

ON the 29th July 1853 His Excellency Lieutenant-Governor La Trobe addressed a circular letter to a number of the remaining early settlers (noting that many had already passed away by this time), requesting information as to the time and circumstances of the first occupation of various parts of the colony of Victoria, Australia.

## Transcript

### Gellibrand's Memorandum re Port Phillip Expedition c Jan – Feb 1836

TO HIS EXCELLENCY CHARLES JOSEPH LA TROBE, ESQ.,  
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE COLONY OF VICTORIA.

GELLIBRAND'S MEMORANDUM OF A TRIP TO PORT PHILLIP.

#### Sunday, January 17th 1836.

I embarked this morning with my son Tom on board the *Norval* for *Port Phillip*, in company with Mr. Wm. Robertson, Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Leake, Mr. Malcolm, and Mr. Mudie, the latter gentleman having the management of the sheep on board, the property of Capt. Swanston.

After making *Point Grant* we encountered a severe gale of wind from the N.W., and the vessel lay-to for three nights and two days under close-reefed topsails. The vessel drifted about 70 or 80 miles to the south-east, and on Sunday morning, January 24th, at daylight the ship was again off *Point Grant*, and bearing up to the westward of *Cape Schanck*, and distant about twenty miles.

In consequence of the improper manner in which the vessel was fitted up for the stock, about 115 sheep perished by injuries and suffocation during the gale and the day afterwards. The greater portion of the hay had been destroyed in consequence of there not being any proper racks, and on Saturday the 23rd the passengers were under the necessity of assisting Mr. Mudie in feeding the sheep with flour and water. The Captain stated that he should not be able to make *Port Phillip* without two or three tacks, and even if he succeeded in getting into *Port Phillip* that evening, it would most probably take him two days to reach the settlement; and he also stated that the ship was under demurrage at 10 per day, and would be so until she came to anchor at *Western Port*, where she was engaged to take in a cargo of bark for the owner. Under these circumstances, and feeling convinced that if a change of wind took place and the vessel was again driven from the land the sheep must perish, and there not being any means of even keeping them alive for three days, and believing that the sheep could be landed at *Sandy Point* that day, the passengers were unanimously of opinion that it would be for the interest of the charterers to proceed at once to *Western Port*, land the stock, and drive the sheep across to the settlement at *Port Phillip*.

The Captain then, at the request of Mr. Mudie, made *Western Port*, and about twelve o'clock the vessel came to anchor near *Sandy Point*. About one, the Captain, Mr. Mudie, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Leake, and my son Tom proceeded to the shore, for the purpose of selecting a proper place to land the sheep. I remained on board, for the purpose of getting the long-boat out and the sheep ready for disembarkation. In about three hours the boat returned, and the parties stated that it was impossible to land sheep, as there was nothing but heath and scrub, and no appearance of water.

A person of the name of Thorn was on board the vessel, for the purpose of acting as pilot at *Western Port* and superintending the shipment of the bark, and who was well acquainted with *Western Port*. He

represented that there was a beautiful tract of land, with plenty of water, about ten miles further up the bay, and near to the Government settlement which had been abandoned in 1827.

After some deliberation and hesitation on the part of the Captain, it was determined that a party should proceed at daylight to Phillip Island to examine that station, and if we could not find good land and water, to proceed at once to the spot pointed out by Mr. Thorn.

#### January 25th.

Went on shore at daylight with Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Robertson, and Mr. Mudie, to Phillip Island, and returned in about an hour, finding the island totally unfit for the purpose required. Got the vessel immediately under weigh, and proceeded to the spot pointed out by Mr. Thorn, and came to anchor within a quarter of a mile from shore, about nine o'clock in the morning. The long and other boats were immediately loaded with sheep, and Mr. Mudie, Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Leake, Mr. Malcolm, Tom, and myself and two shepherds, went ashore with the first boat. Mr. Robertson stayed on board for the purpose of superintending the sheep, and it was arranged that Mr. Mudie and the shepherds should wait on the beach and receive them, and that the others should examine the tract of land, and decide upon the most eligible spot as a temporary settlement. When the sheep were landed they endeavoured to drink salt water, and were inclined to wander (*as sheep always do in a strange place*). They were landed upon a point of land with abundance of grass, and 300 acres of land might be enclosed by a line of 150 yards. When I landed, I particularly cautioned the shepherds not to let the sheep stray, and to keep them from salt water. We then proceeded to examine the land, and found abundance of grass, and in some places it was 6 feet high; but we did not find any water. In passing through one of the valleys I found the gleams of heat extremely oppressive, and which brought on violent palpitations and a determination of blood to the head. We were then distant about three miles from the vessel. I walked back, supported by Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Leake, about one mile, but was unable to proceed any further. I then lay down under a tree, Tom and Mr. Leake remaining with me, and Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Malcolm proceeded to the vessel, to procure assistance. They returned in two hours with a boat, and I reached the vessel about three o'clock, and found all the sheep, amounting to 1,009, had been landed.

In the evening, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Leake, and Mr. Gardiner went ashore, and found the shepherds near the *Point*, and that the sheep had strayed away. They went in search of them, and brought back to the *Point* about 800, which they placed in charge of the three shepherds who were then on shore.

#### January 26th.

Mr. Robertson and the other gentlemen went on shore at daylight, and found that the shepherds, instead of being stationed back in the bush, so as to keep the sheep on the neck, had, in fact, wholly neglected their duty, and had slept at the extreme point on the beach, close to the vessel, and on searching for the sheep, only two or three, which were in a dying state, could be found. The gentlemen then proceeded in search of the sheep, and returned about eleven o'clock to the ship to breakfast, having walked about fifteen miles in a fruitless search after the sheep. Mr. Robertson, having found from Mr. Thorn that there was a fine river about nine miles from the Point, was extremely anxious to proceed in search of the sheep as far as the river, under the expectation of finding them, and Mr. Thorn promising to meet them in the evening with the long-boat near the mouth of the river. The Captain and my son left the vessel about the same time, and proceeded along the beach, on the other side of the point, and as far as the late settlement. The Captain and Tom found the tracks of sheep along the beach, and about two miles from the landing place, a muddy saltwater creek, and the carcasses of about 280 sheep in and near the creek. Mr. Robertson and the others reached the vessel about eleven o'clock at night; they had been unsuccessful in their search; they were worn out with fatigue and anxiety. Mr. Mudie went into violent hysterics. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Leake were both taken exceedingly ill, and, in fact, nature appeared quite exhausted.

#### January 27th.

We this morning took into consideration our own situation and what course should be pursued. Having suffered from the heat on Monday, I did not think it proper to expose myself to the dangers of a journey

overland, and I intimated my intention of staying on board until a better opportunity of proceeding either backwards or forwards presented itself, but finding that one or two of the gentlemen would follow my example and that the others would proceed overland to *Port Phillip* and thinking that three or four might be exposed to dangers which eight might prevent, and knowing also the anxiety I should feel in the uncertainty of their fate, I at length determined that we should all proceed by the first opportunity to *Port Phillip*.

We were all anxious, however, before we quitted the vessel, to conclude some arrangement for the establishment of Mr. Mudie, until we could send him assistance from *Port Phillip*; and, as the late Government station appeared the most eligible for that purpose, on account of its situation and supply of water, we proceeded this morning in the whale-boat to that station and made arrangements, which appeared satisfactory to Mr Mudie, who then determined to remove all his stores, and also the wives of the shepherds out of the vessel and fix his station there, so that we might direct a party where to find him.

On our return to the ship, the party were all busily engaged in making arrangements for the proposed journey, and I was busily employed in making calomel pills, in case any of the party should be taken ill. This day was extremely sultry, and we were waiting some hours in anxious expectation of the sea breeze, as we were desirous of reaching Sandy Point that night, so that we might start upon our journey by daylight.

About five o'clock a slight breeze set in, and we bid farewell to the *Norval*, each person taking one bottle of water, and trusting to Providence for such further supplies as we might require.

In our passage to *Sandy Point*, Mr. Gardiner shot a swan, and Tom another. We were unable to reach *Sandy Point* before dark, and about three-quarters of a mile from our landing place the boat grounded on a sandbank with a rapid ebbing tide, and we remained aground, high and dry, all night. At daylight the tide was flowing, and in one and a half hours the vessel was afloat, and about six o'clock we landed and saw many tracks of the natives upon the beach. We made a fire and roasted the swans for breakfast, which proved very acceptable, and, after having remunerated Mr. Thorn for his trouble, and obtained from him a promise to return to the same spot on the following Sunday, in case we should be unable to accomplish our purpose, Mr. Thorn took his departure in the boat, and we commenced our journey.

### January 28th.

The party were eight in number; all carried arms except myself, and all knapsacks except Tom and myself. Mr. R. most kindly carried the greater portion of my provisions, and Mr. L. the blankets, and the remainder was carried by my shepherd. Mr. G. was chosen conductor; and, in case of any appearance of the natives, the gentlemen were all pledged to act under my directions.

We pursued a course N.W., and found the country for the first three miles heath and low scrub. We then got into a thin forest, and after we had walked about nine miles, I felt the same effects from the heat that I had experienced the previous Monday, and, in consequence, the party halted in the forest. I lay down for about two hours, and finding the heat very oppressive, I took three grains of calomel, and in half an hour afterwards took another pill.

Whilst we were in the forest, Mr. L. had exhausted his supply of water, and at this time he was determined to leave us in search of water. Accordingly Mr. L. and one of the men left us, and were absent upwards of one hour. We became much alarmed at their absence, but at length heard a cooey, and they returned with the intelligence that they had fallen in with about 100 native huts, and near the huts had discovered water. We then packed up our things, and proceeded on our course, and in about a quarter of an hour came to a few waterholes, surrounded with a thick scrub.

The party dined at this place, and, although it was extremely hot, we remained there till five o'clock, under the shelter of a blanket tent, to protect us from the rays of the sun.

Having filled all our bottles with water, we then proceeded on our journey; and, supposing the distance across to the bay of *Port Phillip* to be only a few miles, we were induced to hope we should reach the beach

that night. Several times we fancied we could discern the sea, and we kept on walking till ten o'clock at night, when we got into a piece of open scrub, and thinking it safer to lie down in an open place, we determined to stay there that night; and those who had blankets spread them out and lay down to rest, affording part to those who had none. We were too tired either to make a fire or to eat.

### January 29th

We rose at daylight and proceeded on our journey without any breakfast, under the hope of making the bay. We came to two or three very scrubby places, but without water, and at this time I do not think there was a bottle of water amongst the whole party. One or two of the gentlemen were of opinion that we were making too much north, which prevented us from reaching the bay, and as that seemed to be the object of our desire, our course was altered a point or two more west, and about eight o'clock in the morning we came upon a saltwater creek which led to *Port Phillip Bay*.

We found a fire burning in two native huts, and every appearance of their having been occupied the previous night; and on the beach we found tracks of natives proceeding towards *Arthur's Seat*. We rested here, and made a fire; some of the party proceeded in search of water, which, however, was very brackish.

We had our breakfast and consumed what little water was left. Two bottles of the brackish water were boiled with tea, in the event of not finding better water. After resting at this place about half an hour we proceeded on our journey about five miles, and then discovered several native huts, and to our great joy and gratitude found a creek with an abundant supply of water. We rested at this place about two hours, filled our bottles, and proceeded on our journey about six miles, and came to some more waterholes and native huts. We dined at this spot, took a fresh supply of water, and proceeded on our journey, and came to a tract of low scrubby land, upon which we took to the beach, and came to an open sandy bay, about thirty or forty miles long. We continued walking till about six o'clock, when the weather became squally and wet. We walked for about half an hour, and had intended to do so till late at night, but the rain increasing, we thought it most prudent to get some shelter before it was dark. We then went into the scrub and found a sheltered spot. We made a blanket hut to protect us from the rain, with a large fire in front. We soon found a large quantity of blue ants on the ground which we had selected for our resting place, and I therefore, as it was too late to move our tent, spread the ashes all over the ground, which had the effect of driving them away. It continued raining till about two o'clock, but as we were lying on a sand bank, the rain was all absorbed.

### 30th January.

We started this morning about half an hour before daylight and continued walking till eight o'clock without finding any fresh water. We then rested and had our breakfast and about half a pint of tea to each person, which was all the water we had left, and we then continued our journey, expecting at every turn of the bay that we should discover the river. We continued walking till twelve o'clock, when Mr. Leake and Tom lay down, and declared they could not proceed any further till they got water.

We had now quitted the shore and got upon high land again.

After resting on the hill about half an hour, I urged upon the party to proceed, and after some difficulty we were all on the march, but some of the party were a considerable distance behind.

We were now on a native track, and the advantage of following those tracks is soon experienced. This track continued along the margin of the hill, and ultimately led us to the beach, and near the beach we found a few native huts and one native well. Upon discovering the well, Mr. G-. gave the welcome shout " Water ! " which was immediately repeated by the others, and in a few minutes the weary ones in arrear came rushing down, anxious to quench their thirst. But by the time they had reached the well Mr. G-. reported the water to be bad. Mr. R., however, examined the well, and thinking that it had been choked up, he got an oyster shell and cleaned it out, and deepened it; expecting that the fresh water would be good. The party were

now obliged to wait with much anxiety, watching the rising of the water in the hole; and at length Mr. R. was enabled to distribute to each person half a pint, and in about one hour, a second supply of one pint each was distributed for dinner, and we were enabled, when we quitted at four o'clock, to take with us three bottles of water.

At four we continued our course along the beach, Mr. Gardiner and myself making the first start, and in about ten minutes we saw a dog on the beach, advancing toward us; at length he stopped and ran back again and turned into the bush, from which we concluded that the natives were at hand. We waited till some of the party came up, and then advanced and found on the beach part of a boomer kangaroo, and we saw the tracks of several natives on the beach, and several tracks of dogs.

We fully expected this night to reach the settlement, and we pushed on until seven o'clock; we then came to a point which we fully expected would be the head of the river. We crossed over the point and found a stack of wattle bark, and we also found the hut where the barkers had lived, and the tracks of a cart. It had been raining about three-quarters of an hour, and we were nearly wet through. We felt assured that we were near the settlement, and that the bark had been obtained by Mr. Fawkner's party, but we could not see the river. It was near night, and there was every appearance of a wet night, and we therefore considered it most prudent at once to make a blanket hut for the night, and make a fire, before the bark and grass were too wet, and which we accordingly did. Two of the party went in search of waterholes, but without success; and Tom went to the beach, to shoot a duck, and in about ten minutes he returned, having found the waterholes near the beach, and where we again obtained an abundant supply of good water. This night was very wet, and the most uncomfortable night we had experienced.

### 31st January.

Although we were satisfied that we were near the settlement, we considered it most prudent to keep the bay until we reached the river, and after walking seven miles further, we at length discovered the mouth of the river. My feet had been for the last two days very much blistered, and I felt quite unable to walk any further; and I therefore proposed that half the party should proceed to *The Settlement*, and send a boat or a horse to my assistance; and Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Leake, Mr. Malcolm, and Tom proceeded to *The Settlement*. I hobbled along, with the assistance of Mr. Robertson, about three miles, and then waited for the horse or boat. In about half an hour a boat, manned with blacks, came down the river. We hailed them, and after explaining where we had come from, and who we were, they came to our assistance. We found they were going to the Heads to fish; but they immediately proceeded with us to the settlement, and we arrived there about twelve o'clock.

The settlement consists of about a dozen huts, built with turf, on the left bank of the river Yarra Yarra. The river, from the mouth to the settlement, is about eight miles long; it is salt for about six. The first two miles, it is about 500 yards wide; for the next three miles, it is about 300 yards. It then becomes gradually narrower, and is about 60 yards wide at *The Settlement*, with deep and precipitous banks, and vessels of 60 tons burthen can with safety proceed to *The Settlement*, close to the shore, and discharge a cargo. As it was of importance that immediate assistance should be rendered to Mr. Mudie, I made arrangements with Mr. Batman to despatch, on the next morning, four Sydney natives who, it appeared, were well acquainted with *Western Port*, and who, upon my questioning them, appeared also quite confident that they would be able to find the sheep, and bring them to *Port Phillip*.

I felt very much vexed on learning that the natives, with the exception of two, had left the settlement on a hunting expedition a few days previous, and would not return for some time.

### 1st February.

I had, this morning, a long conversation with Buckley, and explained to him very fully the desire of the Association, in every respect, to meet his views, and to make him superintendent over the native tribes, for the purpose of protecting them from aggressions, and also of acting as an interpreter in imparting to them

not only the habits of civilization, but also of communicating religious knowledge. It appears, from his statement, that the tribes are most peaceably disposed; that they fully understand the nature of the grants issued by them, and that they are looking forward to the time when the blankets, tomahawks, and flour will be distributed.

Buckley appears to be of a nervous and irritable disposition, and a little thing will annoy him much, but this may arise from the peculiar situation in which he has been placed for so many years. I am quite satisfied that he can only be acted upon by kindness and conciliation, and that by those means he will be an instrument in the hands of Providence in working a great moral change upon the aborigines. He is not at all desirous of occupying any land or having sheep, but is highly pleased at the idea of being appointed superintendent of the natives, with a fixed stipend, so that, to use his own expression, "he may know what he has to depend upon", and be enabled to make a few presents to his native friends. I told him that I intended on the following day to proceed to *Geelong*, and inquired whether he would not like to visit his own country. He seemed much pleased at the idea, but stated he did not think he could walk so far. I then proposed he should ride, which seemed to gratify him very much, and in consequence I engaged a large cart-horse of Mr. Fawkner's for that purpose.

My feet were so bad I could not walk, and, as I was desirous of seeing No. 12, I had my horse taken to the fording place and round to the *Saltwater Creek*, and about ten o'clock Mr. G., Mr. L., Dr. Cotter, myself, and Linfield, went in the whaleboat to the creek. I took Linfield with me for the purpose of making him acquainted with that section, as I intended to stock it.

After passing over about six miles of the section we came upon a large saltwater river, which Dr. Cotter was of opinion communicated with a chain of freshwater ponds which he had recently crossed on that section. Dr. C. and myself, therefore, proceeded to trace up the river, and I requested the remainder of the party to trace it down to the sea. Dr. C. and myself then, traced the river up to the chain of ponds, and I was quite satisfied there was plenty of water on the Grant. We then made across to the point at which the ships lay and the stock was landed, and we found all the party, with the exception of Linfield, who, it appeared, had stayed behind. We waited for him about three-quarters of an hour, and as it was six in the evening, the gentlemen were anxious to return, and I therefore desired the man to take the horse round to the point, find Linfield, and bring him home by the fording place. About ten o'clock at night the man returned home with the horse, and stated that he could not find Linfield anywhere, and as I felt very uneasy about him, I desired Mr. Batman to send the boat at daylight the next morning in search of him.

## 2nd February.

The boat returned this morning, about seven o'clock, with Linfield, who, finding he had lost us, proceeded to the *Saltwater Creek*, where he had been landed, and being, as I imagined, very much afraid of the natives, sat up in a tree all night, and seeing the boat come down the river cooeyed to them.

Mr. Fawkner's vessel arrived this morning from *George Town*, and I considered it advisable to send assistance to Mr. Mudie in the removal of the women, stores, and rams from *Western Port*, and I therefore engaged the vessel for one trip, upon Captain Swanston's account. In consequence of Mr. Fawkner's people being engaged with the vessel, we were unable to obtain the horses for our journey until about four in the afternoon, when we started, seven in number, intending to reach Captain Swanston's station on the *River Exe* that night. The scenery from the settlement to the ford on the *Saltwater River* is most beautiful, and some of the spots quite enchanting. The grass had been burnt about a month previously, and was then quite green and beautiful; the land is very rich, and consists of a succession of gentle hills and dales; and the first view of the *Saltwater River* and its windings is beautiful beyond description.

We reached the ford about 6.30, and we found the country completely changed when we crossed the ford. The land was then quite flat, and rather rocky; and from the ford to the station on the *Exe*, a distance of fourteen miles, and, in fact, up to *Geelong Harbour*, consisted of open plains, with a thin coat of grass, and

exposed to the cold winds. We did not reach the station until 10.30 at night, and were compelled for the last seven miles to follow a cart-track, which we were fortunately enabled to do, as it was a starlight night.

### 3rd February.

As Mr. Furgesson had not found the sheep, and we were proceeding in the direction where they had been lost, he proposed to accompany us in our visit to *Geelong*, and we started this morning about seven o'clock. At noon we came upon a chain of ponds, which appeared to come from the Debackarite, and which I accordingly noted in my chart. We stopped at this chain of ponds and dined, and towards evening we came upon some native wells, near the point of *Geelong Harbour*, which are called *Geewar*, and as there was good feed for the horses, we determined on staying here for the night.

### 4th February.

We started from *Geewar* about six o'clock, and shortly afterwards entered the section No. 16, which we found to contain a tract of most excellent land, fit for agricultural or pastoral purposes. After travelling about fourteen miles, we came to some more native wells on the margin of the bay, and close to the line which divides 16 from 17. We stayed at this place and dined, and then proceeded across the *Bellarine Hills* to the settlement at *Indented Head*.

The *Bellarine Hills* contain about 20,000 acres of land of the finest description; they consist of hill and dale, and although we did not see any water in the valleys, I am satisfied water could be easily obtained. The land is thinly timbered; the soil appeared very rich, and fit for any purpose. The kangaroo grass was up to my middle, and with a thick bottom. It is as fine a tract of land as any I have as yet passed over.

We reached the settlement about four o'clock, and I learned, to my extreme mortification, that some of the natives had that morning, and the others the day previously, quitted the settlement, in consequence of the threats made use of by the man at the station that he would shoot the natives.

I found that the natives had a few nights previously stolen about a sack of potatoes out of the garden; they had pulled up the roots and taken the potatoes, and then planted the roots in the earth again, thinking they should not be discovered; and, to prevent a repetition of this conduct, the threats had been made use of, without the slightest intention of carrying them into execution.

I found, in answer to my inquiries, that no food of any description had been given to the natives for the last three months; that, although there is abundance of fish at *Indented Head*, yet there are no means of catching them, and that the natives had no idea of making boats or catamarans.

### February 5th.

We started very early this morning, under the expectation that we should see the natives, and in order that they should not be frightened, I directed Buckley to advance, and we would follow him at the distance of a quarter of a mile. Buckley made towards a native well, and after he had ridden about eight miles we heard a cooey, and when we arrived at the spot I witnessed one of the most pleasing and affecting sights. There were three men, five women, and about twelve children. Buckley had dismounted, and they were all clinging round him, and tears of joy and delight running down their cheeks. It was truly an affecting sight, and proved the affection which these people entertained for Buckley. I felt much affected at the sight myself, and considered it a convincing proof of the happy results which will follow our exertions, if properly directed. Amongst the number were a little old man, and an old woman, one of his wives.

Buckley told me this was his old friend, with whom he had lived and associated 30 years. I was surprised to find that this old man had not a blanket, and I inquired the cause, and was much concerned to learn that no blankets had been given him, because he did not leave that part of the country and proceed to *Dutigalla* for it. I could ill spare my blankets for him, but I could not refrain from giving one of them to Buckley in order that he might give it to his friend, with an assurance that he should have further clothing after our return. The men seemed much surprised at the horses. I, however, after some little persuasion, induced the

youngest man to put his foot in the stirrup and mount my grey mare, and I led the horse round a few paces, to the great delight of the whole party. I then coaxed the mare, and put my face to hers, to show them they need not be afraid, and then prevailed upon a young girl, about thirteen years of age, also to take a ride. As soon as the horse began to move she seemed very much alarmed, and her countenance bespoke her fears, but she continued silent. We gave them a few presents, and then left them to proceed on our journey.

I may here mention that so soon as Buckley crossed the *Saltwater River*, and obtained a view of his own country, his countenance was much changed, and when we reached Geelong, he took the lead, and kept us upon a trot. He seemed quite delighted and proud of his horse.

When we quitted the natives, we directed our course to the head of the *Barwon River*. This river is about two miles wide.

There are breakers on each side of the heads, like *Port Phillip*, but it appeared to me that there was a channel in the centre. We then proceeded through a fair country, near the margin of the river, until we arrived at a flat, where the river is at least eight or nine miles wide. At this flat there are some very good native wells, called *Yau-Yan*. We dined at this place, and continued our course near the river, until we had crossed over a very extensive marsh on the banks of the *Barwon*, the extremity of No. 16. We stopped at this place all night, and shot some wildfowls, which we had for our supper. Tom shot a large musk duck, which Buckley had for his supper.

#### February 6th.

We started this morning about six o'clock, and when we had got out of the marsh, we saw *Geelong Harbour*, and ascertained that the distance from the harbour at the neck was not more than four miles. We continued our course upon some high land until we had reached the junction of the *Yalloak* and *Barwon Rivers*. We then descended into a marsh on the *Yalloak*, left our horses there, crossed the *Yalloak* by a native track over a large tree, and went across to the *Barwon*, to a spot called *Buckley's Falls*, where there is a large basin, and the river somewhat resembles the cataract and basin at *Launceston*, but upon a smaller scale. Buckley showed us the hollow tree in which he used to live and the places where the natives used to catch the fish in the winter season. Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Leake, Mr. Robertson, myself, and Mr. Malcolm crossed over the cataract for the purpose of examining the *Barrabool Hills*, which had presented a most inviting appearance in our progress up the *Barwon River*. We passed over about eight or nine miles, and kept upon the high grounds, in order that we might see the surrounding country. We found the herbage to be very good, and I think the best sheep country we had passed over, and I believe the other gentlemen were of the same opinion. We were compelled to cross the Bar-Avon at the same spot, and I should think from the appearance of the country that the *Barwon* is a deep river, about 60 feet wide for many miles up; in the winter a large body of water passes down it.

We then crossed the *Yalloak* and dined, and proceeded about twelve miles further up the river, for the purpose of inspecting the country, and also searching for tracks of sheep, but without success. We stayed in a small marsh on the banks of the *Yalloak* that night. The river at this part is only a small running stream.

Having a few spare potatoes, we planted them in this marsh near the fire.

#### February 7th.

As soon as we made the rising ground this morning we took an observation of the *Villamanata* and *Anakie Hills*, and we found that they were not correctly laid down. We then proceeded direct for the *Anakie Hills*. We passed over a tract of very fine land, and found some waterholes at the foot of the *Anakie*, and the herbage for miles round, and even up to the top, of the finest description. We reached the summit of the highest hill, from which we had a beautiful view of the land, extending up towards the *Exe*, which appeared to be very fine and well timbered; also of the *Barrabool Hills*, and of the land in and about *Geelong*. We descended on the north side, passed along flat land between the *Anakie* and *Villamanata*, and left them four miles on the right. We then came upon the *Debackarite*, which enabled me to continue the chain of ponds,

and where we dined; and after dinner we rode across to Captain Swanston's station, which we reached at sundown.

### February 8th.

We passed this morning over to the upper part of No. 12, in order to continue the chain of ponds which we traced up to and over No. 11. We dined at the stock hut at the ford, and after dinner passed about five miles along the side line of No. 9 and then made an angle across to the settlement, which we reached about four p.m., and found that no vessel had arrived during our absence. In the evening some of the natives came to the settlement and reported that a ship was coming in; they also made us understand that they had tracked us on the beach and followed us many miles, and they had also seen the places where we had slept.

### February 9th.

At daylight this morning we heard the report of guns from the ship, and shortly afterwards the natives reported that a vessel was at anchor, with three masts; and, concluding it was the *Caledonia*, Mr. Furgesson went down the river with Mr. Batman's boat. About eleven o'clock Captain Symers, of the *Caledonia*, came up to the settlement. I then arranged with him for a passage to *George Town*, and to be on board on Saturday afternoon at two o'clock. Mr. Furgesson, Mr. Leake, Mr. Robertson, myself, Linfield, and Stewart, one of the Sydney natives, left the settlement for the purpose of proceeding to the northward and exploring that part of the country. We took with us four days' supplies and only two guns. My object in taking Stewart was to prevent the possibility of any collision with the natives, and that he might act as an interpreter. We proceeded in a straight line through the lands reserved for the settlement, and over No. 9. In passing over No. 9 we crossed a chain of ponds, extending a little to the N.W. When we had reached the extremity of No. 9, and were upon No. 7, it was nearly dark. We observed a tier of steep hills to the right, and concluded that we should find water at the foot, and we accordingly moved to the right and passed over about four miles of very fine land, and just at dusk came upon a chain of ponds, as we expected, where we stayed all night.

### February 10th.

We started this morning at daylight, leaning to the right, and ascending the steep hills, so that we might be enabled to obtain an extensive view to the north-east. We travelled in this direction about four miles, and from the summit of the hill we had an extensive view of the country composing Nos. 3 and 4 and part of 8. The country appeared rather thickly wooded towards No. 4, and particularly so over No. 8; and we were enabled clearly to trace the course of the *River Yarra Yarra* by the white fog. We then proceeded in a westerly direction until we came to the chain of ponds, which I had particularly traced through No. 8, and the line of which I was then enabled to continue. This chain of ponds I considered to be within a mile of the side line between No. 7 and No. 6. The country and pasturage are here very fine, and present a desirable spot for a homestead.

As I intended to come back over Nos. 1 and 2, and within a few miles of this spot, I marked down on the chart two sugar-loaf hills.

The weather was exceedingly hot this day, and we rested under a blanket tent for some hours at the ponds. In the afternoon we proceeded in a westerly course over a continuation of plains.

We then ascended a rise, and from the summit obtained one of the most beautiful views I ever saw, commanding a full view of the junction near the settlement, the bay, *Geelong*, *Villamanata*, and the *Barrabool Hills*. I think it must have been from this spot Mr. Hume had the first view of *Port Phillip*. After taking observations and the bearings of these several places on the chart, we continued our course over No. 6 until we reached the *Saltwater River*, or the *River Arndell*, as called by Mr. Hume. We found the land lightly timbered, and fully equal to our expectations as to quality. The country near the river is hilly and full of glens, and is well calculated for an extensive sheep run. We continued our course on the high ground, and near the river, for about five miles, and then descended into a small marsh near *Gumm's Corner*, where we stayed all night.

## February 11th.

We this morning crossed the *Saltwater River*, and took a westerly direction to the summit of a flat-topped hill, which Stewart stated was the hill from which Mr. Batman saw the native fires upon his first visit, and which he called *Mount Iramo*.

We then proceeded over a running stream which nearly divides No. 5. We were detained some time, waiting for Mr. Furgesson, whose horse had lost a fore shoe. When he reached me, I told him that as we were limited to time, it was necessary we should push on, and I proposed that he should mount Stewart's horse, and that Stewart should lead his horse to the settlement. My object in doing this was to afford him the opportunity of inspecting No. 1 and 2, in order that he might report thereupon to Capt. Swanston; and to accomplish this purpose, I should have deprived myself of Stewart's assistance. Mr. Furgesson, without even thanking me for the offer, observed that the black men were very careless, and that he should not trust his horse with him.

Stewart had hitherto carried a double-barrelled gun for the protection of the party. Mr. Fergusson called to Stewart to give him the gun, and he then wished me "good morning".

During the whole of our journey through the bush the fires had, in every instance, been produced from the phosphoric matches, which Mr. Furgesson had; independent of which he also carried a steel with prepared punk. I felt much surprised at his conduct, and not knowing whether we might experience any difficulty in obtaining fire, I said to him, "If you leave us, what shall we do without your matches?" He simply replied, "Oh, you will have no difficulty in obtaining fire", and rode away and left me.

At this time we were not more than 22 miles from his tent.

*Mount Cotterill* was in full view, and he could easily have reached home that afternoon.

We then proceeded N.W. about two miles, and as we were desirous of seeing the land to the westward, we left our horses with the servants, and ascended the summit of the *Sugar-loaf Hill*, about half a mile distant. We had now only a single-barrelled gun for our protection. We then altered our course nearly due north, and passed over some very good plains; and near the foot of a tier of hills we crossed over two or three rivulets, at one of which we dined. We then came to a forest of gum and stringy-bark, and having ridden about a mile and a half, we then altered our course and proceeded due east. On our way from the forest to the line extending to the *Villamanata Hills*, we passed over two other creeks, which appeared to flow in a southerly direction; we continued our course until we again reached the *Saltwater River*.

The land of No. 1 is very good, and is well watered; we crossed three chains of ponds, about three miles distant from each other. We stayed on the banks all night, and as we did not reach the river till near dark and were fatigued, we did not put up any hut or breakwind. About twelve at night we had a heavy thunder-storm, and by two o'clock we were all wet through.

## February 12th.

Mr. Leake and myself had slept upon the hills to avoid the mosquitoes, and when we had descended into the bottom, we found the fire almost out. We roused the party, and were at length, with the greatest difficulty, enabled to make the fire burn. It continued burning till daylight, and we then dried our clothes, had some hot tea, crossed the river, and proceeded on our journey. We now altered our course for the purpose of passing between the two hills which I had marked down on the 10th; and we arrived at the spot within a few minutes of the time we expected, so that the chart must be correctly laid down, and also our observation upon it.

About one mile from the river we came upon a most beautiful vale, extending, apparently, several miles to the northward, and extending over part of No. 6 and 7. This vale contains about 20,000 acres of the richest quality and of the finest herbage I ever saw, and, in my opinion, far superior to any of the land upon No. 9 or any of the sections. We found the continuation of the rivulet, and that it wound round the flat-topped hill,

thereby affording a most eligible situation for a homestead. We then continued our course to another hill, near the margin of No. 7, which we passed over, and from this hill we had the opportunity of proving the correctness of the hills marked down by observation.

We then continued our course about eight miles over fine feeding land, and came upon a rapid stream of water, flowing, like all the other rivers, from the north to south. We called this river the *River Plenty*, as it is the only stream, except the *River Barwon*, deserving the name of river. We dined at this river, and after proceeded about one mile down it in order to form an opinion as to its course, and as we were desirous of reaching, if possible, the *River Yarra Yarra* that afternoon, we then crossed the river and made an easterly course through forest land about six miles, and until we came upon another rapid stream, flowing in a southerly direction, and which it was impossible to cross in consequence of the hills and scrub. We then proceeded about a mile S.E., when we were again stopped by a small stream, and found the land very boggy. After proceeding about half a mile S. and one mile W. along a high ridge, we determined to cross, if possible, the stream, and which after much labour we accomplished; but finding it impossible to continue our course, and the land between us and the *Yarra Yarra* being very heavy and thickly wooded, we were compelled again to re-cross the last stream; and as it was near six in the evening, with an appearance of rain, we thought it most prudent to halt for the night, and put up a strong and secure tent to protect us from the wet.

### February 13th.

When we awoke this morning we found to our dismay that the horses, with the exception of one mare, which had been tethered out, were missing. In about an hour Stewart returned, informing us that he had discovered the tracks, and that the horses were all gone. We were under an engagement to return to the settlement by twelve o'clock, and we calculated that we were distant about seventeen miles in a straight line. We got our breakfast, and packed all the saddles upon the horse which had been tethered out, and then proceeded in search of the horses by following their tracks. And here the instinct of that noble animal was most powerfully exhibited. The horses had been a circuit of at least 120 miles; they had never been within ten miles of the spot where we were stationed that night; and yet, instead of proceeding back upon their tracks, the horses made a direct course for the settlement round the hills, with as much care and sagacity as could have been manifested had they been led by a native. We followed the tracks about seven miles, and until we came upon the banks of the *River Plenty*, where we found the horses grazing. We then saddled them, crossed the river, and continued the course to the settlement, which we reached at five minutes past twelve. Upon my arrival at the settlement I found about 150 natives, and I learnt with much concern that an act of aggression had been committed upon one of the women, which required my immediate attention. Without waiting to refresh myself or refit, I proceeded to the native huts, and ordered the persons supposed to be implicated to be brought down.

I found a young woman, about 22, lying on the ground, covered over with a kangaroo-rug, and suffering from a violent contusion on the back part of her head, and which I understood had been inflicted upon her by her husband. It appeared that she was one of three wives, and that the tribe had lately been on the *Saltwater River* and near the shepherds' hut on No. 10; that this woman was proceeding towards the settlement to see her mother, and fell in with one of the shepherds, who laid hold of her, brought her to the hut, tied her hands behind her, and kept her there all night, and either that night or the next morning abused her person.

When she reached the settlement she communicated to her friends the injury she had sustained, and they immediately apprised Buckley of it, expecting to obtain redress. The natives are particularly jealous respecting their women; and they consider any intercourse of this kind as a contamination, and in every case punish the woman frequently even to death. The natives men, women, and children assembled around me. I explained to them, through Buckley, our determination, in every instance, to punish the white man, and to protect the natives to the utmost of our power; but we were not allowed to beat them, as they had the woman, but would send them to their own country to be punished. The woman was then raised, and the two men placed before her, and Buckley asked her if either of those men had ill-treated her person. She replied, "No"; and I then inquired whether she had ever seen them before. She replied, "Yes", they were in

the hut when the other man brought her in with her hands tied. I then inquired of the overseer, and found that a third man was at the hut, but had not been brought down. I then explained to the two men the wickedness of their conduct, and how justly they would be punished if the natives had inflicted an injury upon them, and gave orders that as soon as fresh shepherds could be obtained, they should be removed from the settlement, under the terms of their indentures. I directed the other man to be immediately sent for, and if the woman identified him as the aggressor, that he should be removed from the settlement by the first ship, and be publicly taken away as a prisoner. I directed Buckley to explain to the whole tribe the course which I had directed to be pursued, and I could perceive by the expression of their countenances that they were highly satisfied. I then endeavoured to make the poor woman understand how much I commiserated with her situation, and I tied round her neck a red silk handkerchief, which delighted her exceedingly.

### All of the party

. . . and we all went in the Captain's boat to the mouth of the river, and reached the .....

### 16th February.

By daylight this morning we were visited on board by four of our own tribe, in Mr. Batman's whale-boat. The natives appeared much pleased with their visit and surprised at the appearance of the vessel. They remained on board about a quarter of an hour, when having obtained a supply of biscuit, they left us. At o'clock, the vessel was under weigh and proceeded towards the sea. Mr. Escoart came to anchor near the settlement at *Indented Head*. When we were near *Arthur's Seat* it became necessary to work the vessel through a narrow passage about four miles long. This passage is not more than a mile and a half wide in some places, and being the evening, so that the Captain was afraid to proceed to sea that night, lest we should be driven upon *Cape Otway*, and, in consequence, came to anchor about three miles from the Heads, under the lee of the land.

### 17th February.

We got under weigh at daylight, and made a safe passage between the Heads of *Port Phillip* . . . about eleven o'clock at night we reached *White's Hotel* at *Launceston*.

### OBSERVATIONS.

The natives are a fine race of men, many of them handsome in; their persons, and all well made. They are strong and athletic, very intelligent, and quick in their perceptions . . .

Preparing meat . . . The women, and especially the young ones, are particularly modest in their behaviour, and also in their dress. They all appear to be well disposed, and very fond of bread and potatoes. In the winter season they live principally on fish and game. Upon the appearance of the country, I feel persuaded that they must exert themselves considerably in obtaining subsistence, and from their extreme partiality to bread and potatoes, I feel not the slightest doubt but that they may be all brought to habits of industry and civilization, when the mode of obtaining potatoes and wheat country is generally . . . open, flat, champaign country, with abundance of verdure, and well watered. It far exceeds my expectations, although I was

prepared to expect something very superior. I consider the representations of Mr. Batman fully borne out, and from the account given by Buckley, I am disposed to believe . . .

I this day . . . settlement at *Port Phillip*, having taken a trip over in the *Adelaide* with some of my sheep; I found the young woman before spoken of living at *The Settlement* with her husband and his other wives. She had quite recovered from the contusion, and her husband was again reconciled to her.