



SUPPLEMENT
TO THE
NEW SOUTH WALES
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE,

OF FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 1848.

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*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sydney, 24th January, 1848.*

RIVER VICTORIA.

HIS Excellency the GOVERNOR is pleased to direct the publication, for general information, of the following Despatch from Mr. Assistant-Surveyor Kennedy, detailing the particulars of the expedition undertaken to ascertain the course of the River Victoria.

*By His Excellency's Command,
E. DEAS THOMSON.*

*Camp at Derribong,
on the River Bogan,
12th January, 1848.*

Sm,
I take the earliest opportunity of reporting to you the return of myself and party to Mr. Ker's station, on the Bogan, having, in accordance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 22nd February, No. 47-42, followed down the River Victoria, and determined so much of its course as the supply of water and feed for my horses would admit of.

You will observe, however, from the following particulars, which I have now the honor to lay before you, that I continued to trace that river, through a desert, to the southward, for more than a hundred miles, when nothing less than a total failure of water and vegetation compelled me, with difficulty and much reluctance, to withdraw.

To enter into "the detail of the results and progress of my journey," and with a view to notice, as fully as possible, each clause in my instructions, I take the liberty of repeating here the heads of each paragraph contained in your letter, replying to them in the order they demanded my attention.

With reference to the first, in which I was directed to "return to the interior from Sydney, "without delay, by the road across Liverpool Plains, so as to fall into the return track of the "late expedition; to recross the Balonne, at "St. George's Bridge; take the route back to "Camp 83, and thence by the route along the "Maranco to Camp XXIX," I have only to state that, having left Sydney on the 13th March, and Parramatta on the 21st of the same month, I adhered to the route pointed out without any deviation, and arrived at the Camp referred to, on the Maranco, on the 8th June.

From thence I was desired to "cross the Maranoa, and continue along the return route to Camp 75; at seven miles beyond that point to leave it, and move up the advance track to Camp XXXIV, not crossing a little river I should find there at all."

I accordingly crossed the Maranoa, on the morning of the 11th June, but, although the attention of our native and that of all the party was given to trace the return of the light carts, we were unable to detect any other track but that of the advance route; when, therefore, I felt satisfied that I had passed the junction of the two tracks, I proceeded up the river, cutting off the bends, which a tracing of Sir Thomas Mitchell's map enabled me to do.

On the 14th I fell in with the track of the late expedition in a dense brigalow scrub, and continued along it to Camp XXXII; the following morning, the return route being still imperceptible, I kept the direction of it (as laid down in the map) which brought me to Camp XXXIII. On the 16th we travelled on the advance and return tracks combined; passed Camp 75; and arrived at XXXIV upon the little river alluded to, but finding no water in its channel, which had the appearance of having been some time dry, a close search was made up and down it, and at sunset two or three small holes were discovered which might afford a scanty supply for three or four days.

Having reached thus far, it next became my duty "to proceed by Camps XXXV and XXXVI, in order to approach the bed of the Warrego, in the direction of Sir Thomas Mitchell's ride of the 14th June, 1846; in a general north-west direction; to pursue the course of the Warrego upwards towards Mount Playfair, turning up the Cunno Creek, leaving that mount on my right."

Having found no water at Camp XXXIV, I could not expect to find any at XXXV higher up on the same watercourse, I therefore first ascertained the nearest permanent water, to which my party might remove should our present supply fail them during my contemplated absence from the Camp; and on the 18th June, leaving the party in charge of Mr. Turner (a young friend and volunteer in the service,) I took Douglas, Luff, and Harry (a young native of the Namoi) with me, and rode towards the Warrego, on a bearing of 305° E. of north, so as to fall into the Surveyor General's adopted line to the north-west, on the 14th June; my tents, I should have mentioned, being one and one-half mile below XXXIV. For the first four miles the country

was open, and the soil similar to the loose sand on the Maranoa, but from that distance to the extent of our ride on that day we were scarcely a moment out of a dense callitris scrub, through which we found some difficulty to break our way; at eight miles from camp we crossed the tributary of the Maranoa, upon which were situated Camps XXXVI and XXXVII, having a narrow strip of open forest on its immediate banks, and containing an abundance of water; at seventeen and a-half miles we encamped in latitude 25° 40' 15" upon a small watercourse falling to the north-east, and in the bed of which we found a temporary water hole; on the 19th we proceeded on the same bearing, boring through callitris scrub, only varied by a denser forest of Brigalow; at about fourteen miles we had crossed the range which divides the waters of the Maranoa and Warrego, the box flats which thence traverse our path all falling to the westward; at sixteen miles we entered upon fine open forest downs; and at about 20 miles bivouaced on the creek which intersects these fine downs in latitude 25° 29' 27".

The 20th I devoted to examining this creek, and the determining of its position by a round of angles, taken from a range seven miles to the westward. Observing smoke rising from a valley still further to the westward, I determined upon proceeding in that direction the following day. The creek we had been examining contained small (but not permanent) water holes; it is the recipient of that watercourse upon which Sir Thomas Mitchell encamped on the 20th and 21st June, 1846, and has its principal source from the range immediately south of the extreme northern bend of the Warrego.

On the 21st. I crossed the range to the westward, the summit of which was covered with a dense Brigalow scrub, and at nine miles descended into the valley of the Warrego. The River contained no water, but had a deep and well marked sandy bed; we followed it up from latitude 25° 29', through all its windings to 25° 16' 10", when we at length had the good fortune to find a pool at the junction of a creek from the northward with the River; this discovery, as the water was deep and permanent, at once enabled me to advance with my party in the desired direction, and at the same time secured to me a convenient resting place for my party, during my next reconnoitre towards Happy Valley; on the 23rd. I returned towards my camp, in a S.S.E. direction, as far as my bivouac of the 20th, on the creek next to the eastward,

thinking that by crossing the range, which divides it from the Warrego, more to the northward I should find less scrub to contend with and a more direct route; in that attempt I was so far successful that my carts and pack horses passed over with comparatively little clearing; from the creek I kept my outward track as nearly as possible, at the same time avoiding a great portion of the scrubs we had before encountered. On the 26th we reached the Camp removed to the water appointed on the Maranoa. On the 28th we resumed our journey and arrived at the pool on the Warrego in latitude $25^{\circ} 16' 10''$; on the 5th July, having watered at the four following specified stages,—1st, on the creek of Camps XXXVI and XXXVII, in latitude $25^{\circ} 40' 15''$, six miles;—2nd, at the temporary water hole in latitude $25^{\circ} 29' 27''$, twelve miles;—3rd, on the creek of the Downs in latitude $25^{\circ} 27' 20''$, seventeen miles;—4th, at three wells sunk in the Warrego, in $25^{\circ} 20' 7''$, thirteen miles; these distances refer to our track in some places, making detours to avoid scrub. On the morning of the 5th July, the Thermometer stood at the minimum height observed on this journey, *i. e.*, $8\frac{1}{2}$ at sun-rise; my Meteorological Table will shew that it had frequently fallen to 9° .

From the 5th to the 16th July, I was absent from Camp with the same men as on my last ride, seeking a passage through the scrubs to Happy Valley; and on the 17th we continued our journey, with the carts halting at another pool, similar in every respect to the one we had left; it was in latitude $25^{\circ} 11' 6''$, Mount Playfair bearing 313° by compass, the variation at the last Camp being $10^{\circ} 14' E.$; thence we proceeded to a creek which has its source to the eastward of Mount Playfair, and receives the waters of the Cannö, and other creeks rising to the westward of that Mount; our position on the 19th was in latitude $25^{\circ} 7' 8''$, Mount Playfair bearing $353^{\circ} E.$ of north three miles distant. Water boiled at 210° , the Thermometer at 44° in the shade.

Having in attention to your desire, adhered in my ride to the direction taken by Sir Thomas Mitchell from Cannö Creek, crossed over ridges A & B, followed down the watered valley referred to, and arrived at Camp 77 on the Nive, thence running that river down to the Brigalow Creek before I crossed over to Happy Valley on my return to Camp, I examined the country to the westward of the valley at the head of the "Nive,"

and found an easy passage for my carts, to the left or southward of the ridges A & B, and thus escaped both, as also much of the Brigalow through which we had penetrated in our outward track. With this knowledge of the country before me, I removed the Camp successively to a creek falling to the southward, in latitude $25^{\circ} 1' 47''$, the Rocky Ridges bearing N. N. W., $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile distant from the Creek to Camp 77, through principally open forest; and thence to Happy Valley via the Brigalow Creek.

From Happy Valley I was directed "to keep Sir Thomas Mitchell's track, if possible, across the Victoria Downs, and beyond his, the Surveyor General's Camp of the 1st October, to take the return route, thus cutting off a great bend of the river, to ascertain the position of Sir Thomas Mitchell's Camp of the 28th September, so that I might thence set out westward in the direction of his return route, instead of following the circuitous turn the river there takes to the northward."

We accordingly commenced our journey down the Victoria on the 25th July, but with regard to the horse tracks I beg to remark that, owing to late rains, not even on ground immediately around marked Camps, could our native often detect the track of a horse's foot, although he has given us many evidences of his quick sight; however, guided by the map, I was at all times enabled to cut off the bends, making straight courses to those points I considered we were able to reach. On arriving at the Camp alluded to of the 1st October, I crossed over the Downs in the direction of the return route, and encamped on the western extremity of the "Fine Reach" laid down beyond that point. I kept the southernmost channel until we arrived at what I supposed to be about the position of Sir Thomas Mitchell's Camp of the 28th September, when I crossed over and encamped at a small hole of water in the next channel to the northward. As it was my intention to change my course at that point, and set out in the direction of the Surveyor-General's route across the great bend of the river to the northward, I decided upon burying our carts at a short distance from that camp, conceiving the site, peculiarly favorable, inasmuch as water being scarce in the neighbourhood, that ground was less likely to be subject to the scrutinizing eye of the native, or the far more piercing one of his gin; moreover it would enable me to make longer journeys when travelling at a distance from the river. Accordingly a pit was sunk without

delay, and the carts, with all the dispensable part of the equipment, covered over on the 8th August; in the early part of the previous day I should mention, Harry found Sir Thomas Mitchell's camping ground of the 21st September, and the next morning we found the horse tracks near our tents, trending in a W. N. W. direction, evidently approaching the Camp of the 28th, making our position between the two Camps but nearer to the latter.

The long looked for day having at length arrived, when the carts should be disposed of, and preparations made for riding down the Victoria to the Gulf with pack horses, on the 9th August we made a move towards the opposite side of the great bend, on a bearing S. 86 W.; we took with us 2350 lbs. of flour, 6 months' tea, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ months' sugar; the horses being newly shod, one spare set was taken for each horse, which, it was considered, would last them until their return to the carts. The loads having been only experimentally put on, we made a short journey of 5 miles, and encamped on the southern channel, in latitude $24^{\circ} 14' 44''$, where the pack loads were more accurately adjusted. The following day we proceeded on the same bearing, and at 12 miles halted upon the river from the south-east, shewn in the Surveyor General's map; my camp was in latitude $24^{\circ} 15' 47''$. On the 11th we continued our journey in the same direction for 18 miles, when we encamped on well grassed and open downs, in latitude $24^{\circ} 16' 48''$. On the 12th, at about 9 miles, we crossed the flat in which is situated, I imagine, Yuranigh Lagoon; inclining thence to the W. N. W. we skirted a fine marsh, on the borders of which we first found Sir Thomas Mitchell's horse tracks; and again at about one mile they were observed within sixty yards of my camp on the river, in latitude $24^{\circ} 16' 33''$, the ridge laid down at Sir Thomas Mitchell's furthest on the Victoria, bearing west 3 miles.

Having reached the lowest point of the Victoria attained by the Surveyor General, I was directed "to pursue the river, and determine the course thereof as accurately as my light equipment and consequent rapid progress might permit." Accordingly, on the 13th August we moved down the river, and at $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles crossed over to its proper right bank; the Victoria is there bounded on the south by a low sandstone ridge, covered with brigalow; and on the north by fine grassy plains,

with here and there clumps of the silver leaf brigalow. At 7 miles we passed a fine deep reach, below which the river is divided into three channels, and inclines more to the southward; at 13 miles we encamped upon the centre channel; the three were about half a mile apart, the southern one under the ridge being the deepest. We found water in each, but I believe it to be only permanent in the southernmost, which contains a fine reach, one mile below our encampment, in latitude $24^{\circ} 17' 34''$. An intelligent native whom we met there with his family, on our return, gave me the name of the river, which they call "Barcoo." I also obtained from him several useful words which he seemed to take a pleasure in giving, and which I entered in my journal.

Between the parallels of $24^{\circ} 17'$ and $24^{\circ} 53'$, the river preserves generally a very direct course to the S. S. W., and maintains an unvaried character, although the supply of water greatly decreases below the latitude $24^{\circ} 25'$. It is divided into three principal channels, and several minor watercourses, which traverse a flat country lightly timbered by a species of flooded box; this flat is confined on either side by low sandstone ridges, thickly covered with an acacia scrub. In latitude $24^{\circ} 50'$ we had some difficulty in finding a sufficiency for our own consumption, but after searching the numerous channels, the deep (though dry) lagoons and lakes formed there by the river, we at length encamped at a small water hole in latitude $24^{\circ} 52' 55''$ and longitude $144^{\circ} 11' 26''$.

Being aware that the principal view of the Government in sending me to trace the Victoria was the discovery of a practical route to the Gulf of Carpentaria, I then began to fear that I should be unable, with my small stock of provisions, to accomplish the two objects of my Expedition. My instructions confined me to the river, which had now preserved almost without deviation, a S. S. W. course for nearly a hundred miles; the only method which occurred to me, by the adoption of which I might still hope to perform all that was desired, was to trace the river with two men as far as latitude 26° , which the maintenance of its general course would have enabled me to do in two days, and then to hasten back to my party, to conduct them to the extreme northern point attained by the Victoria, and endeavour to prolong the direct route carried that far, from Sydney towards the Gulf of Carpentaria, by Sir Thomas Mitchell.

With this intention I left the Camp on the 20th August, and at 12 miles found several channels united, forming a fine reach, below which the river takes a turn to the W.S.W., receiving the waters of rather a large creek from the eastward, in latitude $25^{\circ} 3'$. In latitude $25^{\circ} 7'$, the river, having again inclined to the southward, impinges upon the point of a low range on its left, by the influence of which it is turned in one well watered channel to the west and west by north for nearly 30 miles; in that course the reaches are nearly connected, varying in breadth from 80 to 120 yards; firm plains of a poor white soil extend on either side the river; they were rather bare of pasture, but they are evidently in some seasons less deficient of grass. In latitude $25^{\circ} 9' 30''$, and longitude about $143^{\circ} 16'$, a considerable river joins the Victoria from the north-east, which I would submit may be named the "Thomson," in honor of E. Deas Thomson, Esquire, the Honorable the Colonial Secretary. It was on one of the five reaches in the westerly course of the Victoria that I passed the second night; the river there measured 120 yards across, and seemed to have a great depth; the rocks and small islets which here and there occurred in its channel giving it the semblance of a lasting and most important river; this unexpected change, however, both in its appearance and course, caused me to return immediately to my Camp for the purpose of conducting my party down such a river whithersoever it should flow.

On the 25th August we resumed our journey down that portion of the Victoria above described, and made the river mentioned from the N. E. three miles above its junction; following it down we found an unbroken sheet of water in its channel, averaging fifty yards in breadth; we forded it at the junction, and continued to move down the Victoria, keeping all the channels, into which it had again divided, on my left. At about one mile the river there turns to the S. S. W. and S., spreading over a depressed and barren waste, void of trees or vegetation of any kind, its level surface being only broken by small doones of red sand, resembling islands upon the dry bed of an inland sea, which, I am convinced, at no distant period did exist there.

On the 1st September we encamped up on a long, though narrow, reach in the most western channel, at which point a low sandstone ridge, strewed with boulders, and covered with an acacia scrub, closes

upon the river. This position is important, as a small supply of grass will, (I think) in most seasons, be found on the bank of the river when not a blade, perhaps, may be seen within many miles above or below; my Camp, which I marked ^K IV was in latitude $25^{\circ} 24' 22''$, longitude $142^{\circ} 51'$. Beyond Camp IV the ridge recedes, and the soil becomes more broken and crumbling; our horses struggled, with difficulty, over this ground to my Camp, at a small water hole, in lat. $25^{\circ} 43' 44''$, where I found it necessary to lighten some of their loads by having buried 400lbs. flour and 70lbs. sugar, still retaining a sufficient supply to carry us to Captain Sturt's farthest, on Cooper's Creek, to the eastward, (to which point I was convinced this river would lead me) and from thence back to the settled districts of New South Wales, which was all I could then hope to accomplish. At about sixteen miles further, the ground becoming worse, so that our horses were continually falling into the fissures up to their hocks, I was compelled to leave 270lbs. more of flour and sugar at my Camp of the 4th September, in latitude $25^{\circ} 51'$, at another small water hole found in the bed of a very dry and insignificant channel; here a barren sandstone range again impedes the river in its southerly course, and throws it off to the westward, thus causing many of its channels to unite and form a reach of water in latitude $25^{\circ} 54'$; this, the lowest reach we attained, I did not discover until my return, having found a sufficient supply in a channel more to the westward. In lat. $25^{\circ} 25'$, and long., by account, $142^{\circ} 23'$, the river, having rounded the point of the range which obstructs it, resumes its southerly course, spreading in countless channels over a surface bearing flood marks six and ten feet above its present level; this vast expanse is only bounded to the eastward by the barren range alluded to, which ending abruptly runs parallel with the river at a distance varying from four to seven miles. On the 7th September I encamped upon a small waterhole in $26^{\circ} 0' 13''$ in the midst of a desert not producing a morsel of vegetation; yet so long as we could find water, transient as it was, I continued to push on with the hope of reaching sooner or later some grassy spot, whereon by a halt I might refresh the horses; however that hope was destroyed at the close of the next day, for although I had commenced an early search for water when travelling to the southward, with numerous channels on either side of me, I was compelled at length to encamp in latitude $26^{\circ} 13' 9''$, and long. by

account $142^{\circ} 20'$ on the bank of a deep channel, without either water or food for our wearied horses. The following morning, taking one man and Harry with me, we made a close search down the most promising watercourses and lagoons, but upon riding down even the deepest of them, we invariably found them break off into several insignificant channels, which again subdivided, and in a short distance dissipated the waters, derived from what had appeared the dry bed of a large river on the absorbing plain; returning in disappointment to the Camp, I sent my lightest man and Harry on other horses to look into the channels still unexamined, but they also returned unsuccessful. We had seen late fires of the natives at which they had passed the night without water, and tracked them on their path from lagoon to lagoon in search of it; we also found that they had encamped on some of the deepest channels in succession, quitting each as it had become dry, having previously made holes to drain off the last moisture. My horses were by this time literally starving, and all we could give them was the rotten straw and weeds which had covered some deserted huts of the natives. Seeing then that it would be the certain loss of many, and consequently an unjustifiable risk of my party to attempt to push farther into a country where the Aborigines themselves were at a loss to find water, I felt it my imperative duty to at once abandon it. I would here beg to remark, that although unsuccessful in my attempt to follow it that far, from the appearance of the country, and long continued direction of the river's course, I think there can exist but little doubt, that the "Victoria" is identical with Cooper's Creek, of Captain Sturt; that Creek was abandoned by its discoverer in latitude $27^{\circ} 56'$, longitude 142° , coming from the north-east, and as the natives informed him, "in many small channels forming a large one"; the lowest camp of mine on the Victoria, was in latitude $26^{\circ} 13' 9''$, longitude $142^{\circ} 20'$; the river, in several channels, trending due south, and the lowest point of the range which bounds that flat country to the eastward, bearing south 25° east; Captain Sturt also states, that the ground, near the creek, was so blistered and light that it was unfit to ride on, but that before he turned, he had satisfied himself that there was no apparent sign of water to the eastward.

Having marked a tree ^{EK}₁₈₄₇ we commenced our return journey along the track at 2 P. M. of the 9th September; at eight miles I allowed one of the horses to be shot, for being an old invalid, and

unable to travel further, he must have starved if left alive. At thirteen miles we reached the water; some while after dark the following day, we made our next camp, but it was with much difficulty that my private horse and two or three others were brought to water, one being almost carried by three men the latter part of the day. Upon discovering the reach, in latitude $25^{\circ} 54'$ near the range, and finding a little grass in the channel about the water, I gave the horses two days rest. My Camp on the reach is marked ^K_{III}; it is in latitude $25^{\circ} 55' 37''$, longitude by account $142^{\circ} 24'$; the variation of the compass 8° E.; water boiled at 214° , the temperature of the air being 64° . On the 14th September we proceeded on our journey, and reached the firm plains beyond the desert; on the 22nd, having halted a day, we again moved on, and arrived within five miles of the carts; on the 7th October, leaving my party on the south channel, I rode to the spot and found them still safe, although a native had been examining the ground that very morning. Lest he should have gone to collect others to assist him in his researches, I brought my party forward the same evening, had the carts dug out during the night, and at sunrise proceeded to our position of the 4th August on the South Channel. Five natives were observed, in the morning, following on our track, and before the tents were pitched, they drew near, and ordered us away from the water; they had all their implements with them, and from their surly and untractable manner appeared to have been lately disappointed in a mining speculation. Pursuing our course up the river, we reached the Nive on the 18th October; there was but little water in the hole near the Brigalow Creek, and none to be procured but by digging at the junction of the Nivelle. On leaving Camp 77, we found no water until we reached the first pool in the Warrego, a distance of forty miles, all the intervening watercourses having become dry.

Finding upon my arrival on the Warrego that we had still 756lbs. of flour remaining, and feeling anxious to make some discovery, which might, at least in a small degree, palliate the bad tidings of which I was the bearer, I determined upon following that river down, with the view, not only of finding an available country, but also of adding to what little is known of the range which divides the waters of the Darling from those of the interior. The "Nive" being the only watercourse of any importance between the Victoria and the Warrego, I conceived, that should the latter river be found to fall to the westward, or be joined by the "Nive" in

an easterly course, in either case the form and position of that range would, to a certain extent, be established. With these views, I accordingly left the pond on the Warrego, in lat $25^{\circ} 16' 10''$ on the 25th October, and continued to travel down that river until the 18th November, with the following results:—

So far as my camp, marked K_{15} in lat. $25^{\circ} 55' 57''$ and long. $146^{\circ} 44' 7''$ the Warrego maintains its deep sandy bed averaging 40 feet in breadth; it intersects an open forest country with good pasture, the forest being generally composed of several varieties of Eucalypti, such as the iron bark, box, &c., the acacia and pine; the trees on the immediate bank of the river are chiefly the flooded gum and oak, which wear a healthy appearance and attain a growth very remarkable on the banks of a channel in which water can never lodge. The river is joined in lat. $25^{\circ} 35'$ by the creek before mentioned, as being the next to the eastward; its channel is broad and sandy near the junction, and contains small but permanent water holes; the country bordering it, resembling in every respect that on the Warrego. In lat. $25^{\circ} 51' 22''$ another creek enters the Warrego from the eastward, at the junction of which water may at all times be found; the river again receives the waters of a creek which I called the "Yo Yo" Creek in lat. $25^{\circ} 55' 57''$; this creek has its source in the range, of which Mount Boyd is a fixed point, and contained an abundance of water in its chain of holes; of the Warrego thus far, I may in a word say, that its grassy banks and clear forest land render it available for either sheep or horse stock, but it is unfit for cattle, from there being no surface water; we obtained a supply on travelling down the river, either from wells sunk two or three feet by ourselves, or caused by the uprooting of a large tree on a level with its bed. Water can be procured in almost any part of its whole course, by clearing away the sand to the depth of from 1 to 5 feet, more especially at the junction of a creek however small.

From Camp XV to latitude $28^{\circ} 15' 44''$ and longitude $145^{\circ} 28' 52''$ the river contains deep reaches of water occurring at short distances, and increasing in proximity as we advanced; this inexhaustible supply of water is bounded by open forest for the first 40 miles, and from thence by extensive plains thickly covered with the most luxuriant pasture, and broken here and there by clumps of "acacia pendula." I have never seen in the Colony any country which surpasses it, and but very little to equal it, either as being adapted for the depasturing of cattle or any kind of stock. In latitude $28^{\circ} 3'$,

we encamped upon a reach, but found the country much fallen off in appearance; between that Camp and K_{XXII} in latitude $28^{\circ} 15' 44''$, the river rapidly diminished by throwing off watercourses to the eastward, and it was only after a long search that we found a spot at which we could procure a supply of water by digging. At thirteen miles beyond, or in about latitude $28^{\circ} 25'$ the river now much reduced splits into two equal parts, the one running directly to the eastward, the other in the opposite direction to the westward; the eastern channel, however, after a circuitous turn rejoins that to the westward, without improving, what the river had here become, the insignificant dry bed of a watercourse; the country on either side being flat and subject to inundation, was of a poor crumbling soil, void of grass and thickly wooded by a species of small stunted Box and Acacia.

I was then in latitude about $28^{\circ} 25'$ and longitude $145^{\circ} 28'$, having ventured again that far to the westward with the hope of carrying the fine country we had lately traversed the whole way to the Barwon.

Being now unable to procure water in either channel of the river, even by sinking wells, once more disgusted and disappointed, as all travellers will ever be who put their trust in the interior rivers of New Holland, I decided upon leaving it and moving towards the Culgoa, for although eighty miles distant, it was the nearest water to the position I was there in; accordingly on the evening of the 18th November, I left the Warrego, steering S. 37° E., and at 8 a.m., of the next day, we encamped on a watercourse from the north-east, containing shallow holes of water; on the 20th I followed the watercourse for about three miles, when finding it reduced and turning sharp to the eastward I resumed my course for the Culgoa, which river I reached with the horses on the morning of the 22nd; but in travelling that distance the ground and weather proved so very unfavourable, that I lost three of my best draught horses before I could accomplish it, which loss led to the death of three others in bringing the carts to the river. This loss was the first of any kind we had sustained on the journey, with the exception of the horse left on the desert. At about 30 miles from the Culgoa we had to traverse hills of bare red sand partially covered by spinefir and a low kind of brush, which being on fire in every direction, was kept raging within a few yards of us by the hottest wind I have experienced this season; the thermometer in the shade was that day 110° .

It was the 15th December before my carts were brought up, and the horses sufficiently recovered to continue our journey, and on the 16th we left my first Camp on the Culgoa, in lat. $29^{\circ} 29' 41''$, long. $146^{\circ} 36' 52''$, moving by short stages down the river, in lat. $29^{\circ} 35'$ the Birie, another outlet of the Balonne, joins the river from the eastward; in lat. $29^{\circ} 50'$, having crossed the river I struck off for the Barwan, which we reached in six miles, our position being forty miles above Fort Bourke and nine below Mr. Lawson's station; proceeding up the river for supplies, I returned to my first Camp on the Barwan marked ^K XXVII, and on the 27th December crossed over to the Bogan, following that river up to Mr. Andrew Ker's station, at which we arrived last evening.

With respect to the Aborigines I beg to state we have been generally on the most friendly terms, making them presents and establishing a kind feeling which I trust may be beneficially felt by those of our countrymen, who may follow me into that portion of New Holland. On two or three occasions only, we had to exercise what I believe to have been unparalleled forbearance, to avoid collision with them, but finally succeeded.

The Victoria language is spoken on the Warrego with only a slight difference in the pronunciation; on the shallow watercourse, (seventy miles from the Culgoa, and ninety-five from the Barwan,) we

met a tribe who spoke a different language, but understood that of the Victoria; the Natives of the Barwan and Bogan appear to know nothing of the interior language.

In conclusion, it is my pleasing duty to make a few brief observations on the remarkably good conduct of every member composing my party, of whom collectively I need only state, that they have undergone the hardships and privations experienced on this journey, toiling frequently on foot through the desert (upon a ration of 75lbs of flour equally divided among nine men,) with a constant and ready obedience, and without a murmur.

Mr. Thomas Wall, the brother of Mr. Wall, Curator of the Australian Museum, has been most assiduous in collecting specimens of natural history, and has succeeded in my belief, to an extent highly creditable to him, deprived as he was of the ordinary conveniences of a collector, and embarrassed by the daily duties of the Camp, in which he took his equal share.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDMUND B. KENNEDY,

Assistant Surveyor.

To the Surveyor General,
Sydney.

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