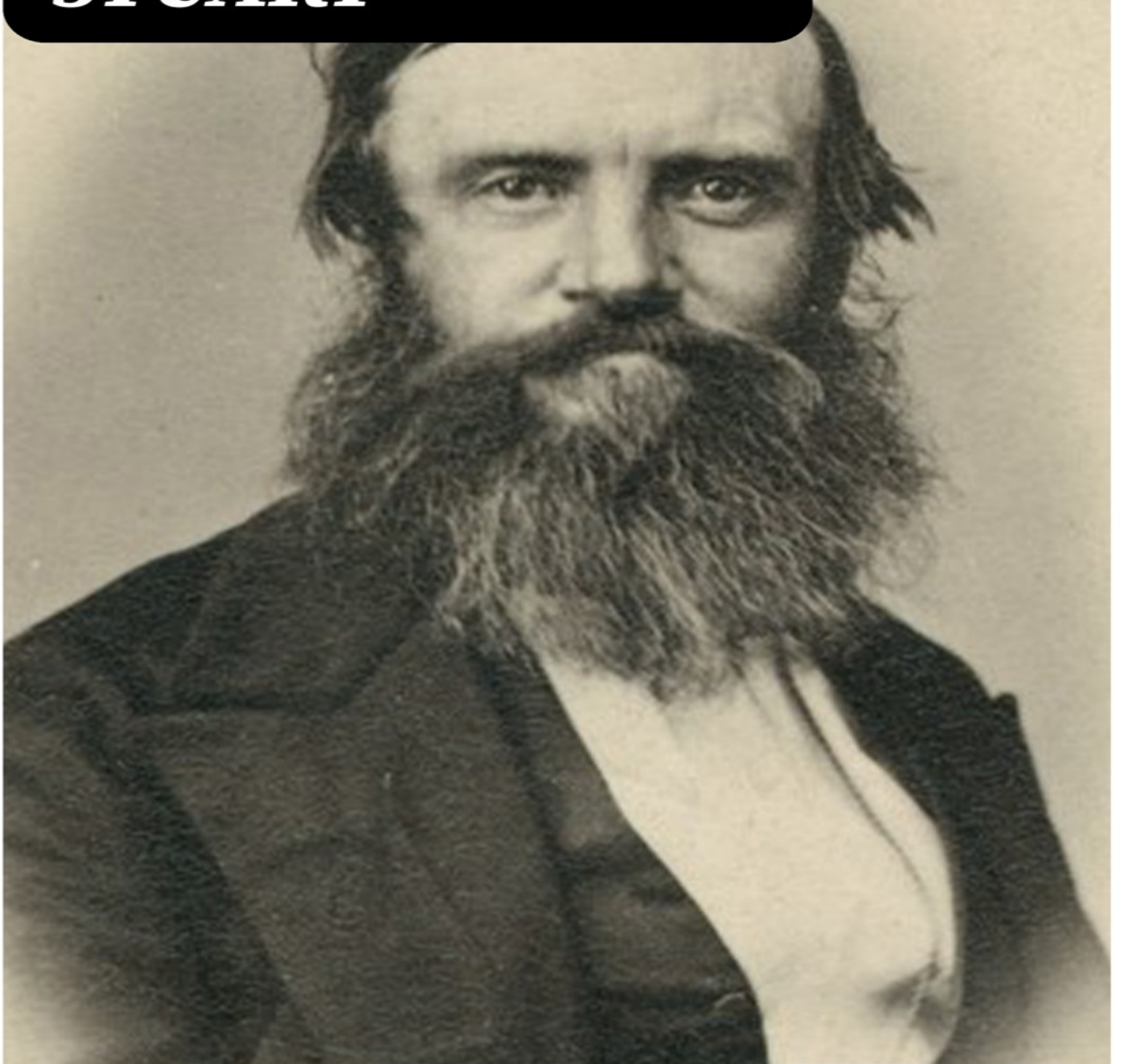


***JOHN MCDOUALL  
STUART***



***EXPLORATIONS  
IN AUSTRALIA***

**John McDouall Stuart**

# **Explorations in Australia**

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## **JOURNAL OF MR. STUART'S EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH-WEST. MAY TO SEPTEMBER, 1858.**

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On the 14th of May, 1858, Mr. Stuart started from Oratunga (the head station of Mr. John Chambers), accompanied by Mr. Barker, with six horses, and all that was requisite (with one important exception, as will be seen hereafter), for an excursion to the north-west of Swinden's Country. They arrived at Aroona the same evening. On the following day (the 15th) they made Morleeanna Creek, and reached Ootaina on the 16th, about 7 p.m. Here they remained for a couple of days, as sufficient rain had not fallen to enable them to proceed. On the afternoon of the 19th they arrived at Mr. Sleep's, who informed them that Mr. M. Campbell had returned from the West, being hard pushed for water; very little rain having fallen to the west. The next day (20th) Mr. Stuart arrived at Mr. Loudon's, but, in consequence of some difficulties about the horses, he returned to Ootaina. Various preparations, combined with want of rain, compelled him to delay his start until the 10th of June. Here the journal commences:—

Thursday, 10th June, 1858. Started from Ootaina at 1 p.m. for Beda. Camped on the plain, about thirteen miles from Mount Eyre.

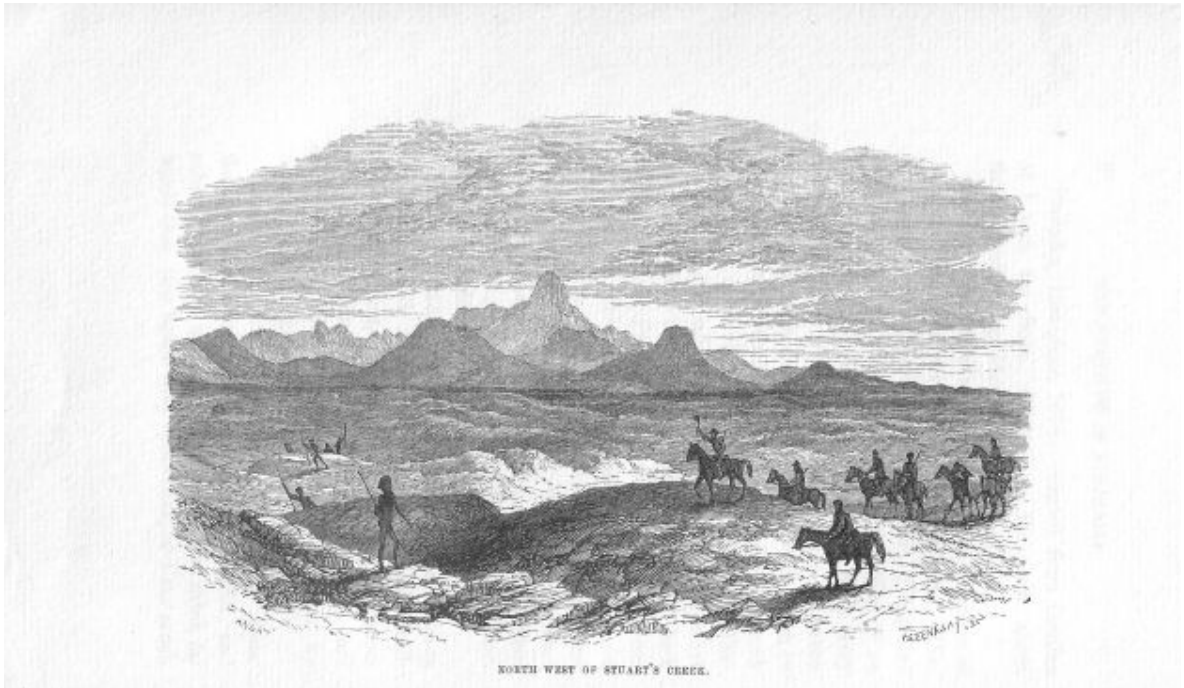
Friday, 11th June, West Plain. Made Mudleealpa at 11 a.m. The horses would not drink the water. Proceeded for about five miles towards Beda. The plains are fearfully dry; they have the

appearance as if no rain had fallen here for a long time, and I am very much afraid there will be no water at Beda. If such should be the case, the horses will suffer too much in the beginning of their journey to be without a drink to-night. I think it will be best to return to Mudleealpa, leave our saddles, rations, etc. there, and drive the horses back to water. I sent Mr. Forster back with them, telling him if he can find no water between this and Mr. Sleep's, to take them there, remain for the night, give them a drink in the morning, and return; we shall then be able to make a fresh start to-morrow. Bearings: Mount Arden, 154 degrees 30 minutes; Mount Eyre, 77 degrees 30 minutes; Beda Hill, 272 degrees; Mount Elder, 64 degrees 50 minutes; Dutchman's Stern, 162 degrees 15 minutes.

Saturday, 12th June, Mudleealpa. In examining the creek a little higher up, we found another well. By cleaning it out, the water is drinkable. The horses did not arrive until it was too late to start, and having water here now, that they can drink, we camped here another night.

Sunday, 13th June, Mudleealpa. Started for Beda. Some of the horses would not drink the water, and others drank very little: they will be glad to drink far worse than this before they come back, or I am much mistaken. Arrived at Beda at sundown. I was right in my opinion; no fresh water to be found; nothing but salt, salter than the sea. I can see nothing of Mr. Babbage's\* encampment; he must be higher up the creek. All the country we have come over to-day is very dry. (\* It will probably be recollected that Mr. Babbage was sent out by the Government to make a north-west course through the continent, but, when at the Elizabeth, he made an unaccountable detour, and found himself at Port Augusta, his

original starting-point. On my return from this journey he called on me at Mount Arden, when I furnished him with such information as he required, and he again started, and made Chambers' Creek, which I had previously found and named after my old friend, Mr. James Chambers, but which he called Stuart's Creek in acknowledgment of my information, etc. J. McD. Stuart.)



#### NORTH-WEST OF STUART'S CREEK.

Monday, 14th June, Beda. This morning we have searched all round, but can find no fresh water, although there are numerous places that would retain water if any quantity had fallen. Mr. Forster, whom I had sent up the creek to Mr. Babbage's, to inquire if there was any water at Pernatta, has returned with the information that Mr. B. was up there with all his horses, and that there was still a little water, but not much. Started at 11.30 a.m. for that place; camped in the sand hills one hour after dark. Here we found some pig-faces\* which the horses eat freely. (\* These pig-faces belong to the Mesembryaceae, of which the common ice-plant of our

gardens is an example.) There is a great deal of moisture in them, and they are a first-rate thing for thirsty horses; besides, they have a powerful diuretic effect. I was unable to fix Beda Hill, all my time being taken up in looking for water, but I hope to get its position at Pernatta. The country was very heavy—sand hills.

Tuesday, 15th June, Sand Hills. Started at break of day for Pernatta. About 10 a.m. met Mr. Babbage's two men returning with some of the horses for rations. They informed me that the water was nearly all gone, but that there was plenty in the Elizabeth, nineteen miles from Pernatta. I intended to keep on the track, but our black insisted that Pernatta lay through a gap, and not round the bluff. I allowed him to have his own way. Our route was through a very stony saddle. When there we saw a gum creek, and made for it; when we arrived at the creek he told us that was Pernatta. We looked for water, and found a little hole, which, to our great disappointment, contained salt water. Could see nothing of Mr. Babbage's camp. I then asked our black where there was another water; he said, "Down the creek," which we followed. He took us to five or six water holes, with native names, every one dry. The last one he called Yolticourie. It being now within an hour of sundown, I would follow him no longer, but unsaddled, and told Mr. Forster to take the black and the horses, and to steer for the bluff; if he found no water between, to intersect Mr. Babbage's tracks, and follow them up and get water. I remained with our provisions. The black fellow evidently does not know the country. I am sorry that I have taken him with me. I think I shall send him back; he is of little use in assisting to get the horses in the morning.

Wednesday, 16th June, Yolticourie. The horses have returned; they found no water last night; they were obliged to camp for the night, it being so dark, but they found Mr. Babbage's camp very early. The horses drank all the water. I was wrong in blaming the black fellow; he took us to the RIGHT Pernatta. It is another water that Mr. B. is encamped at. He moves to-day for the Elizabeth, which I also will do. He found the remains of poor Coulthard yesterday. We must have passed quite close to them in our search for water. He has sent for me to come and assist at the burial. It being so late in the day (12 o'clock), and the horses requiring more water, and he having four men besides himself, I do not see that I can be of any use, and it might cause me to lose another day, and the horses to be another night without water, which would be an injury to them, they not having had sufficient this morning. Mr. B. also sent to say that he would accompany me to the Elizabeth. I have delayed an hour for him, and he has not yet made his appearance; it being now 1 o'clock, and having to travel seventeen miles, I can wait no longer. Started for Bottle Hill; arrived on the south side of the hill an hour and a half before sundown, found some water and plenty of grass; encamped for the night. Distance to-day, seventeen miles. The former part of the journey was over very stony country; the latter part very heavy sand hills.

Thursday, 17th June, Bottle Hill. Got on the top of Bottle Hill to take bearings, but was disappointed; could see no hill except one, which was either Mount Deception or Mount North-west; the bearing was 51 degrees 30 minutes. There is a small cone of stones on the top, and a flat stone on the top of it, with the names of Loudon and Burt. From here I saw the gum trees in the Elizabeth; course to them 325 degrees 30



minutes, seven miles to the creek. The country from the hill here is of the very worst description—nothing but sand and salt bush.

Friday, 18th June, The Elizabeth. We must rest our horses to-day, they have not yet recovered from their long thirst. I am quite disappointed with this creek and the surrounding country. The water is not permanent, it is only rain water; since we arrived yesterday it has shrunk a great deal. There are small plains on each side from a quarter to half a mile broad with salt bush; the hills are very stony with a little salt bush, and destitute of timber, except the few gum-trees in the creek and the mulga bushes in the sand hills.

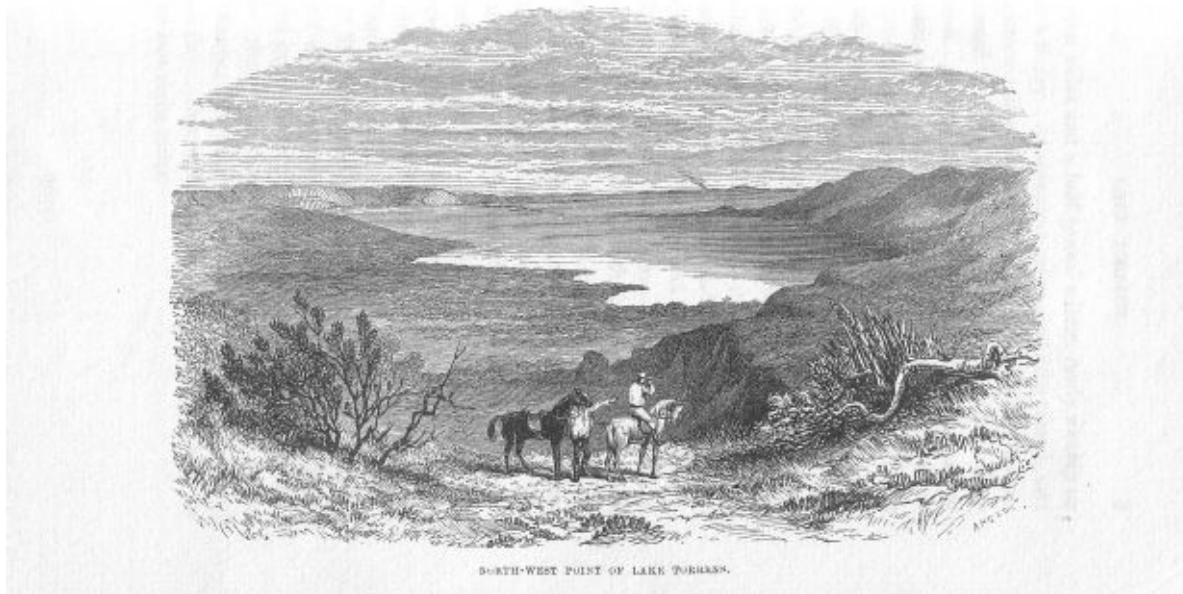
Saturday, 19th June, The Elizabeth. The sky was quite overcast with cloud during the night, and a few drops of rain fell, but of no consequence. Started at 9.30 a.m., on a bearing of 308 degrees for six miles; changed the bearing to 355 degrees for one mile and a half; next bearing 328 degrees for four miles, to the north side of a dry swamp; next bearing 4 degrees for ten miles and a half; next bearing 350 degrees for four miles to a sand hill. Camped. Distance to-day, twenty-five miles, over a very bad country, with large fragments of a hard flinty stone covering the surface. Salt bush with small sand hills. No water.

Sunday, 20th June, Sand Hill. Started at 9 a.m., on a course of 25 degrees for sixteen miles. At 1 p.m., came upon a creek, in which I thought there might be water; examined it and found two water holes, with plenty of grass upon their banks. The water is not permanent. Our course to-day has been across stony plains (covered on the surface with fragments resembling hard white quartz), with sand hills about two miles broad dividing them. The black did not know of this water; I

am very doubtful of his knowing anything of the country. The stony plains are surrounded by high heavy sand hills, especially to the west and north-west; I dare not attempt to get through them without rain. They are much higher than the country that I am travelling through. It seems as if there had been no rain for twelve months, every thing is so dried and parched up. On further examination of the creek we have found a large hole of clear water, with rushes growing round it; I almost think it is permanent, and intend to run the risk of falling back upon it should I be forced to retreat and wait for rain. The creek seems to drain the large stony plains that we crossed; the water is three and a half feet deep, ten yards wide, by forty yards long.

Monday, 21st June, Water Creek. Started at 9.30 a.m. on a course of 25 degrees. At a mile passed a small table-topped hill to the west of our line; at three miles and a half crossed the creek; at four miles passed another table-topped hill connected with the low range to the east, and passed the first ironstone hill; at seven miles changed to 55 degrees; at eight miles halted at a large permanent water hole (Andamoka). I can with safety say that this is permanent; it is a splendid water hole, nearly as large as the one at the mouth of the gorge in the John. The low range to the east of our course, and running nearly parallel with it, is composed of conglomerate, quartz, and a little ironstone. Part of to-day's journey was over low undulating sandy and very well grassed country. There seems to have been a little rain here lately; the grass is springing beautifully. At eleven miles we came upon a salt lagoon (Wealaroo) two miles long by one broad. From the north end of it, on a bearing of 55 degrees, one mile and a half will strike Andamoka. I think we have now left the western

sand hills behind us; and now that we have permanent water to fall back on, I shall strike into the north-west to-morrow. The distance travelled to-day was fifteen miles. The country around this water consists of bold stony rises and sand, with salt bush and grass; no timber except mulga and a few myall bushes in the creek. On an examination of the creek, we have found salt water above and below this hole. In one place above there are cakes of salt one inch and a half thick, a convincing proof that this is supplied by springs.



#### NORTH-WEST POINT OF LAKE TORRENS.

Tuesday, 22nd June, Andamoka. Started on a bearing of 342 degrees. At seven miles and a half, crossed a low stony range running east-north-east and west-south-west, which turned out to be table land, with sand hills crossing our line, bearing to a high range east of us 93 degrees 30 minutes. About eight miles in the same direction there is the appearance of a long salt lake. At nine miles and a half, on a sand hill, I obtained the following bearings: Mount North-west, 60 degrees 30 minutes; Mount Deception, 95 degrees. At eleven miles and a half

passed a large reedy swamp on our left, dry. At seventeen miles sand hills ceased. At eighteen miles and a half the sand hills again commenced, and we changed our course to north for three miles. Camped for the night at a creek of permanent water, very good. The last four miles of to-day's journey have been over very stony rises with salt bush and a little grass.

Wednesday, 23rd June, Permanent Water Creek. The horses had strayed so far that we did not get a start until 10 a.m. Bearing to-day, 318 degrees. At two miles crossed a tea-tree creek, in which there is water, coming from the stony rises, and running to the north of east. At six miles the sand hills again commence. To this place we have come over a stony plain, covered on the surface with fragments of limestone, quartz, and ironstone, with salt bush and grass. In a watery season it must be well covered with grass; the old grass is lying between the salt bushes. We have a view of part of the lake (Torrens) bearing north-east about fifteen or twenty miles from us; to the west again the stony rises, apparently more open. At ten miles, in the sand hills, we have again a view of Flinders range. The bearings are: Mount North-west, 78 degrees 35 minutes; Mount Deception, 107 degrees. At fourteen and a half miles we found a clay-pan of water, with beautiful green feed for the horses. As we don't know when we shall find more water, and as Forster has a damper to bake, I decide to camp for the rest of the day. Our route has lain over heavy sand hills for the last eight miles.

Thursday, 24th June, Sand Hills. At 8.30 we left on a course of 340 degrees, commencing with about two miles of rather heavy sand hills. At eight miles these sand hills diminished, and the valleys between them became much wider—both sand hills and valleys being well covered with grass and salt

bush, with courses of lime and ironstone cropping out and running east and west. At twelve miles changed our course to 79 degrees, to examine a gum creek (Yarraout), which we ran down for water, but did not obtain it before four miles, when we found a small hole of rain water. This creek seems to be a hunting-ground of the natives, as we saw a great many summer worleys on its banks. They had evidently been here to-day, for, a little above where we first struck the creek, we saw some smoke, but on following it up, we found they had gone; most likely they had seen us and run away. The latter part of our journey to-day was over a stony plain, bounded on the west by the stony table land with the sand hills on the top. All this country seems to have been under water, and is most likely the bed of Lake Torrens, or Captain Sturt's inland sea. In travelling over the plains, one is reminded of going over a rough, gravelly beach; the stones are all rounded and smooth. Distance to-day, thirty miles.

Friday, 25th June, Yarraout Gum Creek. Started at 9.40 from the point where we first struck the creek last night, bearing 20 degrees for two miles, thence 61 degrees for one mile to a high sand hill, thence 39 degrees for one mile to a stony rise. My doubt of the black fellow's knowledge of the country is now confirmed; he seems to be quite lost, and knows nothing of the country, except what he has heard other blacks relate; he is quite bewildered and points all round when I ask him the direction of Wingillpin. I have determined to push into the westward, keeping a little north of west. Bearing 292 degrees for five miles, sand hills; thence 327 degrees to a table-hill nine miles. Camped without water. Our route to-day has been through sand hills, with a few miles of stones and dry reedy swamp, all well grassed, but no water. We came across some

natives, who kept a long distance off. I sent our black up to them, to ask in which direction Wingillpin lay. They pointed to the course I was then steering, and said, "Five sleeps." They would not come near to us. About three-quarters of an hour afterwards I came suddenly upon another native, who was hunting in the sand hills. My attention being engaged in keeping the bearing, I did not observe him until he moved, but I pulled up at once, lest he should run away, and called to him. What he imagined I was I do not know; but when he turned round and saw me, I never beheld a finer picture of astonishment and fear. He was a fine muscular fellow, about six feet in height, and stood as if riveted to the spot, with his mouth wide open, and his eyes staring. I sent our black forward to speak with him, but omitted to tell him to dismount. The terrified native remained motionless, allowing our black to ride within a few yards of him, when, in an instant, he threw down his waddies, and jumped up into a mulga bush as high as he could, one foot being about three feet from the ground, and the other about two feet higher, and kept waving us off with his hand as we advanced. I expected every moment to see the bush break with his weight. When close under the bush, I told our black to inquire if he were a Wingillpin native. He was so frightened he could not utter a word, and trembled from head to foot. We then asked him where Wingillpin was. He mustered courage to let go one hand, and emphatically snapping his fingers in a north-west direction, again waved us off. I take this emphatic snapping of his fingers to mean a long distance. Probably this Wingillpin may be Cooper's Creek. We then left him, and proceeded on our way through the sand hills. About an hour before sunset, we came in full sight of a number of tent and table-topped hills to the north-west, the

stony table land being to the south of us, and the dip of the country still towards Lake Torrens. I shall keep a little more to the west to-morrow if possible, to get the fall of the country the other way. The horses' shoes have been worn quite thin by the stones, and will not last above a day or two. Nay, some of the poor animals are already shoeless. It is most unfortunate that we did not bring another set with us. Distance to-day, twenty-four miles.

Saturday, 26th June, Edge of Plain. Started at 9.30 a.m., on a bearing of 314 degrees 30 minutes, over an undulating plain, with low sand hills and wide valleys, with plenty of grass and salt bush. After ten miles the sand hills ceased, and at thirteen miles we reached the point of the stony table land. Here we saw, to the north-north-west, what was apparently a large gum creek, running north-east and south-west. Changing our bearing to 285 degrees, after seven miles of very bad stony plain, thinly covered with salt bush and grass, we came upon the creek, and found long reaches of permanent water, divided here and there by only a few yards of rocks, and bordered by reeds and rushes. The water hole, by which we camped, is from forty to fifty feet wide, and half a mile in length; the water is excellent, and I could see small fish in it about two inches long. About ten miles down the creek the country seems to be more open, and the gum-trees much larger, and in a distant bend of the creek I can perceive a large body of water. The first of the seven or eight tent-like hills that were to the east of our route to-day presents a somewhat remarkable appearance. Of a conical form, it comes to a point like a Chinaman's hat, and is encircled near the top by a black ring, while some rocks resembling a white tower crown the summit. Distance to-day, twenty miles.

Sunday, 27th June, Large Water Creek. Cloudy morning, with prospect of rain. A swan visited the water hole last night, and to-day we have seen both the mountain duck and the large black duck. Having a shoe to fix upon Jersey, and my courses to map down, we did not get a start until 10 o'clock, and we were obliged to stop early in consequence of the grey mare getting so lame that we were unable to proceed. We had an old shoe or two, and Mr. Forster managed to get one on the mare. We started to-day on a bearing of 270 degrees for eight miles to a low flat-topped hill, when we changed to 220 degrees for five miles to a gum creek with rain water. About five miles to the north of our line there are flat-topped ranges, running north-east. The main creek runs on the south side of this course, and nearly parallel to it. Further to the south, at a distance of about ten miles, is still the stony table land with the sand hills. The country is fearfully stony, but improves a little in grass as we get west. It seems to be well watered. Distance to-day, about twelve miles.

Monday, 28th June, Gum Creek. There has been a little rain during the night, and it is still coming down. As I am so far north, I regret that I am unable to go a little further, fearing the lameness of the horses from the stony nature of the country. I intend to follow the creek up, if it comes from the west, or a little to the north of west, to see if I cannot make the fall of the country to the south-west, and get on a better road for the horses. We started on a bearing of 305 degrees, but after a mile and a half, finding the creek wind too much to the north, we changed our course to 287 degrees for five miles to a small flat-topped hill. Changed our bearing again to 281 degrees for twenty-two miles to a tent hill, on the south side of which we camped. This part of the country is very



stony and bad, with salt bush and very little grass. It has evidently been the course of a large water at some time, and reminded me of the stony desert of Captain Sturt. Bleak, barren, and desolate, it grows no timber, so that we scarcely can find sufficient wood to boil our quart pot. The rain, which poured down upon us all day, so softened the ground that the horses could tread the stones into it, and we got along much better than we expected. Distance to-day, twenty-eight miles and a half.

Tuesday, 29th June, South Side of Tent Hill. Started at 8.30 a.m. on a bearing of 305 degrees. At eight miles crossed a gum creek, with polyganum, running to the north. At twelve miles crossed another, trending in the same direction. These creeks are wide and formed into numerous channels. I expected to have done thirty miles to-day, but am disappointed, for we were obliged to halt early, after having gone only eighteen miles, as my horse was quite lame. How much do we feel the want of another set of horse-shoes! We have, however, still got an old shoe left, which is put on this afternoon. It had continued raining all last night, but not heavily, and cleared off in the morning shortly after we started. Our travelling to-day has been still very stony, over stony rises; the stony table land that has been all along on our left is now trending more to the south-west. The country is more open: in looking at it from one of the rises it has the appearance of an immense plain, studded with isolated flat-topped hills. The last eight miles is better grassed and has more salt bush. Camped on a small creek in the stony rises. Distance to-day, eighteen miles.

Wednesday, 30th June, Stony Rises. We had a little rain in the former part of the night, and a very heavy dew in the

morning. Started at 9.30 a.m., bearing 305 degrees; at five miles crossed the upper part of a gum creek, and at twelve miles ascended a high flat-topped hill, commanding a view of an immense stony plain, but it is so hazy that we can see nothing beyond ten miles. From this hill we changed our course to 309 degrees to a saddle in the next range. At four miles halted at a gum creek, with plenty of green feed. Made a very short journey to-day in consequence of the horses being quite lame. In addition to their want of shoes, a stiff, tenacious brown clay adhered to the hoof, and picked up the small round stones, which pressed on the frog of the foot. These pebbles were as firmly packed as if they had been put in with cement, so that we had hard work to keep the hoofs clear. Distance travelled, sixteen miles. Weather showery.

Thursday, 1st July, Gum Creek. The horses have had such poor food for the last week that I shall rest them to-day. About half a mile below us there is a large water hole a quarter of a mile long, with a number of black ducks upon it, but they are very shy. It rained very heavily and without intermission all last night and to-day. This creek is visited by a great many natives. We saw them making away as we approached.

Friday, 2nd July, Same Place. The creek came down last night: it is now a sheet of water two hundred yards broad. Started at 8.45 a.m. over a stony plain on a bearing of 309 degrees, to the saddle in the range. I ascended one of the highest hills in this range, but the day was too dull to see far. I could, however, distinguish what appeared to be a wooded country\* in the distance, from south-west to north-east. (\* This "wooded country" afterwards turned out to be sand hills, with scrub.) Observing that the country a little more to the north was less stony, I changed our course to a bearing of 344

degrees, over a plain thinly covered with gravelly stones, consisting of quartz, ironstone, and a dark reddish-brown stone, with a good deal of gypsum cropping out. The soil is of a light-brown colour, with plenty of dry grass upon it, and very little salt bush. In the spring time it must look beautiful. The country was so boggy from the heavy rains, that for the sake of my horse I was obliged to stop early. Camped at a gum creek coming from the south-west, and running a little to the east of north. Distance to-day, eighteen miles.

Sunday, 4th July, Same Place. Not the slightest appearance of a change. It rained in torrents all night and all day, though at sundown it seemed to be breaking a little. The creek came down in the forenoon, overflowed its banks, and left us on an island before we knew what we were about. We were obliged to seek a higher place. Not content with depriving us of our first worley, it has now forced us to retreat to a bare hill, without any protection from the weather. The rain has come from the north-east.

Monday, 5th July, Same Place. The rain lasted the greater part of the night, but became light before morning. Started at 12.30 on a bearing of 312 degrees for eleven miles to some sand hills. A fearfully hard day's work for the poor horses over a stony plain, sinking up to their knees in mud, until at eight miles we crossed a reedy swamp two miles in breadth, and how many in length I know not, for it seemed all one sheet of water: it took our horses up to their bellies.

Tuesday, 6th July, Sand Hills. All our rations and everything we have got being perfectly saturated with wet, I have made up my mind to stop and put them to rights; if we neglect them it will soon be all over with us. This was a beautiful day, not a

cloud to be seen. There are a great many natives' tracks in these sand hills, and plenty of grass.

Wednesday, 7th July, Sand Hills. Heavy dew last night. Started on a bearing of 312 degrees at 9 a.m. At eleven miles the sand hills cease, and stony plain commences. The sand hills were well grassed: also the stony plain. Dip of the country still north-east. We crossed two watercourses—one at this side of the plain, and the other two miles back, broad and shallow. I could see gum-trees on the latter about two miles to the north-east as if it formed itself into a deeper channel. Travelling very heavy. Distance to-day, twenty-five miles.

Thursday, 8th July, Sand Hills. A very heavy dew again last night. Started at 9 a.m. At one mile we came on yesterday's course; could see nothing; changed the bearing to 272 degrees. At seven miles crossed a creek running north and a little west, the water being up to our saddle-flaps. At twelve miles the sand hills ceased, and we came upon an elevated plain, of a light-brown soil, with fragments of stone on the surface. At twenty-five miles, in the middle of this plain, we camped, without wood, and in sight of a large range in the far distance to the west. Distance to-day, twenty-five miles.

Friday, 9th July, Large Plain. Left our camp at 8.50 a.m. on the same bearing as yesterday, 272 degrees. At one mile and half came upon a creek of water, seemingly permanent. Judging from the immense quantity of dry grass that is strewn over the plain, this must be a beautiful country in spring. The dip of the country is to the north and west. Our horses are all very lame for want of shoes, and the boggy state of the soil to-day has tried them severely. If the country does not become less stony, I shall be compelled to leave some of them behind. We camped on a gum creek about three miles to the west of

the range. My only hope now of cutting Cooper's Creek is on the other side of the range. The plain we crossed to-day resembles those of the Cooper, also the grasses; if it is not there, it must run to the north-west, and form the Glenelg of Captain Grey. Distance to-day, twenty-one miles.

Saturday, 10th July, Gum Creek, West End of Large Stony Plain. Rested the horses to-day. This evening we were surprised to hear a dog barking\* at the grey mare; its colour was black and tan. (\* It is commonly supposed that the native dingo or wild dog does not bark. This is an error. The dog in this instance being black and tan, was probably a hybrid. (See below.))

Sunday, 11th July, Same Place. This morning the sun rose at 62 degrees. Bearing to-day, 272 degrees, so as to round the point of range, which seems to have a little mallee in the gullies on this side, and some trees on the west side. Started at 8.30 a.m., and at four miles ascended the highest point of the range. The view to the north-east is over an immense stony plain with broken hills in the distance. To the north is also the plain, with table-hills in the far distance. To the north-west is the termination of the range running north-east and south-west, distant about ten miles; about half-way between is a gum creek running to north-east. To the west is the same range, and a number of conical hills between. Changed our bearing to 220 degrees in order to break through the range. This range is very stony, composed of a hard milky-white flint stone, and white and yellow chalky substance, with a gradual descent on the other side to the south, which is the finest salt-bush country that I have seen, with a great quantity of grass upon it. The grey mare has been very bad; her belly was very much swollen, but this morning she seemed better. Towards

afternoon, however, she fagged very much, which caused me to stop so soon. I am almost afraid that I shall lose her. I shall see how she is in the morning, and, if she is no better, I will endeavour to get her on to some permanent water or creek running to the south. I think we have now made the dip of the country to the south, but the mirage is so powerful that little bushes appear like great gum-trees, which makes it very difficult to judge what is before us; it is almost as bad as travelling in the dark. I never saw it so bright nor so continuous as it is now; one would think that the whole country was under water. Camped without water. No timber as yet on this side of the range, except a few bushes in the creek. A good deal of rain has fallen here lately, and the vegetation is looking fresh.

Monday, 12th July, Large Salt-Bush and Grass Plain. The mare seems a little better this morning, and I shall be able to make a short journey. There was a very heavy white frost during the night, and it was bitterly cold. Not a hill to be seen either to the south-west or west—nothing but plain. Left our camp at 8.30 a.m. on a bearing of 220 degrees; at two miles and a half changed to 112 degrees for three miles to a small creek running south with plenty of feed and water. We found our horses very much done up this morning; they could scarcely travel over the stones, which caused me to alter my course to the eastward, where I found the travelling generally better. All the horses are now so lame that I shall require to rest them before I can proceed. They will not walk above two miles an hour among the stones. The stony plain seems to continue a long way to the south-west, but the country being undulating and the mirage so strong, I cannot say precisely. I

intend to see where this creek will lead me to, for I cannot face the stones again. Our distance to-day, five miles and a half.

Tuesday, 13th July, Mulga Creek. Went to the highest point on the stony range east of us, but could only see a very short distance. There are a number of creeks on the eastern side running into this one. The range is low and very stony, composed of flints and pebbles of all colours. No timber.

Wednesday, 14th July, Same Place. During the night it became very cloudy, and I was afraid we were going to have more rain, but it has ended in a light shower, and cleared off this morning. I shall follow down the creek and see what it leads to. The grey mare still seems very bad, and I must make short journeys until she gets a little better. Started at 8.30 a.m., bearing 180 degrees for eight miles to Large Mulga Creek, thence 192 degrees for four miles. The country to-day is good on both sides of the creek, a good salt-bush country with plenty of grass, but rather stony. The gum trees are becoming a little larger on the creek, which at present is formed into a great many channels. The timber consists of mulga and dwarf gum, with saplings. There is plenty of water in the creek at present, from the late rain, but I see nothing to indicate its becoming permanent. Distance to-day, twelve miles.

Thursday, 15th July, Mulga and Gum Creek. Left the camp at 9 a.m. on a bearing of 190 degrees for two miles, thence 230 degrees for one mile and a half, thence 250 degrees for four miles and a half, thence 286 degrees for two miles, thence 290 degrees for one mile, thence 270 degrees for five miles, thence 320 degrees for one mile, to camp at some mallee. The country on both sides of the creek is good, but subject to be flooded; the width of the plain is about fifteen

miles, bounded on the south side by bare stony rises, and on the north by scrubby rises. The creek spreads itself all over the plain, which seems to be very extensive. It has been excessively cold to-day: wind from the west. Distance to-day, seventeen miles.

Friday, 16th July, Large Plain, Mulga and Gum Creek. Left the camp at 9 a.m., on a bearing of 270 degrees for nine miles. The first six miles was a continuation of the creek and plain; it then turned to the north-west and the sand hills commenced. At nine miles we had a good view of the surrounding country, from the east to the north-west. To the west we could see the range that we crossed on the 11th instant trending away to the north-west as far as the eye could reach, apparently a sandy and scrubby country with small patches of open ground intervening. There also appeared to be a gum creek, about five miles west of this point. Seeing there was no hope for anything to the west for a long distance, I changed my course to the south on a bearing of 190 degrees to cross the stony rise, keeping on the sand hills for the benefit of the horses' feet. At five miles found that the sandy country swept round the stony rise, the country still having the appearance of scrub and sand hills all round. I altered my course to south-east to 132 degrees for fourteen miles; on this course we have ridden over a scrubby plain of a light sandy soil, most beautifully grassed but dry, the young feed not having sprung. We have not seen a drop of water on the surface; the ground evidently absorbs all that falls; the scrub is principally the mulga and hakea bushes and acacia, with a few other small bushes, but very little salt bush. Camped to-night without water. The grey mare appears to be getting round again; it seems to have been an affection of the chest,



and has now fallen down into the left knee, which has become very much swollen, but it seems to have relieved her chest; she now feeds as well as ever. Distance to-day, twenty-eight miles.

Saturday, 17th July, Scrub and Sandy Plain without Water. Started at 8.10 a.m. on the same course, 132 degrees. At two miles and a half, rain water; at seven miles crossed a stunted gum creek running towards the south-west; at twenty-five miles came upon a little rain water. Camped. The plain still continues with very low rises at intervals; the scrub is much thicker and the greater part of it dead, which makes it very difficult to travel through. The grass is not so plentiful, and it is more sandy. The creek that we crossed at seven miles was running; it had salt tea-tree on its banks, and seems likely to have some permanent water either above or below. I did not examine it, because, the surrounding country being so sandy and scrubby, it will be of little use. Distance to-day, twenty-five miles.

Sunday, 18th July, Dense Scrubby Plain. Rain Water. Left at 9.15 a.m. on the same bearing, 132 degrees. We saw some native worleys, and the tracks of a number of natives having passed this place a day or two ago, going to the south-west. Distance to-day, twenty miles. Had to halt early in consequence of grey mare being done up and unable to proceed. The first part of the day's journey the scrub became more open and splendidly grassed, the latter part was fearfully thick, it is composed of mulga, dead and alive, and a few hakea and other bushes, with salt bush and plenty of grass of two or three different sorts. We have a view of rising ground a little to the north of our line, about from fifteen to twenty miles distant. To-morrow I shall alter my course to strike the highest

point; it is a range, and seems to be wooded. I suppose it is the same range that we crossed on the 11th instant. It is very cloudy, and seems as if it will rain. Distance to-day, twenty miles.

Monday, 19th July, Dense Scrubby Plain. Started at 9.15 a.m. on a bearing of 120 degrees to the highest point of the range. A slight shower fell early this morning; it still looks very cloudy. We could only accomplish ten miles to-day in consequence of the grey mare being unable to proceed farther; if I can get her on to permanent water I shall leave her; she only keeps me back, and endangers the other horses. I shall be very sorry to do so, for she is a great favourite. We are now camped at a place where there are five or six small watercourses; if we can find water I shall give her until tomorrow to rest. The country that we have come over to-day is most splendidly grassed, of a red light sandy soil, but good; the mulga bushes in some places grow thick, and a great many are very tall. Forster caught an opossum—the first that we have seen; we intend making a dinner from him to-day. This is the first game we have been able to secure, except two small ducks we had at the beginning of our journey. We have found water a little way down the valley, which I think will become a large creek further to the south-west. We are again in the country of the kangaroos. Distance to-day, ten miles.

Tuesday, 20th July, Grassy Valley. We had another shower this morning. I must try and make the hills to-day if I can. Started at 10.10 a.m. on the same bearing as yesterday, 120 degrees, and at four miles ascended the peak on the range. I see around me a scrubby country, with open patches, and here and there in the far distance what appear to be belts of mulga. Four miles beyond this hill we halted at some rain

water. We have seen three or four kangaroos to-day; they were the red sort with white breasts. Distance travelled, eight miles.

Wednesday 21st July, Grass and Salt-Bush Plains. Left the camp at 9 a.m. on a bearing of 97 degrees. Camped at some rain water in a clay-pan. At twelve miles there is low rising ground running north-west and south-east, which divides the two plains; there are no creeks, but the dip of the country is to the south-west. This is as fine a salt-bush and grass country as I have seen. It is a pity there is no permanent water. Distance to-day, twenty miles.

Thursday, 22nd July, Open, Good Country. Started at 9 a.m. on the same course as yesterday, 97 degrees. At ten miles crossed a small watercourse running to the south-south-west; at sixteen miles came through the saddle of a low range running north-west and south-east composed of limestone; it forms one of the boundaries of a large plain, which seems well adapted for pastoral purposes; it is well grassed, with salt bush, although we could find no permanent water. I think I can see a gum creek to the east of us, but the mirage is so powerful that I am not quite certain. Distance to-day, twenty miles.

Friday, 23rd July, Large East Plain. Started at 9.10 a.m. on a bearing of 82 degrees, and at four miles ascended an isolated hill, but can see nothing of the gum creek. Changed our course to 122 degrees, and at four miles crossed a mulga creek running to the east. Camped on the south-east side of a flat-topped hill, which, although the highest I have yet seen, enabled me to see nothing but the range to the north-east, and a high conical hill about ten miles south-west, connected

with the ranges. The country is without timber except a few mulga bushes at intervals. Distance to-day, twenty-one miles.

Saturday, 24th July, South-east Side of Flat-topped Hill. Left at 8.10 a.m. on the same course, 122 degrees, over an undulating stony plain, with narrow sand hills at intervals, and a number of lagoons containing rain water, where we camped. I intend to move to-morrow to another large lagoon that we have seen from a small rise, and rest the horses there; they have had a very severe day of it, and feel the want of shoes very much. The stones are mostly white quartz and ironstone, small and water-washed. I conclude they have come from the hills that are to the south-west. Distance to-day, twenty-four miles.

Sunday, 25th July, A Lagoon of Rain Water. Finding that we have sand hills to cross, and being anxious to meet with the gum creek that the blacks have talked about, I have determined to proceed to-day, but if I do not find it on this course I shall turn to the south. Started at eight a.m. on a bearing of 122 degrees. At five miles, one mile to the south is a large reedy swamp. At fourteen miles changed the bearing to 135 degrees to the head of a swamp, two miles and a half, found it dry, a large clay-pan about three miles in circumference. I am obliged to halt, the horses are very tired and want rest; and there being plenty of beautiful green feed about, I have halted without water. Our journey has been through a very thick mulga scrub and sand hills, very heavy travelling. The trees in the scrub are of a different description to any that I have seen; they grow high and very crooked, without branches until near the top, and with a rough, ragged bark; seven or eight seem to spring from one root. The wood is very tough and heavy, and burns a long time, giving out a glowing heat. The leaves resemble

the mulga, but are of a darker colour and smaller size. The native name is Moratchee. Shot a wallaby, and had him for dinner. They are very wild, no getting within shot of them, which is unfortunate, as our provisions are getting rather short. From the number of native tracks about, this would seem to be their season for hunting in the sand hills, which accounts for everything being so wild. We saw five turkeys yesterday, but could not get within shot of them. All the water seems to drain into the reedy swamp and clay-pans. I shall go no further to the east on this course, for I can see no inducement. I shall go south to-morrow, and see what that produces; if I cross no large creek within forty-five miles in that direction, I shall then direct my course for the north-west of Fowler's Bay to see what is there. Distance to-day, sixteen miles.

Monday, 27th July, Sand Hills and Dense Scrub. Left our camp at 9.20 a.m. on a southerly course, 182 degrees. At thirteen miles we camped at some rain water to give the horses a little rest. We have come through a very thick scrub of mulga, with broken sand hills and a few low rises of lime and ironstone. We have seen two or three pines for the first time, and a few black oaks. No appearance of a change of country. From a high sand ridge I could see a long way to the north-east, seemingly all a dense scrub. The grey mare is unwell again. Distance to-day, thirteen miles.

Tuesday, 27th July, Sandy Undulations. Started at 9 a.m. on the same bearing as yesterday, 182 degrees. At twenty-one miles changed our course to 235 degrees to some gum-trees. The first part of our journey the scrub became lower and more open, with limestone and sand rises at intervals,