as with the niggers so close I do not feel justified in sending a man away from Stn or in going myself leaving 1 man at Stn & 1 shepherding—I shall get a horse in tomorrow and inspect as far as possible to return tomorrow night—Mare in OK. Blazes for miles E to S.

Wednesday 17th Sepr. 1873—Hume off early on my mare to get a horse to inspect line and retnd & started with 'Bob' at 2 p.m. In his absence (Smith out with sheep) 7 or 8 niggers came across the hill 300yds S of Stn and were coming straight up but, as I was alone, I motioned them away, they would not go so I fired a shot 'across her bows' and started them—They were loaded with spears to—Smith heard the report & brot sheep close up and came in—Fires continuously in a circle round us tonight—Sultry—No change on line.

Thursday 18th Sepr 1873. Sam's pup (Mick) cranky with distemper has rambled off this mng. Line OK 12, noon-Very warm—Bush fires all round—Nearest about 2 miles, SSE from Stn—Tuckers men started about mid-day Tuesday from Stn —instructed to come on until they met my party (!) or if they found the break to stick up a notice and return-

Friday 19th Sepr 1873. Hume retnd 3 a.m. Natives smashed shackle N. Tomkinson, 2 cut wire whilst Hume camped there, gave chase—repaired line again—Going down the darkies hunted him from Renners Springs—Mick the pup cranky was killed by Sam today. No niggers came to us yet. Line working well —Warm.

Saturday 20th Sepr 1873. TK men arrived here just after 8 a.m.—They stay over Monday. Very warm. Line OK—Paid Alec Robinson £1 on Anti up a/c.

Sunday 21st Sepr 1873—Hume off this morning for horses that we & 1 TK man can go & see what the darkies are up to and if necessary give them a lesson—Horses in after dinner—started & found some tracks of todays make but failed to find darkies before it came dark so retnd home—The country is all ablaze to the E & ESE to N —fresh breeze sprung up at sundown—Very warm all day—All horses except 'Sweep'—Recvd memo from Supt in reply niggers—plsd with Hume's conduct—Blowing a gale since dusk-

Monday 22nd Sepr 1873. Tk man Robinson doing some iron work for me. Hume looked for horses saw but Ratty—My mare about home alright—Dyke to put in iron pins from 10 miles S of Frews! Sent cheque to Tucker £4. 4.8 men start tomorrow mng—my dog Ranger died this evening in a mad fit—Have now but one dog —Hume gives notice to leave at end of month. He will not be a party to the cause of this being under-manned—This may cause some alterations for the better.

Tuesday 23rd Sepr 1873. Informed Supt Hume leaves end month—replied telling me try to retain him till Dyke arrives from whom he has instructed to start as soon as possible and push on to relieve me—Hume will not go on N with me—why change his mind I do not know. Carlier leaves YK tomorrow morning—Hume stopt. his horses-

Wednesday 24th Sepr 1873. Mare 'Spider' dead, sale of her to Hume cancelled by Supt. — Dyke starts tomorrow or Friday—Supt. gives no immediate rise to him or myself—Smiths pay to be 4s/6d from 1st August—Hume brot. up horses today and found my mare & brot. her in as big & round as a hogshead—He says saw from 40 to 50 darkies N of Stn & overhauled 1 old man, all others bolted but remained in sight—old man dropped spears & every thing—they were hunting and had many snakes carrying-Reports horse track coming out of paper bark flat and single sheep track N of Gorge Creek & W of road—Joe told me C.V. bought me some of Neates shares.

Thursday 25th Sepr 1873—very few fires about—Dyke not got all his horses in so not started today—Hume complains unwell-at work about pack saddles—Advised acct. of Smiths 4/6 & sent in a/cs against Curtis & Loxton.

Friday 26th Sepr 1873 Dyke left DW today at 1 p.m—expects to get here on 10th day—One sheep died—My mare comes in again every night and is not hobbled—Hume offered £5 for 'Creamy Jack'—I told Supt. saying the horse had not been home for months but I thought he would suit him. He says he will go out with me if can get his mare and Creamy jack or other horse for a pack—Good breeze all day from E but still warm in. saw TK men retrnd. there today—Tucker cant send up with Sally.

Saturday 27th 1873. good breeze nearly all day, light clouds coming over from E. — Whirlwinds frequent & strong. Cir good-

Sunday 28th Sepr 1873—fresh breeze all day. A few fires about. Mosquitoes very troublesome towards night. Wrote memos to Supt. re Loxton's pay ceasing, Hume's pay continuing to KN -to Little re revolver per Loxton & to Supt. (for acctnt.—advise of order to Hume & horse sale.

Monday 29th Sepr. 1873. Fresh breeze all day—Bush fires coming close again. May have another visit bro' Smat. Hume finished my pack saddle & cut out bags to make tomorrow—Done a heavy days washing today!!

Tuesday 30th Sepr. 1873. Tolerably cool all day with breeze from E by N. Bush fires close & numerous—evening sultry and mosquitoes—Carlier should be here tomorrow or next day. Hume started for his mare at TK on Thursday—Acctnt. memo re Wilson's accounts—replied no books supplied to keep a/c-

Wednesday 1st Oct. 1873 —Supt. sent memo today saying. I should be able to arrange for Hume to travel in company for initial protection & no pay. Hume declined and now will not go under £1 per day—He says he is tired of humbug—warm day—breeze in the evening—

Aldridge ill arrived. DW retns to Roper—No Carlier yet—Little ill fever—YC(Smith) laid up—Stopped Smith from practising on field inst-

Thursday 2nd Oct 1873 Sent Humes message to Supt. today re 3 months pay BK—very warm outside—Cant keep fresh meat more than 2 days. A few clouds came up today but passed off in evening.

Friday 3rd—No Carlier yet—Very sultry evening—morning cool fresh N.N.W. breeze—Line works badly N —Hume growling this evening, abusing every officer on the line with whom he has worked—Asks for a horse to go on to NC waters to get Creamy Jack—Refuses further work—I should advise settlement with him up to today—Carlier should be here now having left TK 10 days ago and Dyke should arrive with men before Carlier finishes shearing next week—Please advise me—Hume is as unreasonable & impracticable as can possibly be—His engagement commenced 1st July last—Humes order for horse WK No 6-

Saturday Oct 4th 1873—Line broken between here & DW—Hume not on work. Had to keep the sheep in paddock whilst Smith dragged wood. and this p.m I walked 7 miles for a horse to go along line tonight as far as possible—when I got the horse saddled Hume wanted to go so I started him at 4.45p.m —read him Supts memo to himself first—gave him Galvr. & memo to Tom Dyke. Recvd. several memos re Hume and one about his a/c I cant settle with him on Monday as Accountant away —Replied to query re horses on NC Waters -and Supts memo re Hume to KN.

Sunday Line repaired 5 miles N Millners Lagoon at 6 p.m—Very hot day—N.W. monsoon strong—Hume retnd 8 p.m—Dyke gone on line—Teams camped at the Lawson. probably arrive here on Tuesday afternoon—Hume goes on South tomorrow-

Monday 6th Oct 1873—densely overcast very few light drops of rain here & at YK—Thunder & lightning distant—Hume off 2p.m. Took letter to Supt contg. Humes horse papers & receipts for orders, £5 & £18.10.6—Nos 6 &7. WK. dated today & 26th Septr—Dyke arrd. 7.30 p.m-

Tuesday 7th Oct 1873—Dyke looks first rate he came on by himself, teams come on today—they arrvd 2p.m—Warren, Curtis & blackboy—Cool day-fresh E breeze —Bought from Dyke 7 hat nets at 5/—ea., 4 pairs socks @5/0, 1 hat 10/—paid by sovereign-

Wednesday 8th Oct 1873—Carlier arrived his teams lower crossing come up tomorrow—Dyke & I looking for horses, not successful found tracks-

Thursday 9th Oct 1873—Carlier & teams arrvd today. They topped old yard & made small one for shearing—Only team horses found today—Advised accountant of settlement with Hume by order WK No. 7 or 6th Oct account £18.10.6-

Friday 10th Oct 1873 All horses got. Made a start after dinner with Curtis driving waggon—Warren riding one of my horses. We are to repair line as we go—WK men return from Millners Lagoon—I go on to DW alone—Arrvd at Fergusson Creek sundown. Cut one pole-

Saturday 11th—Early start—put on one iron pin, 1 mule N of Fergusson 1 pole & 1 wooden pin 6 mules—Arrvd Lawson 2 pins

Sunday 12th Start 8 a.m. Put in new pole iron pin 6 mules N Lawson—iron pin 3 miles S green grass swamp—Camped G G Swamp —Shot 6 pigeons 1 duck-

Monday 13th Oct 1873 Start 8.10 a.m. 'Dick' in team instead of 'Hector' iron pin 4 miles N of camp—cleared undergrowth New insulator reqd. 1mile S of Corduroy. Camped 1.30 p.m N Newcastle

Tuesday 14th Oct 1873. Started 5.50 a.m. I went and got horses myself before sunrise. Followed line to 4 miles S of Frews—no fault. One old man nigger alone camped 100 yds from us at Frews—Plenty water.

Wednesday 15th Good start—Give the nigger a vest, pocket hdkf & tomohawk. Arrived Millners Lagoon 2 p.m 19 miles—Lots of niggers & gins in water ran off as we approached, mostly young ones, they retnd later & I went out to them. No trouble—Very hot.

Thursday 16th Started 6.30 arrvd DW 3 pm 34 miles—Very hot. The natives followed me a few miles. WK men & team retnd from Millners.

Friday 17th —Geo Bayfield & team arrvd here this afternoon. Shall not be able to leave here until Monday or Tuesday—No one to go on with me. Very warm—The iron roof not as cool as WK thatch.

Saturday 18th—Very threatening for [...] Sultry. Heavy shower but short.

Sunday 19th Oct 1873 Cool morning—turned hot. Bathed in creek.

Monday 20th Oct 1873. Hot—Line interrupted S. of WK. Washing & horse hunting.

Tuesday 21st Oct Bayfields teams away. Daer & I start this afternoon. Warm already—Off at 3 p.m—arrd (26 miles) Giles water 10 pm-

Wednesday 22nd Started 7.30. Water 22miles & 28 miles. Camped 4.39 p.m—Waters last a week—Very hot —Horses right.

Thursday 23rd Started 6.53 a.m Passed No 3, 2 & 1 wells—No 3 last night 1½ S of camp. No 2 this mng 12½ miles from start—No 1 at 3p.m full of water 18 miles N of No 2. Came on 4 miles to Warlock Ponds head of Elsie & Roper River (large waters) EB mare. Pleasant day—Bathe in Ponds—Beautiful lilies

Friday 24th Picked up the mare left by Campbell (staked) & started 7 a.m. Camped 2 hours Lily Pond started again 2 p.m reached Stirling Creek & Camp 3.30.—plenty water—My E B mare looks nearly done.

Saturday 25th Started 7 a.m—My mare foaled 3 miles from Gran Flat Billabong we camped there 8 miles from Stirling . I went back & found foal dead. Brot. mare on to water.

Sunday 26th Started 6.30 am, turned out 1 hour at 2 miles N of King (running water) 11.30. 1 p.m started again try for KN—Arrived 8 p.m

Monday 27th -I find KN as good as DW but very rough at that-

Tuesday 28th Very warm-

30thOct. Stapleton started--

31st Nothing new

November 1st sent in my returns

Thursday 6th Joe wants some sheep & will be coming up for them-

November 10th—B Richards with Farrell & 4 horses left here today

Prospect F Pub. Holiday.

Tuesday —Party of niggers trying to steal from mens hut were frightened off by a shot. Another lot came from N and had some biscuit and a yarn & off-

Inserted pages at the back of Diary

Left DW Weds16th June '75 & camped at 16 mile (Penelope) 25miles

17th Camped Purdies Ponds—33miles

18th—Arrd at No 11 camp (sml creek)

19th No 9 —on Strangways

20th—Camp Gorge on Strangways—caught feed fish—Shot a wild dog & got the kangaroo. Blk boys friends. 2 horses running SE. tracks—fish

21st Brunos swamp—picked up 5 bullocks on road today-

22nd Bruno's spelling—got 2 horses Ms.

23rd Late start made Weavers Pond 5 pygmy geese

24th Thurs —camped at Sandy Ck.—Broken shaft—fish

25th Friday—Arrd. at Moles Hill 1 p.m dist about 15 miles—bullock tracks on road. saw
lubras Butcher's Creek

26th camp E side McCulloch Range at bay o'biscay waterhole near large lily lagoon bearing
N 100yds—abt 14 miles

27th Passed Duck Ponds 5 miles from old camp—numerous bullock tracks & native ditto—
feed of ducks—21 miles -about 6 E of Cooley Creek-

Sunday 28th June 1875

Good start made reached McMinns Table 12 o'clock—Met a great number of natives & more
with them joined us at our camp—very friendly—dist' about 13 miles

Different person Daer or Rickards⁸⁸

Monday 29 June Came on the Bar Charlie went to swim when the Blcks speared him his
entrails came out did all I could for him but he died

Tuesday 30

Mother Kiss Me In My Dreams
Lying on my dying bed
Thro' the dark & silent night
Waiting for the coming day
Came a vision to my sight
Near me stood the forms I loved
In the sunlights mellow gleam
Holding me close to her breast
Mother kissed me in my dreams-
Mother! Mother! Mother! Kissed me in my dreams

Tell her comrades when you write
That I did my duty well
Say that when the battle raged
Fighting in the van I fell
Tell her too while on my bed
Slowly ebb'd my being's streams
How I knew no peace until
Mother kissed me in my dreams &-
Once again I long to see
Home & kindred far away
But I feel I shall be dead
'Ere there dawns another day

⁸⁸ *Rickards, Charles, hand at Daly Waters Ref., The Shackle, The South Australian Register, 14th
July p5,*

Hopefully I bide the hour
When shall fade life's feeble gleam
For every pang has left me now
Since mother kissed me in my dreams

When Other Lips & Other Heart

When other lips and other hearts
Their tales of love shall tell,
In language that excess imparts,
The power they know so well.
There may perhaps in such an hour
Some recollection be
Of days when we have happy been-
Then you'll remember me Then you'll remember, you'll &e-

=

When coldness or de[...] shall blight
The be[...] now they prize
And deem it but a faded light
Their beams [...] those eyes-
When hollow hearts shall wear a mask
I would break your own to be
In such a moment I but ask
That you'll remember me

List of medicines supplied to me for use of wiring party
June 10th 1872

1 bot bolyrium [...]
1 Friars Balsam
1 pkt Ginger beer pdrs
2 bots Chloridyne
1 pot Holloways Ointment
1 doz Aperient pills
1 oz Quinine
Cholera drops
Eye Lotion
1 bot[...]
1 Mixed shot

Distances to waters from camps S of S Tomkinson

New waterhole

Kuerchners Ponds 12 miles

Cox's Pool from 1½

Morphett from do 7

from Morphett to Attack 8

Attack to Hayward 8½ left side

Hayward to Gibson 5

Gibson to Phillips 7

Phillips to Tennants 19